

Protecting the state's groundwater

Beach Energy has a strong track record of protecting groundwater resources in its operations in South Australia over the past 50 years.

This protection has been top of mind as we look to develop gas resources in the South East of South Australia.

The new conventional gas exploration well, Haselgrove 3, will be located on state forestry land in close proximity to the existing Haselgrove gas wells drilled in the 1990s.

The well will be drilled to a planned depth of 3,900 metres, and will comprise layers of protective steel and cement casing installed across the major groundwater aquifers, including the Gambier Limestone and Dilwyn Formation. While these aquifers extend some 300 metres below the surface, the protective casing will be installed to approximately 900 metres, to provide added levels of protection. The well will not be fracture stimulated.

As part of the exploration approval granted, Beach Energy will use no more than 2 megalitres of groundwater, which is a minimal amount in comparison to the average 200,000 megalitres of annual groundwater usage from the unconfined aquifer in the lower limestone coast prescribed wells area.

Beach Energy Regional Manager South East, Hydrogeologist, Mr Glenn Toogood said "It is important to recognise that the targeted gas formations are more than three kilometres below the aquifers and are isolated from them by multiple layers of impermeable rocks.

"There have been many incorrect claims made that drilling for gas will adversely impact aquifers. This is simply not true. To provide assurances that our operations do not affect aquifers, baseline groundwater monitoring will be undertaken in the area surrounding the well prior and post the well being drilled."

Mr Toogood said that if the well did not strike commercial levels of gas it would be plugged in accordance with strict regulatory guidelines to isolate the deeper layers preventing any possible contamination of the groundwater. The overlying surface disturbance area would then be rehabilitated back to its original state.

Natural gas is an essential source of energy in the south-east, and Beach is playing its part to ensure there is a competitive future supply of gas to assist industries and households facing rising energy costs.

Beach remains committed to using best practice in its operations to ensure well integrity and excellent environmental performance.

Conceptualisation – Haselgrove- 3 Conventional Natural Gas Well

