



# MEDIA RELEASE

**Senator the Hon Penny Wong**

***Minister for Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water***

PW 83/10

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## **INFRASTRUCTURE ROLLS OUTS IN MACQUARIE RIVER CATCHMENT**

Irrigation communities in New South Wales will benefit from new and more efficient irrigation infrastructure following an announcement by the Minister for Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water, Senator Penny Wong, during a visit to Dubbo today.

Up to \$162 million in funding will be rolled out for irrigation infrastructure projects across the Macquarie River catchment under the *Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program*.

“This is an investment that will provide a welcome boost for irrigation communities throughout the Macquarie River catchment which have suffered from reduced water availability in recent years due to drought and climate change,” Senator Wong said.

The funding will be rolled out by three private irrigation organisations across the Macquarie River catchment – Trangie-Nevertire Irrigation Scheme, Tenandra Scheme and Marthaguy Irrigation Scheme.

“This funding will help these organisations assist their local irrigation communities to manage their water allocations more efficiently, reduce water losses and achieve significant water savings,” Senator Wong said.

“It enables irrigation operators to carry out projects such as replacing irrigation channels with pipelines, reconstructing channels, and decommissioning sections of the water delivery system identified for closure.”

Water saved through new and more efficient irrigation infrastructure will be shared between irrigation farmers and the environment, with up to 48 billion litres of water entitlements expected to be added to the Commonwealth’s environmental water holdings for restoring the health of the Basin’s rivers and wetlands.

“These infrastructure projects will not only deliver water back to the environment, which is important for restoring the health of our rivers, but will be vital in helping irrigation communities prepare for a future with less water,” Senator Wong said.

“And with the draft Basin plan being released later this year which will put new, lower science-based limits on the amount of water that can be taken out of the Basin’s rivers, we are working hard to smooth the transition for Basin communities to these lower limits on water use.

“The Rudd Government is getting on with the job of purchasing water from willing sellers and investing in irrigation infrastructure through our comprehensive long-term, \$12.9 billion *Water for the Future* initiative.”

Further successful funding recipients will be announced in the coming days.

The *Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program* is funded under the \$5.8 billion *Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure* program, a major component of the Rudd Government's ten-year, \$12.9 billion *Water for the Future* program.

More information on this program and *Water for the Future* is available at [www.environment.gov.au/water](http://www.environment.gov.au/water).

**List of the successful recipients in the Macquarie River catchment to round one of the Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program in NSW**

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Catchment</b>	<b>Description of Projects</b>	<b>Funding subject to contract negotiation (GST Exclusive)</b>
Marthaguy Irrigation Scheme	Macquarie	Measures aimed at improving scheme efficiencies including rationalising the scheme channels, provision of a stock and domestic pipeline and improved channel management technologies.	\$9,528,690
Tenandra Scheme	Macquarie	Measures aimed at improving scheme efficiencies including restructuring of channel configuration, channel upgrades, on-farm upgrades and rationalisation.	\$37,475,140
Trangie-Nevertire Irrigation Scheme	Macquarie	Measures aimed at improving scheme efficiencies including provision of a stock and domestic pipeline, channel lining, on-farm upgrades and rationalisation.	\$115,000,000