

PROJECT NEWSLETTER



November 2022

Our project

The Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage project is an 'off river' pumped hydro energy development located adjacent to the Macleay River between Armidale and Kempsey.

Situated within the New England Renewable Energy Zone, the project will provide clean energy generation and storage capabilities, ensuring a reliable, resilient, and renewable future energy supply for NSW.

The Oven Mountain project acknowledges the Thunggutti people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We also extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across this nation.

Project update

Our team is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project and are continuing with design work.

Site and field investigations continued on the lower and upper reservoir areas, including terrestrial and aquatic ecology, ground water and surface water (pictured above), koala detection, and cultural heritage work (excavation and cultural values mapping activities).

On the design front, consultation continued on road options and requirements, with meetings held with Kempsey Shire Council. The team also met with education and service providers regarding upcoming skills, education, and training opportunities, and the Kempsey Local Emergency Management Committee regarding safety management plans.

On consultation, our team completed over 1,800 letter box drops in the Kempsey and Frederickton areas and released two of four videos highlighting different areas of the project (pictured, filming at Bellbrook).

Our team are continuing to work to submit the project's EIS for approval at the end of 2022, with a formal exhibition period in early 2023.



The Importance of Pumped Hydro

On 2 September 2022, the NSW Government announced that the Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage project was one of five projects to receive support as part of the 'NSW Pumped Hydro Recoverable Grants Program'.

"The Government has committed to building a clean energy future for NSW", said Mr Anthony Melov (Director, OMPS). "It is an ambitious, but much needed commitment – and we are proud to be part of that journey".

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"The New England region has an industrious heart and an innovative spirit", said Anthony. "It also has some of the best opportunities for clean, reliable, and renewable energy across Australia.

"The 'NSW Pumped Hydro Recoverable Grants Program' will allow us to continue with much needed site investigation, design, and feasibility work".

Considered the workhorse of renewable energy, pumped hydro energy storage uses tried and tested technology to provide much needed stability to our electricity network. NSW has a target to build at least 2GW of new long-duration storage by 2030.

"Long-duration storage will play a critical role in firming up the network and supporting the growth of renewable energy – such as solar and wind", added Anthony.

"Pumped hydro energy projects are often complex and take time to deliver. The NSW Government's support provides us with confidence, and we will continue to work closely with the community".

The project is presently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement. Pending approval, construction will span over four years and create approximately 600 jobs.

To learn more about the NSW Government's renewable energy initiatives and the grants program, visit www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/pumped-hydro.



A Dog's Life

A hard day's work should always include a contemplative moment - or two. And possibly, a treat.

Meet Ryan with Dash (pictured) – the most ambitious, skilled, and dedicated four-legged companion you will ever find. Together, they are helping us identify koala habitats, ensuring the well-being of all animals.

It's always great to have more hands on the project – or feet, or paws.

A big thank you to EMM Consulting Pty Limited for bringing the best specialists to the project, and a special four-paw high five to Ryan and Jen Tate from TATE Animals – their passion for our furry companions is only matched by their skill and experience in conservation, environmental and animal training.





Approximate location of the Lower Reservoir

A 'Step Change' to a Clean Energy Future

The National Electricity Market is experiencing a pivotal shift away from fossil-fuel generation to more affordable variable renewable energy. This transformation has resulted in the need to 'firm up' renewable technologies that are subject to weather extremes and modernise the energy network and market.

The **NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap** notes:

“NSW’s existing generation and transmission network took around 30 years to plan and build, but the majority of this infrastructure needs to be replaced in less than 15 years. The window to replace generation capacity could narrow further if power stations close early, especially given the growing risk of failure inherent as thermal plants age. This signifies the need for an unprecedented rate of investment in electricity infrastructure”.

The reasons behind this energy transformation are varied, but include changes in consumer behaviour, government policy, commercial viability of renewable energy products, and the retirement of thermal plants. On the latter, the **2022 Integrated System Plan (ISP)** states:

“Coal-fired generation (is) withdrawing faster than announced, with 60% of capacity (to be) withdrawn by 2030. Current announcements by thermal plant owners suggest that about 8 gigawatts (GW) of the current 23 GW of coal-fired generation capacity will withdraw by 2030 ... (However) ISP modelling suggests that 14 GW would withdraw by 2030.

Coal-fired generators are continuing to bring forward their withdrawal from the market – potentially by up to seven years to 2025 in the case of the Eraring Power Station”.

With the principles of ensuring consumer benefits and reliability, the ISP states that investment in the National Electricity Market is needed to - in part – almost double the electricity it now delivers, requiring a nine-fold increase in utility scale variable renewable energy capacity; treble the firming capacity that can respond to a dispatch signal; and install more than 10,000 km of new transmission as part of the transformation.

With the shift in energy reliance moving at a pace - what the ISP calls a 'step change' - there rises the need for varying duration storage and generation services. By 2050, the ISP notes, there will be a need to provide 46 GW of storage, including long-duration pumped hydro to manage variations in solar and wind output.

The task ahead is complex and ambitious and will require the coordinated efforts of government and businesses. Importantly, it will mean working closely with communities – directly impacted landowners, regional townships, and interest groups, as well as Aboriginal people, communities, and businesses. Our collective steps towards a clean energy future should recognise that within all challenges lay opportunities – moments that can instigate long-term and meaningful social and economic change.

Highway to a Renewable Energy Zone

The commute to work just got a little bit faster (cue music – yes, that song).

Our November ‘Top Gun’ moment comes courtesy of Fleet Helicopters in Armidale. The L-39 Albatross is a beauty and is equipped with everything you need for those high-performance, high-speed selfies.

Fleet Helicopters have been integral in helping us deliver important site investigations on the Oven Mountain project. We thank the team for letting us share in their passion.

And now (swipe sunglasses from face), we must take the ‘highway to the renewable energy zone’.



L-39 Albatross jet

The Oven Mountain Project – Our Story

All great ideas have an origin story. Ours begins in the 1980’s when a forward-thinking landowner and engineer in the Upper Macleay – Bob Hayes – went for a bush walk.

Today, his inspired vision is being carried out by his sons, and the Oven Mountain team.

We’ve created a video that tells the story, which you can watch at our **Facebook** page at: www.facebook.com/OvenMountain

Stay connected

The Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage project is being delivered by OMPS Pty Ltd in partnership with Alinta Energy.

The Oven Mountain project team have over 60 years of combined electricity generation development experience spanning hydro-electric, wind, solar and battery storage technologies.

Alinta Energy is committed to getting the balance right - so that everyday Australians can enjoy reliable and affordable energy that also considers the future. Alinta Energy brings a spirit of collaboration and a wealth of experience to the development of the project.



Colin, Alan, and Mark Hayes (L to R), the sons of Bob Hayes

To find out more about the **Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro** project, or to sign up for our mailing list visit: www.ompshydro.com

You can also contact the team at: info@ompshydro.com or on **1800 518 194**.



OVEN MOUNTAIN
PUMPED HYDRO STORAGE