MEDIA RELEASE

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WORK STARTS TO BUILD NEW GEE GEE BRIDGE

Member for Murray Austin Evans said today marks the start of work to replace the Gee Gee Bridge over the Wakool River on the Noorong Road, 37 kilometres east of Swan Hill, which will improve freight access through the region.

Mr Evans said the $23 million project is part of the NSW Government's Bridges for the Bush program which aims to improve freight productivity in regional areas as well as improve safety and access for all road users.

"Roads and Maritime Services has contracted Nelmac Pty Ltd to build a new two-lane, 245 metre long concrete bridge across the Wakool River and floodplain which is between 15 and 20 metres downstream of the existing bridge and flood relief bridge," Mr Evans said.

"Around 1.4 kilometres of Noorong Road will be realigned as part of the project, with the existing Gee Gee Bridge and flood relief brief bridge to also be demolished and removed.

"This project represents a strong investment by the NSW Government in recognition of the role this route plays within the strategic freight route network."

Mr Evans said the replacement project will not only improve freight efficiency but also reduce the operating and maintenance costs associated with keeping the existing structure in a serviceable condition into the future.

"The old Gee Gee Bridge, which was built in 1929, was identified for replacement under the Timber Truss Bridge Strategy. It is narrow and has a single lane where vehicles must give way to oncoming traffic," he said.

"The existing bridge is also not suitable for higher mass limit or oversized vehicles. It cannot be upgraded to meet the future operational needs of Noorong Road, which is why the new bridge is so important."

The old bridge will be removed once the new structure has been completed. The new bridge will be under the care and control of Murray River Council once it is completed in 2020, weather permitting.

ENDS

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