



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Tony Burke MP
Minister for Sustainability, Environment,
Water, Population and Communities

The Hon Phillip Costa MP
New South Wales Minister for Water

29 September 2010

\$22 MILLION FOR WATER SAVINGS IN METERING PILOT

The Gillard Government will provide \$22 million in funding to the NSW Government for a pilot water metering project in the upper Murray.

The funding will ensure that up to 1,200 water licence holders in the upper Murray will receive a new or upgraded water meter as part of the pilot project, saving more than 10 billion litres of water a year in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Federal Government Water Minister, Tony Burke and the NSW Minister for Water, Phillip Costa today announced the funding which will improve the management of New South Wales' water resources and deliver a more secure future for all water users in the state.

The Murray Pilot Project is an early works project under the Federal Government's commitment to contribute up to \$221 million for the NSW Water Metering Scheme.

The Scheme aims to improve measurement of water extracted from groundwater, regulated and unregulated rivers by installing high accuracy, tamper proof and low maintenance meters across the NSW Murray-Darling Basin.

"This \$22 million Government investment will allow landholders in the upper Murray to better prepare for the future by delivering a more effective way to manage their water," Tony Burke said.

Minister Costa welcomed the Australian Government funding and said it would allow NSW to build on its ongoing efforts to improve water use and management.

"In return for the \$22 million in funding, it is estimated that more than 10 billion litres of water will be saved," Minister Costa said.

"Sixty per cent of savings will be transferred to the Australian Government to be managed by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder and 40 per cent will be returned to water users.

"Accurate metering of water usage will mean improved water security and delivery for water users."

“This pilot project builds on the NSW Government’s track record of water reform in the Murray-Darling Basin,” Minister Costa said.

Country Labor MLC for Albury Tony Catanzariti said the new technology would benefit water users along the river.

“This new technology will allow water users to accurately measure water use to reduce unaccounted for losses – as technology improves so does our understanding of the Murray- Darling system,” Mr Catanzariti said.

“The project was developed by the NSW Government in response to calls from water users for infrastructure to provide water savings and ensure sustainable use of Basin resources.

“Water users will be provided with real-time data of their water usage, improved delivery on demand and benefit from a share of the 4 billion litres of water saved and returned to water users each year.

“Water meters cost on average between \$6,000 and \$40,000 – under the scheme the government will install these at no cost to water users.

“State-of-the-art meters, including electromagnetic flow meters, will be installed to provide accurate, immediate water usage readings to a website via telemetry.”

State Water Corporation and the NSW Office of Water will carry out the Murray Pilot Project, involving site visits to landowners in the project area.

The pilot area extends from Tooma along the Murray River down to Torrumbarry Weir near Echuca.

Water licence holders involved in the pilot project and NSW Metering Scheme will be required to contribute to the ongoing meter maintenance costs through their water invoice.

For further information on the NSW Metering Scheme – Murray Pilot Project, visit the website www.statewater.com.au/meteringproject contact State Water on 1300 662 077 or email feedback@statewater.com.au.

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