

Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme Augmentation (SWISA)



The SWISA has a total forecast cost of \$124.2 million and will supply highly reliable water every year to over 90 irrigators.

The project will nearly triple the amount of highly reliable irrigation water available to farmers in the Sassafras, Harford, Thirlstane, Moriarty, Wesley Vale, Northdown, Pardoe and East Devonport areas in North West Tasmania.

The principal primary production focus in the region is vegetable production (potatoes, onions, carrots, brassicas, beans, and peas) and field crops (mostly poppies) with new water enabling growth in high value enterprises such as berries, viticulture, and orchards.

Water Supply and Distribution

The total scheme capacity is 14,860 ML with water delivered over a 150-day irrigation season opening in November and closing in late March.

Approximately 97% of summer water in the scheme has been sold. Winter water sales will also be available in the future.

Infrastructure and Operations

The SWISA includes a pipeline of more than 100 kilometres and two pump stations and a balance tank.

The augmentation will deliver an additional 9,200ML of high-surety irrigation water into the existing 5,660ML of the Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme which commenced operations in 2012.

Construction of SWISA began in January 2026 and the augmentation is expected to be commissioned in October 2027.

Economic Impact

The SWISA will create approximately 60 jobs during the construction phase and about 210 direct and indirect full-time jobs once fully operational.

The Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme Augmentation is jointly funded by the Australian Government (\$62.10 million), through the National Water Grid Fund, Tasmanian Government (\$31.05 million), and Tasmanian irrigators through the purchase of water entitlements on the Scheme (\$31.05 million).



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Scheme map



Fast facts

Capital cost	\$124.2 M
State Government Contribution	\$31.05 M
Federal Government Contribution	\$62.10 M
Irrigator Contribution	\$31.05 M
Number of irrigators	94
Scheme Capacity	14,860 ML
Current water entitlement take up (summer)	97 %
Water entitlement sales price (summer)	\$2,090 / ML
Irrigation season duration	150 days
Length of pipeline (approx)	100 km
Pump stations	2
Balance tank	1

Key dates

Funding approved	Apr 23
EPBC approval	Aug 25
Start of construction	Jan 26
Practical completion	
Pipelines, balance tank and pump stations	Sep 27
Commissioning	Oct 27

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