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Deputy Premier

Minister for State Development, Infrastructure & Planning



Member for Callide

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Major Galilee Basin rail line receives state approval

Up to 2400 jobs could be created following the approval by Queensland's independent Coordinator General of a 300-kilometre rail line linking the proposed Carmichael coal mine west of Moranbah to the port of Abbot Point.

Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning Jeff Seeneey said the approval of North Galilee Basin Rail Project is another key decision in unlocking the resource-rich Galilee Basin for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

"The multi-billion dollar coal projects proposed for the Galilee Basin have the potential to create the next wave of resource sector jobs in Queensland and dramatically boost our state's coal exports," Mr Seeneey said.

"Our Government's strong plan to develop this region will set Queensland up for the next 60 to 70 years, allowing us to invest in the schools, hospitals, roads and services we will need for future generations."

It's estimated the rail line will take about two years to build and pump up to \$790 million into the Mackay region and over \$900 million into the state economy during its construction phase. The proposed standard gauge greenfield rail line will cost \$2.2 billion and be able to transport 100 million tonnes of coal a year.

Mr Seeneey said in approving the North Galilee Basin Rail project, the Coordinator General had imposed strict conditions on the construction and operation of the rail line to minimise potential impacts on landholders and the environment.

"These rigorous conditions protect flora and fauna and address surface water, air quality and noise emissions," he said.

"Proponents Adani must also develop an agreement with each affected landholder that stipulates how access will be maintained to homesteads, stock feeding areas and water supply."

"The company must also submit final rail design and revised flood modelling to the Coordinator-General for approval before construction commences."

Mr Seeneey said the Coordinator General's consideration of the North Galilee Basin Rail Project demonstrates another major step forward in streamlining approvals.

“Previously, an environmental impact statement could take 3-4 years to complete, while this assessment took less than one year from the date the terms of reference were finalised to the Coordinator-General’s report,” he said.

“This shows that comprehensive, robust and timely assessments can be undertaken without lengthy delays.”

The project now requires the Federal Government to make an approval decision under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act which is expected by 30 September 2014.