

**Working with Farmers to Grow the Wealth of Tasmania**

### Augmentation Project Ready to Kick Off

Welcome to the first newsletter for the Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme Augmentation (SWISA) project.

The Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme (SWIS) was developed by Tasmanian Irrigation and commenced operations in the 2011-12 irrigation season.

The scheme supplies up to 5,660 ML to 95 irrigators over a 150-day irrigation season, from November to March. The SWIS is fully subscribed, and Tasmanian Irrigation is considering expanding the capacity and extent of the scheme as part of the Tranche Three development program.

This month, Tasmanian Irrigation Project Manager Andy Corbould met with the Irrigator Representative Committee (IRC) to officially 'kick-off' on the Project.

The SWISA project acknowledges the value of irrigation to farmers, its role in underpinning the agricultural industry's continued growth and the efforts of the local community in developing sufficient interest for Tasmanian Irrigation to investigate augmenting the scheme.

The potential water demand survey held late last year resulted in Expressions of Interest (EOI) for an additional 5,785 ML of summer water from 63 irrigators. This included 29 existing SWIS irrigators, who requested an additional 3,750 ML, and 34 new irrigators requiring 2,035 ML.

Tasmanian Irrigation is now assessing a range of options to identify potential water sources and the most cost efficient way of supplying this water to meet the combined demand of 11,445 ML per season, which equates to 76 ML/day.

The cost of water entitlements in Tranche Three is \$1,390/ML or 25 per cent of the capital cost per megalitre of developing the scheme, whichever is the greater.

As the EOI survey was held some 12 months ago, Andy will be phoning a sample of respondents in the near future to confirm the demand.

Tasmanian Irrigation has already considered four potential large winter-fill dam sites within the district to store water for the additional supply. However, none of these were viable.

As an alternative to dam storage, it is possible that the additional water required could be sourced from a combination of Tasmanian Irrigation's existing DPIPWE water licence, and releases from Lake Parangana, to be purchased from Hydro Tasmania.

Under this option, the water from both sources would be extracted from the Mersey River at Great Bend pump station.

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# Sassafras Wesley Vale Augmentation Newsletter

The SWIS was developed using the Great Bend pump station and reservoir, and the Wesley Vale main pipeline, which were built by the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill in 1969 and purchased by Tasmanian Irrigation from Cradle Mountain Water in 2010.

An important issue for the Preferred Design Option is determining what upgrades may be required to ensure these assets can support a doubling of the scheme capacity. Andy said that Tasmanian Irrigation will be doing condition assessments of the former pulp mill assets over the next two months to inform the design. Tasmanian Irrigation is also developing pipeline route options to supply the EOIs, and using hydraulic modelling to ensure the design optimises tradability and overcomes flow rate and pressure issues experienced by some

existing SWIS irrigators.

The IRC will meet with Tasmanian Irrigation again before the end of the year to review and provide valuable input into discussion on options for water supply, new pipe alignments, existing infrastructure upgrades and scheme costs as part of the development of the Preferred Design Option.

A public meeting is planned for March 2021 to launch and seek comment on the Preferred Design Option. While it is early days, the first full irrigation season is anticipated to commence in November 2024 (ie. 2024/25 irrigation season). For further information, please contact Project Manager Andy Corbould on 0417 341 141 or [andy.corbould@tasirrigation.com.au](mailto:andy.corbould@tasirrigation.com.au) or one of the IRC members listed (and pictured) below.

## Tasmanian Irrigation Scheme Snapshot



Tasmanian Irrigation successfully constructed 10 irrigation schemes as part of Tranche One and delivered a further four under Tranche Two, with first water for the fifth project at Scottsdale set to flow in late 2020. The Sassafras Wesley Vale Augmentation is one of five Tranche Three phase one projects currently being progressed, as well as Don, Northern Midlands, Tamar and Fingal. By 2025, Tasmanian Irrigation will manage a portfolio of irrigation infrastructure valued at more than \$680 million, capable of delivering 168,998 megalitres of water via 1,451 km of pipeline, 55 pump stations, 24 dams and three power stations.

COVID-19 – During the COVID-19 pandemic Tasmanian Irrigation established a working from home environment to ensure our essential services work continues, as deemed by the Tasmanian Government. All field work is adhering to strict hygiene rules in accordance with Government policy. For more information please refer to our website [www.tasmanianirrigation.com.au](http://www.tasmanianirrigation.com.au)

IRC Representative	Mobile	Email
Robert Addison	0418 142 270	raddison@bigpond.com
James Addison	0408 120 391	james.addison@charltonfarm.com.au
Colin Chaplin	0419 380 413	chaplinbrothers@bigpond.com
Stuart Greenhill (Chair)	0408 610 795	admin@greenhillbros.com.au
Andrew Marshall	0409 808 534	marshall.sassafras@gmail.com
Nathan Richardson	0418 122 508	njrich5@bigpond.com

**Tasmanian Irrigation looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively and cooperatively with all Sassafras Wesley Vale area farmers and other key stakeholders to deliver an augmentation designed to last at least 100 years and deliver water at an average annual reliability of more than 95 per cent.**

This newsletter contains information of a general nature and reasonable care has been taken to ensure accuracy of content at the time of publication. Scheme details and policies may change, and individual circumstances may vary. This newsletter should not be relied upon as a basis of individual decision making. For more information about this newsletter, please contact:

**Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd, PO Box 84, Evandale, TAS, 7212 | Ph: (03) 6398-8433 | [www.tasirrigation.com.au](http://www.tasirrigation.com.au)**

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically, please email [andy.corbould@tasirrigation.com.au](mailto:andy.corbould@tasirrigation.com.au)

