

Media release

12 May 2021

Go straight to the source on the *Future Water Project 2060*

Rous County Council has announced a series of information days to be held this month where the community can 'drop in' and find out more about the revised draft *Future Water Project 2060*.

Seven community information days have been scheduled across the Lismore, Richmond Valley, Ballina and Byron Bay local government areas.

Rous County Council's Chairperson Keith Williams said the information days are a great opportunity for residents to talk directly with the project team.

"A secure drinking water supply is one of the community's most critical pieces of infrastructure," Chairperson Williams said.

"Residents need to be fully aware of the water security challenges Rous' regional supply is facing from population growth and changing climate conditions as well as better understand the new water sources that are needed.

"The upcoming information days are an important part of the conversation we must continue to have with the many communities that depend on us for their drinking water each day.

"Our draft Future Water Project requires as much input and feedback from the community as possible in order to deliver a water supply that meets its needs," he said.

The community information days will be held:

- Monday 17 May 2021 – Lismore City Hall
- Wednesday 19 May 2021 – Casino Community and Cultural Centre
- Thursday 20 and Friday 21 May 2021 – Rous County Council marquee at the Casino PRIMEX Field Days
- Monday 24 May 2021 – Rous has had to relocate this event from the Richmond Room to the **Ballina Indoor Sports Centre - Meeting Room 2 - 63 Cherry Street Ballina**
- Tuesday 25 May 2021 – Lennox Community Centre
- Wednesday 26 May and Thursday 27 May 2021 – Cavanbah Centre in Byron Bay

Each information day will run from 9am until 4pm, with residents able to drop in at any time that suits them.

Residents who are unable to make an information day can still contact Rous County Council directly to discuss any questions or concerns with the project team.

Rous County Council's General Manager Phillip Rudd said it was pleasing to be able to return to face-to-face engagement with the community after a challenging past year.

"COVID-19 has made it very difficult to have the personal engagement with the broader community that is needed with a major initiative like the Future Water Project," Mr Rudd said.

“Unfortunately, our efforts to hold these information days earlier were hampered by the temporary reintroduction of restrictions for Northern Rivers residents at the start of April, right when we commenced our public exhibition period.

“But the project team has still been able to meet with and present to many community groups over the past month.

“Based on current public health advice, we’re confident it’s now safe and appropriate to hold these information days.

“Although the timing is not ideal, it’s important we still provide as many opportunities as possible for residents to speak with us face-to-face,” Mr Rudd added.

The revised draft *Future Water Project 2060* is currently on public exhibition until **Friday 28 May 2021**.

For more information on the *Future Water Project 2060* (including how to provide feedback), visit www.rous.nsw.gov.au.

All residents attending the community information days must adhere to COVID-safe practices and guidelines.

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For further information, please contact Michael McKenzie, Future Water Project Manager on mobile 0407 351 731.

About Rous County Council

Rous County Council (RCC) is a multipurpose county council delivering bulk water, weed biosecurity and flood mitigation services to the Northern Rivers of NSW. RCC’s constituent councils are Lismore, Ballina, Byron and Richmond Valley:

- **Bulk water:** The regional water supply authority. It provides water in bulk from its principal supply sources at Rocky Creek Dam and Emigrant Creek Dam servicing around 100,000 people.
- **Weed biosecurity:** The local control authority for weed biosecurity. Operations cover an area of more than a million hectares including Kyogle and Tweed shires, which are serviced by agreement with those councils.
- **Flood mitigation:** The flood mitigation authority across the local government areas of Ballina, Lismore and Richmond Valley.

RCC also operates Richmond Water Laboratories in Lismore, providing professional sampling and analytical testing services for water and soil to NSW councils, private industry and the public. The laboratory is National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accredited.

www.rous.nsw.gov.au / www.waterlab.com.au