

Working with Farmers to Grow the Wealth of Tasmania

PROJECT UPDATE

Tasmanian Irrigation (TI) met with the Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigator Representative Committee (IRC) in January and March to discuss key issues and provide an update on development of the Preferred Option design for the Augmentation Project.

To progress the design, it was decided to undertake a comprehensive asset inspection of the now 50-year-old ex-Wesley Vale Paper Mill assets, which include the Great Bend pump station and reservoir, and the Wesley Vale rising main and main pipeline.

Understanding the condition of these assets is critical to setting a budget for the overall scheme upgrade.

Condition Assessments Completed

TI has now the completed comprehensive engineering condition assessments of the Great Bend pump station and reservoir, and the Wesley Vale rising main and main pipeline. The pump station and reservoir review included analysing the strength and thickness of concrete and its reinforcing and using a drone to assess the condition of the structures.

On the steel pipeline, Magnetic Particle Inspection was used at sample locations to detect surface cracking or lamination and Ultrasonic Phased Array scanning determined the thickness of the pipe and identified areas of corrosion.

The findings are that some of these assets are in reasonable condition and some are degraded and repairs and or replacement will be required to ensure reliable ongoing operation of the existing scheme.

It is fortunate that the proposed SWISA project provides an ideal opportunity to do the repairs in conjunction with the scheme upgrade, which will more than double the capacity of the existing scheme from 5,460 ML to approximately 11,445 ML per season.

Project Restructure

Understanding the condition of the Wesley Vale assets has meant that the Augmentation project has now been split into two distinct interrelated projects; one to rectify and where necessary replace the degraded assets and the other to expand the scheme to meet the demand for new water.

TI is currently working to develop a funding model incorporating both the SWIS project repair and SWISA upgrade works, and looks forward to discussing the details of the proposal with the IRC. The irrigator meeting planned for March 2021 to discuss the Preferred Design Option has been postponed until details of the funding model have been confirmed.



Picture: An example of one of the pipeline sections examined after its coating was removed and the pipe was sandblasted clean ready for inspection



Sassafras Wesley Vale Augmentation Newsletter

Preferred Design Option and Water Sales Timing

At this stage, the TI Project Team is targeting having a Preferred Design Option, including capital and operating cost estimates, approved by the Tasmanian Irrigation Board by August 2021. Water Sales are expected to progress shortly thereafter.

The first full irrigation season is anticipated to commence in November 2024 (ie. 2024/25 irrigation season).

Tasmanian Irrigation sincerely thanks all irrigators for their ongoing cooperation and collaboration as we determine the best possible model to deliver high-surety irrigation water and upgrade existing assets.

If you have any queries about the scheme, please feel free to contact Project Manager Andy Corbould on 0417 341 141 or andy.corbould@tasirrigation.com.au or one of the IRC members listed below.



Picture: Refurbished Great Bend Pump Station pumps, which will be utilised in the SWIS Augmentation

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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.

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

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