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Minister for Regional NSW
Member for Monaro

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT GIVES GREEN LIGHT FOR WORK TO START ON SNOWY 2.0

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro and the Minister for Planning Anthony Roberts today announced approval for exploratory works for the Snowy 2.0 project.

Deputy Premier and Member for Monaro John Barilaro made the announcement at the Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre in Cooma, giving the green light from the state government for exploratory works to begin on the project.

“Snowy Hydro is an iconic, Australian success story, part of the fabric of our nation and of the community here in the Snowy Mountains,” Mr Barilaro said.

“We’ve taken the success of the existing scheme to new heights, with a massive \$4 billion for infrastructure for in the bush following the transfer the NSW Government’s share of Snowy Hydro to the Commonwealth.

“Every single cent of that money is going to rural and regional NSW, and these communities will also reap the benefits associated with the extension of the existing scheme with 2000 jobs expected to be created during peak construction.

“Snowy 2.0 involves expanding the existing Snowy Scheme with the construction and operation of a new pumped hydro power station.

“It could increase the generation capacity of the existing Snowy Scheme by almost 50 per cent and provide 350,000 megawatt hours of large-scale storage capacity for the National Energy Market,” he said.

Minister for Planning Anthony Roberts said the approval would allow exploratory works to investigate the underground conditions at the proposed location for a power station cavern.

“Snowy Hydro Limited sought approval to construct a 3.1km tunnel and supporting infrastructure, as part of the Exploratory Works for Snowy 2.0,” Mr Roberts said.

“The Department of Planning and Environment has undertaken a rigorous assessment of the proposal, taking account of environmental, social and economic impacts, of community and stakeholder submissions and advice from other government agencies.

“Snowy 2.0 is ‘critical’ significant state infrastructure because of its potential to contribute to the future security and reliability of our energy system, and to deliver associated economic and broader environmental benefits. This approval allows essential geological information to be gathered for the detailed design of the underground power station,” he said.

Mr Roberts said approval of the project was subject to strict conditions to address concerns about impacts on Kosciuszko National Park.

“Under the conditions of approval, Snowy Hydro is required to pay \$10.5 million to offset the impacts of the exploratory works project on the national park.

“These funds would be used by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to improve catchment health and to support the National Park’s unique environmental, heritage and recreational value,” he said.

Other conditions of approval for include:

- Detailed management plans to minimise traffic, water, biodiversity and heritage impacts and manage rehabilitation of the disturbed areas;
- Strict measures for the management of works involving the placement of material in Talbingo Reservoir;
- The provision of new recreational facilities at the Talbingo Reservoir if current areas are impacted by the project;
- Notifications to the community about road users on the local networks and water users on the Talbingo Reservoir;
- Rehabilitation following decommissioning.

Snowy Hydro will be submitting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) later this year for the Snowy 2.0 main works involving the construction of an underground power station with a generating capacity of around 2,000 megawatts and approximately 27km of power waterways-linking the existing Tantangara and Talbingo Reservoirs.

The Snowy 2.0 main works EIS will be publicly exhibited to provide the community with an opportunity to comment.