
Tasmanian
Irrigation

Greater South East Irrigation Scheme

Andrew Pattle, Project Director



May 2026

Hi everyone,

Planning and design work on the Greater South East Irrigation Scheme (GSEIS) continues to progress, with activity underway across the scheme area as the project moves towards the next stage of development.

Federal and Tasmanian Budgets were both handed down during May, and we have seen re-confirmation of the funding commitment to the GSEIS project: the Australian Government has committed \$150 million, and the Tasmanian Government has committed \$75 million. Remaining capital funding is through irrigator purchase of water entitlements in the GSEIS scheme.

As the project progresses, Tasmanian Irrigation is increasing landowner engagement and will soon undertake a range of environmental studies as part of assessment of the project under State and Commonwealth environmental legislation.

We now have a full project team in place to support this work, including dedicated Landowner Liaison Officers Murray Rutherford, Mel Woolley and Bob Hart. Many landowners may have already spoken with members of the team through recent engagement and field walk-through activities across the scheme area. Murray, Mel and Bob will continue working closely with landowners throughout project planning and delivery, and we encourage landowners to reach out to the team with any questions as work progresses.



GSEIS team (rear) Gordon Williams, Murray Rutherford, Andrew Pattle, David Climie, (front) Tracey Taylor, Mel Woolley, Ayla Richardson, Hugh Abetz, (absent: Bob Hart)

Environmental Assessment and Approvals

You may have seen recent media commentary about the potential impact of water extraction for the GSEIS on the health of the Derwent River.

Tasmanian Irrigation has an in-principle agreement to purchase water from Hydro Tasmania sourced from Lake Meadowbank, upstream of Meadowbank Dam, that will be delivered via underground pipes to irrigators on the Greater South East Irrigation Scheme when commissioned and operational.

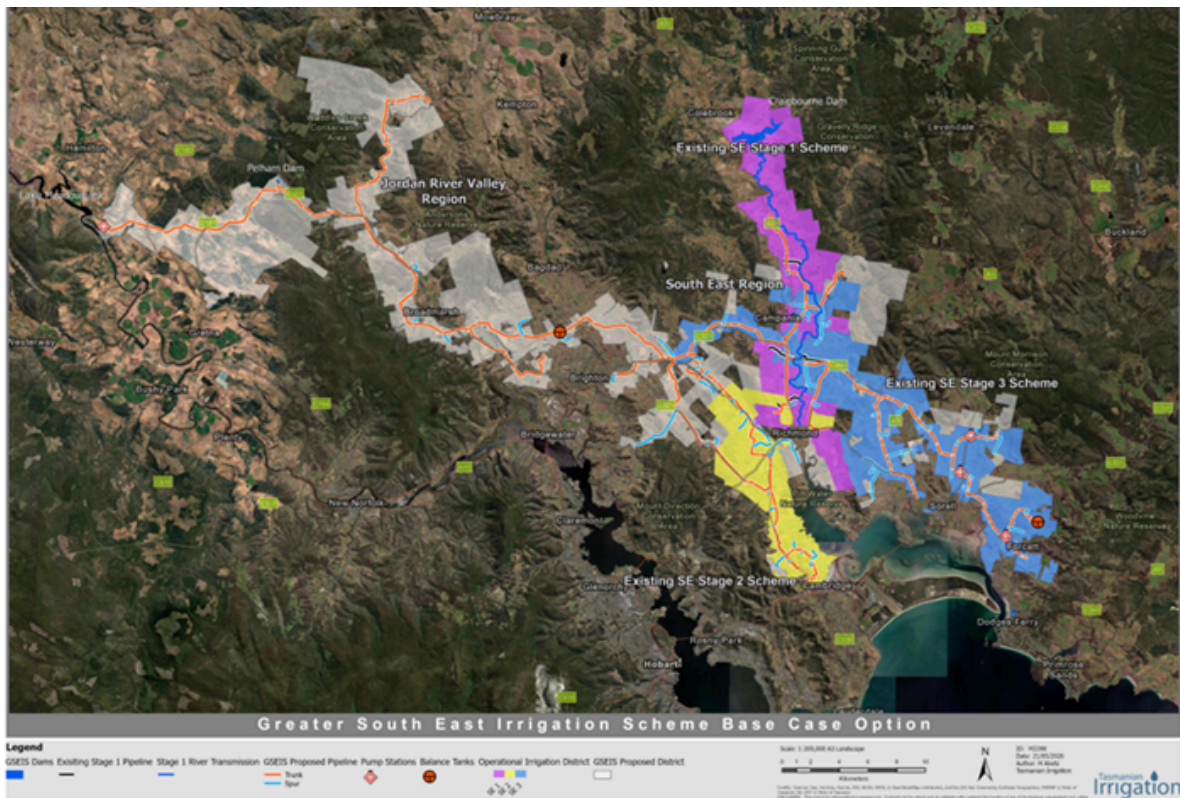
The annual volume for GSEIS irrigation at full capacity is approximately 1.3 per cent of the historic average total annual inflows to Meadowbank Dam. The maximum volume of water the GSEIS will use is 1.1% of total Meadowbank inflows during the winter irrigation season and 1.6% in the summer irrigation season.

Hydro Tasmania has confirmed that the GSEIS, once commissioned, will not affect its ability to meet its existing downstream summer and winter flow commitments in the Derwent River.

As the project progresses, the GSEIS will undergo formal assessment under both State and Commonwealth environmental legislation, including assessment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, which includes a public consultation process.

Tasmanian Irrigation has met with environmental stakeholders to listen to their concerns, and will continue to remain engaged with environmental and other stakeholders of the project.

[Read Tasmanian Irrigation's Media release.](#)



The GSEIS project will undergo rigorous assessment under both State and Commonwealth legislation.

Meet Gordon Williams
- Environmental Manager, Projects

Gordon Williams recently joined Tasmanian Irrigation as Environmental Manager – Projects and will lead environmental and planning approvals activities for the GSEIS, including assessment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Gordon brings more than 25 years experience working as an environmental professional across major infrastructure, construction and resource projects in Australia, the UK and internationally.

" My focus is on ensuring environmental approvals are practical, robust and support strong, defensible outcomes"



Gordon Williams, Environmental Manager-Projects, will lead environmental and planning approvals activities for scheme.

Groundwork Underway for GSEIS Pump Station

Recent geotechnical investigations have been undertaken at the proposed pump station site on the shore of Lake Meadowbank, marking an important step with progressing the scheme's design. Initial test pitting activities have now been completed, with drilling works scheduled to commence in June. Together, these investigations are focused on building a detailed understanding of the underlying ground conditions at the site.

The information gathered will play a critical role in informing the engineering design of the pump station, particularly the foundation requirements. By confirming soil and rock characteristics, the project team can determine the most appropriate and efficient foundation approach, helping to manage construction risk and ensure long-term access to water while fitting within the natural landscape.

Once operational, the pump station will lift water to the top of the Pelham Tier, where it will be distributed across the scheme to support irrigators. With a capacity of up to 12 megawatts, the station represents a significant piece of infrastructure that will underpin reliable water delivery across the network.



Test pitting on the shore of Lake Meadowbank.

Landholder Surveys Underway Across Scheme Area

Environmental, heritage and engineering survey work will continue across selected areas of the proposed GSEIS pipeline route during June, helping inform ongoing planning and detailed design activities.

Tasmanian Irrigation's stakeholder liaison team, including Mel Woolley, Bob Hart and Murray Rutherford, will be out across the scheme area coordinating access and working directly with landowners as these activities progress.

The surveys will support environmental and cultural heritage assessments, as well as engineering investigations to better understand land conditions and identify practical pipeline alignments in consultation with landowners.

Tasmanian Irrigation is currently contacting affected landowners to arrange access for survey activities. Access will be limited to light vehicles and foot access only, with no ground disturbance occurring as part of the works.

Landholders are encouraged to speak with the project team about any property considerations, including livestock movements, cropping activities or access requirements, so activities can be planned appropriately and disruption minimised.



Project Fast Facts

Capital cost	\$301 million
Scheme capacity	37,200 megalitres
Number of irrigators	375
Km of pipeline	160
Pump stations	4
Estimated no. jobs created during construction	225
Estimated no. ongoing jobs created	468
Estimated total net economic benefit to Tasmania	\$291 million
Estimated construction commencement	2028
Estimated first water	Mid 2030

The GSEIS is funded by the Australian Government (\$150 million), the Tasmanian Government (\$75 million) and irrigators through the purchase of water entitlements (\$75 million).

Key Project Contacts

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Landowner Contacts

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The Greater South East Irrigation Scheme project is jointly funded by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments, and delivered in partnership with Tasmanian Irrigation. Australian Government funding is provided through the National Water Grid Fund.

