

EXPANDED NORTHERN MIDLANDS IRRIGATION SCHEME OPEN FOR WATER SALES

Additional demand for high-surety irrigation water has prompted Tasmanian Irrigation to modify the Preferred Design Option for the Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme in time for Water Sales to be launched to landowners.

The revised design is based on a 13,000 megalitre capacity scheme costing \$73.29 million, compared to 11,400 megalitres requested during the original Expression of Interest process.

Landowners are invited to attend an Irrigator's Meeting this Monday (14 December 2020) at the Campbell Town Football Club at 11am to gain a full understanding of the Water Sales process, which enables landowners to contractually commit to the purchase of irrigation water.

Tasmanian Irrigation Chief Executive Officer Andrew Kneebone said the need to further expand the scheme design, incorporating the area south of Cressy, including Macquarie, Barton, Isis, Conara, Campbell Town and Ross districts, was a wonderful problem to have.

"Tasmanian Irrigation is delighted that farmers continue to recognise the value of reliable irrigation water to underpin further investment, growth and diversification," Mr Kneebone said.

"We are hugely appreciative of the commitments from the Tasmanian and Australian Governments, as well as landowners, to fund the development of this complex infrastructure project.

"Tasmanian Irrigation encourages Northern Midlands farmers to take the next important step to commit to purchasing water entitlements to enable the final design and business case to be developed."

The new design is based on three pump stations, two balance tanks, approximately 30 property outlets and 99.7km of HDPE pipeline to deliver irrigation water over a 180-day summer season. Water will be sourced from Great Lake via the Poatina Power Station under an agreement with Hydro Tasmania.

Up to 60 FTEs are expected to be created during construction, as well as a further 121 FTEs once operational, including 81 on-farm jobs and 40 indirect.

Water Sales application forms will be posted to all landowners that completed an Expression of Interest in the project, and can also be downloaded from www.tasmanianirrigation.com.au from Monday. Water Sales will close on 12 February 2021. The business case is expected to be completed in May 2021, followed by construction scheduled to commence in early 2022 and first water flowing in time for the 2024/25 irrigation season.

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