

# NSW SUSTAINING THE BASIN *Irrigated farm modernisation*

## Update bulletin 16

May 2014

This bulletin provides updates on the NSW Sustaining the Basin: Irrigated Farm Modernisation (STBIFM) project. This project is funded by the Australian Government's 'Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure' Program.

The bulletin will keep interested stakeholders informed of key dates and activities for the duration of the project. It will also alert you to opportunities for training and learning more about emerging issues and technologies.

DPI encourages you to be involved and stay informed using this service. You can, of course, unsubscribe at any time.

For more detailed information on any aspects of the project please send an email to [IFM.info@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:IFM.info@dpi.nsw.gov.au) or visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/info/sustainingthebasin](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/info/sustainingthebasin)

### Community meetings kick off

Billed as 'an opportunity not to be missed', the rollout of Round 3 of STBIFM is under way.

Focusing on the NSW Border Rivers and Lower Namoi regions, DPI recently kicked off a series of meetings beginning in Goondiwindi to discuss the program and answer questions.

Tim Napier, Executive Officer of Border Rivers Food and Fibre in Goondiwindi said this project provides a good opportunity for our irrigators.

"Irrigators are the real winners with this approach.

"The project enables irrigators to examine on-farm water losses, adopt new infrastructure to recover this water and retain half of what is saved," Mr Napier said.

Michael Grabham, STBIFM Leader, said that over 70 irrigators have taken advantage of STBIFM funding in previous rounds.



Michael Grabham and Tim Napier of Border Rivers Food & Fibre at a recent meeting in Goondiwindi. Image: J Montgomery

"We have very satisfied irrigators who are happy with the results they have achieved in increasing productivity, improving their water security and accelerating their business plans.

"DPI encourages all irrigators to at least consider the opportunities that this program offers and come along to one of the meetings to find out more while there is still funding available," Dr Grabham said.

### Key dates for Round 3

22 April 2014	Round 3 opens
28 April 2014	Community meetings
30 May 2014	Close of ECRs
29 August 2014	Close of IFWUEAs
17 October 2014	Close of Round 3

## Schedule of community meetings

Date	Location	Time	Venue
Tuesday 6 May	Narromine	8.00 am	Narromine United Services Club
Wednesday 7 May	Walgett	11.30am	Council Meeting Room
Wednesday 7 May	Mungindi	5.00 pm	Mungindi Golf Club
Thursday 8 May	Tamworth	1.00 pm	Tamworth Agricultural Institute, Training room
Friday 9 May	Wee Waa	9.00am	Wee Waa Bowling Club



*Andrew Watson of Boggabri couldn't be happier with his new centre pivot funded in Round 2. Image: S. Bray*

Andrew Watson of Boggabri is clear that the "millenium drought" prompted him to investigate options to improve the security of his water supply and reduce the risk involved with his farm business.

STBIFM was a great opportunity to do just that!

"It's a good way to make the high risk, high capital cost changes we required to remain viable as irrigators in this changing environment."

[Read](#) more on Andrew Watson's experience.



*Peter Maxwell of Gunnedah was successful in Round 2 with works that included reconfiguring a storage and installing a new lateral move irrigator. Image: S. Bray*

Peter Maxwell of Gunnedah has grown cotton for 30 years, and knows the value of having enough water on hand to finish crops when rainfall is below average.

Mr Maxwell says that STBIFM has been very important to him.

"We've had all these works earmarked to do for 10 to 15 years but just couldn't ever afford it.

"This funding has enabled us to do it a lot sooner," Mr Maxwell said.

[Read](#) or [watch](#) more on Peter Maxwell's experience.





Stewart Crawford of Narromine was successful in extending his sub-surface drip system. Image: S. Bray

Stewart Crawford of Narromine was successful in receiving funding in both funding rounds of STBIFM while it was on offer in the Macquarie Valley.

“This funding allowed us to undertake good planning and design, to install a low energy use drip system.

“We have previously experienced significant water savings and improve yields on similar country with this system, leading to a better bottom line.

“The funding has been a great initiative that has enabled people to utilise high end irrigation technology that otherwise may have been unattainable,” Mr Crawford said.

[Watch](#) more on Stewart Crawford’s experience.

## What is now on offer?

In Round 3 STBIFM will offer:

- Up to 80% of the cost to a maximum of \$2000 to undertake an [IFWUEA](#). This is now a **pre-requisite** before applying for infrastructure funding.
- Up to 80% of the total costs of [modernising on-farm irrigation infrastructure](#) in return for at least 50% (up to a maximum of 100%) of the projected water savings to be returned to the environment.
- [Fully subsidised training](#) and capacity building opportunities



Stephen Miller of Tamworth is very happy with the funding he received in Round 1. Image: S. Bray

Stephen Miller from Tamworth previously used hand shift pipes on his property.

With the assistance of the STBIFM funding he now presses the button on his new centre pivot system to get his irrigation underway.

Mr Miller said it’s been a real blessing.

“It has given us surety that we can go and buy cattle and know that we can grow a crop, efficiently and quickly to feed them.

“We wouldn’t have been able to finance this work on our own.

“It has definitely added longevity to my farming life and I’d encourage anyone to do it,” Mr Miller said.

[Watch](#) more on Stephen Millers experience.

## How can I participate in STBIFM?

Interested irrigators are required to submit an [Eligibility Check Request](#) by **30 May 2014** to register their interest in participating in Round 3.

For more information on the upcoming meetings and all aspects of participating in STBIFM, including submitting a re-bid application, please contact your DPI regional project staff member, send an email to [IFM.Info@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:IFM.Info@dpi.nsw.gov.au) or visit the website at [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/info/sustainingthebasin](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/info/sustainingthebasin)



**Ms Janelle Montgomery**  
Irrigation Officer, MOREE  
Phone: (02) 6750 6476

(Rep for Border Rivers  
and Gwydir Valleys)



**Mr Bill Williamson**  
STBIFM Project Officer,  
DUBBO

Phone: (02) 6881 1270

(Rep for Macquarie Valley  
& Lower Namoi)



**Mr Peter Smith**  
Irrigation Development  
Officer, TAMWORTH  
Phone: (02) 6763 1262

(Rep for Namoi/Peel  
Valley)



**Mr Edward Joshua**  
Irrigation Development  
Officer, DUBBO  
Phone: (02) 6881 1270

(Rep for Macquarie  
Valley)



**Mr Stuart Bray**  
Project Officer,  
GUNNEDAH  
Phone: (02) 6741 8333

(Rep for Namoi/Peel,  
Border Rivers and Gwydir  
Valley's)



**Dr Michael Grabham**  
Leader, STBIFM,  
ORANGE

Phone: (02) 6391 3500



## Changes to Irrigated Farm Water Use Efficiency Assessments (IFWUEAs)

The role and process of IFWUEAs has changed for Round 3.

An IFWUEA is now a **prerequisite** to applying for infrastructure funding. The IFWUEA will be used by DPI during the assessment of any future infrastructure funding applications submitted to the program.

The scope of the IFWUEAs has been reduced to a quantification of on-farm water losses only. 80% of the costs associated with preparing the IFWUEA are still covered up to a maximum \$2000 per farm business (ABN). This reduction in the level of funding reflects the reduction in the IFWUEA scope.

An [example of an IFWUEA](#) report is available on the STBIFM website.

All **new** eligible irrigators will be provided with the necessary information to proceed with the preparation of their IFWUEA when they are notified of eligibility.

This will include information on engaging a

[suitable Irrigation Consultant](#) for the preparation and/or certification of their IFWUEA.

The certified IFWUEA report must be returned to DPI within three months of the date of notification of eligibility.

Existing participants who remain eligible for Round 3 must also submit a certified IFWUEA before submitting any future infrastructure applications.

All previously funded IFWUEAs will be accepted by DPI for Round 3.

Contact your local STBIFM contact for more information on all aspects of IFWUEAs.

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