

Water



Managing water responsibly

Water is essential for the Donald Project. DMS will use it for ore processing and site operations, including dust control. We will use water responsibly and efficiently by:

Recycling and conserving water

We've designed our processing plant and tailings management system to maximise water reuse and recovery, minimising our reliance on our GWMWater entitlement.

Using saline groundwater and site surface water

We'll use saline groundwater, which is unsuitable for agriculture, before we draw on our purchased water entitlement. We'll divert clean rainwater offsite to maintain natural flows, while collecting and using rainwater falling on or entering disturbed areas of the mine site.

Carefully monitoring water use

We'll monitor water usage to maintain efficiency and ensure we meet environmental standards.

Protecting the environment

We've designed our operations to stop water in contact with the disturbed areas from leaving the site. This will protect the downstream environment, including Dunmunkle Creek (2 km east) and Richardson River (6 km southwest).

Our water entitlement

DMS purchased a water entitlement from GWMWater in 2011 for \$17.95m. The water entitlement comes from savings created by the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline project. Those savings represent water in open channels previously lost to evaporation and seepage.

GWMWater will supply our entitlement using only part of the network's spare capacity. The supply to DMS will not affect water pressure or flow rates for other customers.

"All mineral sands mining operations have the same conditions applied to take up their allocations or entitlements as any other intensive user. These conditions are put in place to provide fair and equitable access to all GWMWater customers."
— GWMWater

A new pipeline

To deliver our GWMWater entitlement, we are installing an 11 km new pipeline from the Minyip Rural Pump Station to the mine site off Walsh Lane. The complete pipeline will:

- Run from the pump station along Minyip-Banyena Road and onto Gun Club Road
- Be set within the road reserve
- Consist of a trenched 375 mm diameter pipe.

We completed stage one of the pipeline in November 2024. This involved connecting to the existing main at the pump station and installing the first 80 m section of pipe.

When we install the remaining pipeline to our site, we will be careful to protect existing GWMWater infrastructure. GWMWater installed its network using GPS and can locate its pipes precisely, minimising the risk of any damage. We will keep landholders, and the community informed about our work schedule and how we will minimise disruptions.

How our investment benefits community supply

"The sale of growth water and the ongoing rates and charges to intensive users has helped deliver lower overall water charges to customers in the Grampians, Wimmera and Mallee. The additional revenue created through the utilisation of excess capacity in the water network will help fund future investments in water infrastructure in our region." — GWMWater

Our site is not connected to the water network yet. But we understand the \$8.3 million in headworks payments we've made since 2011, has contributed to:

- Improving water infrastructure reliability across the region
- Offsetting potential water rate increases that might otherwise be necessary
- Funding system upgrades, which improve performance for all customers
- Contributing to strategic investments in long-term system sustainability.

In the past, we have donated water from our water allocation to the Donald Weir Pool so the community could keep enjoying it in a dry summer.

Extracting groundwater responsibly

We'll prioritise using groundwater over our GWMWater entitlement.

We'll install dewatering wells around the mining blocks to access ore below the groundwater table. The groundwater is highly saline and unsuitable for agricultural use. The nearest registered stock/domestic bores are about 20 km east of the mine site.

We will extract groundwater in compliance with:

- Our GWMWater 'take and use' licence (DMS to obtain)
- The Victorian *Water Act 1989*.

Collecting surface water

We have developed a comprehensive system to manage surface water. It involves diversion bunds and channels to capture and control runoff from disturbed areas.

Our system incorporates flood mitigation controls designed for 1-in-100-year rainfall events. We'll store the water we collect in interconnected dams and tanks for reuse and divert clean water around the site to maintain natural water flows.

Using water to suppress dust

We will implement industry best practices to control dust. These will include:

- Watering unsealed haul roads, exposed surfaces, stockpiles, and disturbed areas
- Using advanced real-time monitoring systems to check we're suppressing dust effectively
- Applying additional controls in windy and dry conditions.

Preparing for changeable conditions

We know water availability can vary with seasonal conditions, so we have designed our operation to conserve water. Extracting groundwater and recycling surface water will help us reduce our vulnerability to drought conditions. During water restrictions, we will abide by GWMWater's directives, which ensure fair water access and prioritise community needs.

About the Donald Project

The Donald Rare Earth and Mineral Sands Project is near Minyip and Donald, 300 km north-west of Melbourne.

Discovered in the 1980s, the site is a world-class source of minerals essential for everyday industries. These include critical minerals like zirconium and titanium, along with rare earth elements such as neodymium and praseodymium.

A joint venture between Astron Corporation Limited and US-based resources producer Energy Fuels will develop the Donald Project. The joint venture is Donald Project Pty Ltd, trading as DMS.

Through responsible resource development, DMS will create long-term regional benefits including economic growth, jobs, and infrastructure improvements.

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