



Minister Steve Whan

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Rural Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

Tenders closing for farmers seeking irrigation funding

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Farmers tendering for *NSW Sustaining the Basin: Border Rivers-Gwydir* project funding to modernise their irrigation systems need to submit their tenders by 12 March, NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Steve Whan, said today.

“The Border Rivers-Gwydir pilot project provides a unique opportunity for irrigators to improve their water use efficiency, boost farm productivity and increase environmental water flows,” Mr Whan said.

“I urge all irrigators tendering to submit their tenders by the end of this week so they have a chance to become part of this innovative pilot project.

“Successful applicants will receive financial incentives of up to 80% of the cost of improving their on-farm irrigation infrastructure in return for giving up half their projected water savings for environmental flows.

“Should this pilot project be successful, it will help secure the future of local communities that rely on the irrigation industry.”

The *NSW Sustaining the Basin: Border Rivers-Gwydir* project aims to:

- Modernise on-farm irrigation infrastructure
- Reduce irrigation water usage by 16 billion litres
- Return 8 billion litres of water for environmental flows
- Increase agricultural production through water use efficiencies
- Provide water use efficiency training opportunities for all irrigators

Mr Whan said the *NSW Sustaining the Basin: Border Rivers-Gwydir* on-farm irrigation modernisation initiative was developed by Industry & Investment NSW (I&I NSW) in partnership with the Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority and funded by the Australian Government's 'Water for the Future' initiative.

“This NSW initiative has the potential to be used as a model for similar schemes in other Murray Darling Basin catchments,” he said.

“The Australian Government has provided \$21.7 million to the project as the first activity funded under a \$300 million Commonwealth commitment towards the NSW On-Farm Irrigation Modernisation Program.”