

Brisbane taps into Gold Coast water supply

Marissa Calligeros | August 10, 2008 - 2:59PM

As South-East Queenslanders cranked up their water hoses for the second weekend in two years, the final section of the Southern Regional Water Pipeline linking Brisbane's and the Gold Coast's bulk water supplies was laid today.

The last piece of the \$901 million pipeline, which will link the Gold Coast, Logan and Ipswich into the State Government's \$9 billion South East Queensland Water Grid, was lowered into the ground at Helensvale.

"This historic link will transport precious water between Brisbane, Ipswich, Beaudesert, Logan and the Gold Coast, reducing the threat of drought across the region," Premier Anna Bligh said.

The pipeline, due for completion in November, will ultimately converge water from the Gold Coast Desalination Project, Hinze Dam, Cedar Grove Weir, Bromelton Off-Stream Storage and the proposed Wyaralong Dam and facilitate water sharing across the region.

To date, more than 347 kilometres of pipe have been laid across the Water Grid.

However, the Queensland Conservation Council said the state's South East Queensland Water Strategy was a "recipe for confusion".

"It's back to the past agenda of excessive water use based upon expensive desalination," the council's executive director, Tony Hutcheon, said.

Simon Baltais of Sustainable Population Australia said the Queensland Water Commission's strategy failed take into account the South-East's booming population.

"(It) fails to address whether South-East Queensland has the natural resources to support the six million plus people predicted to be shoehorned into the region by 2026," Mr Baltais said.

Despite relaxed water restrictions, Brisbane residents each used an average of 122 litres of water a day - 48 litres below the maximum that the new Target 170 restrictions allow.

"It really does show that the community is definitely focused on water savings and those who did choose to use the hose actually made sure they were using their four minute shower timer as well," Queensland Water Commission chief executive John Bradley said.

Ms Bligh said last week the water grid featuring more than 450 kilometres of pipe, two new dams, a desalination plant and three advanced water treatment plants, would make a return to level-six water restrictions unlikely

"We'll turn the desalination plant on in November and by January next year it will be able to produce enough water each day for more than 700,000 people meeting Target 170," she said.