



NSW SUSTAINING THE BASIN *Border Rivers-Gwydir*

An irrigation modernisation initiative for New South Wales

December 2009

NSW Sustaining the Basin: Border Rivers-Gwydir (STBBRG) is an irrigation modernisation program of Industry and Investment NSW (I&I NSW) funded by the Australian Government's **Water for the Future** initiative.

Industry and Investment NSW (formally NSW Department of Primary Industries) will be the lead agency with administrative and operational support provided by Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority.

STBBRG is the first activity to be funded under the \$300 M Australian Government's commitment towards the NSW Farm Modernisation Program under the NSW Priority Project.

STBBRG provides an opportunity for NSW Border Rivers and Gwydir Valley irrigators to upgrade irrigation infrastructure, improve productivity, adapt to reduced water availability and ensure the long term sustainability of local communities.

STBBRG aims to achieve water savings by improving on-farm water use efficiency (WUE), to reduce the direct extraction of water from the Border Rivers and Gwydir regulated river water sources and return 50 percent of the projected savings to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder.

Capacity building and a skills development program will complement the provision of funds for infrastructure. I&I NSW will provide irrigation training and demonstrate new irrigation technologies.

Importantly STBBRG will capture the irrigation industry's responsiveness to irrigation modernisation-based water recovery programs and assist in determining future projects in other NSW irrigation valleys.



Funding Opportunities

STBBRG will invest in on-farm infrastructure projects that aim to achieve water savings and improvements in WUE. Up to 80 percent of the project costs will be funded in exchange for 50 percent of the projected water savings in equivalent water entitlements. The remaining water savings will stay with irrigators to boost farm productivity and regional economic activity.

Irrigators will need to prepare a tender application outlining the proposed on-farm project and projected water savings.

STBBRG will provide funding for irrigation farm WUE assessments to determine the best options to improve water management. NSW Border Rivers and Gwydir Valley irrigators can engage irrigation consultants to assist in developing their on-farm projects and tender application. Irrigators will be reimbursed 80 percent of the cost of engaging an irrigation consultant up to a maximum of \$6000 per farm.



STBRRG will assist irrigators to undertake on-farm improvements such as, but not limited to:

- Installation of overhead irrigation systems
- Installation of drip irrigation systems
- Re-designing furrow irrigation systems
- Installation of irrigation scheduling equipment
- Installation of water monitoring equipment
- Re-designing supply and drainage systems
- Re-configuring on-farm storages

Further details of eligible projects are provided in the Eligibility Criteria information sheet.

Who can apply for funding?

Irrigators located in the NSW Border Rivers or Gwydir Valley who currently have a regulated, general or high security river water access licence.

Training Opportunities

Irrigation training is offered in conjunction with the Irrigation Farm Water Use Efficiency Assessment process to further assist the development of the tender application and managing new technology.

Available training includes:

- Water trading and water security
- Soil management
- Irrigation benchmarking
- Irrigation systems selection
- Irrigation systems – general principles
- Centre pivot and lateral move (national training course)
- Surface irrigation performance evaluation
- Drip irrigation
- On-farm storage and distribution systems
- Irrigation scheduling
- Pumps
- Water metering

Contacts

For more information or to register your interest in NSW Sustaining the Basin: Border Rivers-Gwydir, please contact Industry & Investment NSW in Moree on (02) 6750 6300, email gwydir.info@industry.nsw.gov.au or visit the website at www.industry.nsw.gov.au/info/sustainingthebasin

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