

Iconic 1930's engineering under the microscope

The design and construction expertise of 1930's engineering is under the scrutiny of 21st century technology following an intensive inspection of the massive 62 year old Lawson Syphon irrigation site 10 kilometres east of Deniliquin.

Owned and operated by Murray Irrigation, the Lawson Syphon is a 700-metre long river management asset completed in 1955 after taking 16 years to build.

The remarkable structure diverts the Mulwala Canal under the Edward River and helps deliver water to agricultural areas south of Deniliquin. The syphon is critical to Murray Irrigation's operations and has been regarded as a national asset from the day its construction was first conceived.

Work on the syphon started in 1939 but was halted only weeks later following the outbreak of World War II. When work resumed in 1945, project managers were faced with repeated flooding of the Edward River and labour shortages.

These days, the critical asset supplies water to many landholders over 140,000ha, whose multi-million dollar agricultural and horticultural enterprises support our region.

Murray Irrigation carried out the ground-breaking inspection in July, along with tier one engineers from AECOM and Interflow.

Murray Irrigation Project Lead Jorge Luengas said the structure was partially drained leading up to the inspection so specialist engineers could enter the confined space and assess the condition of the syphon.

"The engineers descended 25 metres into the syphon entry points, which will provide a thorough indication of the condition of the asset and an estimate of its remaining life," Mr Luengas said.

Concrete core samples and soil samples were taken from the Edward River Escape and the Lawson Syphon.

A full report on the inspection will be released later this year.

Watch the ground-breaking inspection here: <https://youtu.be/OEVup0T8K40>

Ends.

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Photo "Building the Lawson Syphon": The Lawson Syphon being built over 60 years ago, Deniliquin NSW.