

Tasmanian
Irrigation

Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme Augmentation

John Wright, Project Manager



August 2026

Hi everyone,

Over 30 km of SWISA pipeline is now in the ground out of a total pipeline length of 102km. Recent wet weather has slowed construction; however, four pipelaying crews continue to work across the Sassafras, Trunk, Moriarty and Delivery lines where conditions allow. We are working closely with the contractor to ensure strong focus on good outcomes in safety, environment, schedule, quality and rehabilitation of the land.

Environmental and planning activities are continuing to support construction progress. Ecologists are working ahead of pipelaying, relocating Green and Gold Frogs and surveying for Burrowing Crayfish before works progress through environmentally sensitive areas.

Arborists are also working ahead of construction, assessing trees along the pipeline alignment and supporting minor alignment adjustments where required to minimise impacts.

Works on the access track to the Saggars Hill balance tank are continuing, as well as refurbishment of the Great Bend Pump Station, with new power poles installed and all redundant equipment removed.

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding data centre development in Tasmania and the potential for Tasmanian Irrigation to supply water to those centres. Tasmanian Irrigation has given no undertaking to Firmus. Our legislative framework is set up to enable the supply of water for agriculture and for hydrogen production. Any application for water from industries outside of this would require consideration by the Tasmanian Government and engagement with the community, including our customers.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Nathan Richardson as Chair of the Irrigator Reference Committee (IRC). Nathan has been a member of the IRC since its inception and



Over 30km of pipe is now in the ground on SWISA

Message from Irrigation Reference Committee (IRC) Chair, Nathan Richardson

Members of your IRC have met with Tasmanian Irrigation at a pipeline construction site in Sassafras, and at an all-IRC Chairs meeting in Campbell Town in May and in July at Wesley Vale.

We hope to have regular site visits during the build to ensure there is a good understanding of local issues, bring forward any concerns or questions, and see first-hand the incredible system being built in our district that will benefit us for decades.



Nathan Richardson is the Chair of the IRC (Photo: AUSVEG)

is trust that the systems and policies are in place to see this project progress safely and on time. It is a complex build with many State and Federal regulations to meet. We will continue to work with Tasmanian Irrigation to seek answers and the best outcomes for irrigators.

It is also pleasing to see several irrigators interested in becoming involved with the IRC. Along with many other matters, we are working with Tasmanian Irrigation on how to make this happen.

With the support of the members of the IRC, I have recently stepped into the role of Chair which was ratified at our recent IRC meeting. Several of us have been involved since day one, and we've all learnt a great deal through everyone's participation and dedication.

This is an important time in our scheme's history. Your IRC has a strong commitment to working together, sharing the workload and representing the interests of farmers and irrigators across SWISA.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have a question or would like to discuss an issue (see my contact details at the end of the newsletter).

Finally, I wish you every success in preparing for next season.

FarmX Conference and Expo

SWISA Project Manager John Wright will be at FarmX 2026 at the Deloraine Showground on Thursday, 20 August.

The event, hosted by TasFarmers, provides an opportunity for irrigators to meet the TI team and have your questions answered about irrigation development and operations across Tasmania.

John will walk visitors through the engineering, environmental planning and day-to-day management involved in delivering one of the State's major irrigation projects. Irrigators will also have the opportunity to learn more about the process for the development of their Farm Water Access Plan (WAP) and meet the staff who will work with them to develop their property-specific Farm WAP.



Tasmanian
Irrigation

We deliver the water that cultivates productive farms, vibrant communities and a prosperous Tasmania.

We are looking forward to seeing farmers at FarmX this year.

[Click here for the full story](#)

It's time to think about your Farm Water Access Plan

You may be aware from the water sales period and from previous updates that all land receiving irrigation water from Tasmanian Irrigation must be covered by an approved Farm Water Access Plan (Farm WAP).

From November 2026, the Farm WAP team will begin contacting landholders to begin preparing their Farm WAPs.

Environmental Officer Tracy Richards is one of the staff who will be working alongside landholders throughout the process. With a background in environmental management and agriculture, Tracy understands the important role Farm WAPs play in ensuring sustainable application of irrigation water.



Tracy Richards is one of the Farm WAP team who will be working on SWISA

Each Farm WAP is developed in consultation with the landholder and tailored to their property. It identifies soil, waterway and biodiversity values, maps where Tasmanian

Landholders are encouraged to submit their Farm WAP applications early. An example Farm WAP, application form and further information are available on the Tasmanian Irrigation website and you can also meet two of our Farm WAP team members at FarmX.

[Click here for more information](#)

Safety Starts with a Conversation



James Cassidy, TI Safety Manager, says taking a few minutes to plan the job is one of the best ways to keep people safe.

If you've driven past the SWISA construction works or have crews working on your property, you've probably noticed that work doesn't always begin the moment people arrive on site.

According to Tasmanian Irrigation Safety Manager James Cassidy, that's by design.

"Construction sites are constantly changing," James said.

"Even if you've been on the same site the day before, the people, equipment, weather, ground conditions and work activities may all be different.

"Taking a few minutes to talk through the job before work starts helps everyone understand the risks and the controls that need to be in place. Those conversations are one of the most important parts of the day."

For James, safety isn't about paperwork. It's about making sure everyone understands the job, works together and goes home safely at the end of the day.

Building the Pipeline, Protecting the Environment

When people think about building an irrigation scheme, they often picture excavators, trenches and pipelines stretching across the landscape. What they don't see is the environmental planning and specialist expertise that underpins every stage of construction.

As Tasmanian Irrigation's Environmental Manager – Projects, Gordon Williams is responsible for ensuring environmental considerations are integrated into project delivery from planning through to completion.



*Gordon Williams is one of the environmental experts on
SWISA*

"Good environmental management starts long before the first trench is dug," Gordon said.

"The more we understand about a site upfront, the better equipped we are to plan construction activities that minimise impacts while keeping the project moving."

Along the 102-kilometre SWISA pipeline alignment, environmental specialists are called on to assess and manage a wide range of values. Arborists help protect significant trees, ecologists survey threatened species and sensitive habitats, freshwater specialists assess waterways and crayfish habitat, while specialists monitor threatened bird species, including Tasmania's iconic wedge-tailed eagle, to ensure construction activities avoid sensitive breeding periods.

"We're building infrastructure that will support agriculture for generations, and we have a responsibility to do that while respecting and protecting the environment around us."

[Click here for the full story](#)

Project Fast Facts

Subscribe	Past Issues		\$124.2 million	Translate ▼
		Augmentation capacity	9,200 megalitres	
		Total final scheme capacity	14,860 megalitres	
		Number of irrigators	94	
		Kms of pipeline	More than 100	
		Pump stations	2	
		Estimated no. jobs created during construction	60	
		Estimated no. ongoing jobs created	210	
		Estimated total net economic benefit to Tasmania	\$113.14 million	
		Estimated first water	2027	

Progress Update

Project stages



Key Project Contacts

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