

Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme (NMIS)

The NMIS has a total forecast cost of \$217.9 million and will supply highly reliable water to approximately 50 irrigators, supporting agricultural activity on 7,000 hectares of farmland.

The NMIS began construction in September 2024 and will enhance irrigation opportunities in the lower Isis Valley and Macquarie River region. The scheme is underpinned by large Hydro Tasmania storages in the central highlands of Tasmania. The NMIS is scheduled to be commissioned to deliver its first water in time for the 2026/27 summer irrigation season. The principal primary production focus in the region is grazing (dairy, beef and sheep) and field crops (cereals, poppies, seed crops, lucerne, potatoes and peas).

Water Supply and Distribution

The scheme has a capacity of 25,500 ML and will deliver water over a 180-day irrigation season opening in early October and closing in late March. The scheme flow rate is based on 150 days giving irrigators some flexibility with their take.

Infrastructure and Operations

The NMIS will be the largest irrigation scheme in the state in terms of its capital value and summer capacity, including a pipeline of 152.4 km, one pump station, two boost pump stations, and one buffer dam. As at May 2025, 61km of pipeline has been installed, the buffer dam is 60% complete and works have commenced on the foundations of the pump stations and balance tanks.

Economic Impact

The NMIS will create approximately 150 jobs during the construction phase and about 450 jobs post-completion in the region.

The scheme will deliver \$184 million in increased farming revenue and an ongoing \$54 million annual boost to the Tasmanian economy.



The Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme is jointly funded by the Australian Government (\$108.98 million), through the National Water Grid Fund, Tasmanian Government (\$72.26 million), and Tasmanian irrigators through the purchase of water entitlements on the Scheme (\$36.72 million). The project is being constructed by Tasmanian Irrigation.

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Scheme Map



Fast facts

Capital cost	\$218 million
State Government Contribution	\$72.3 M
Federal Government Contribution	\$109 M
Number of irrigators	50
Landowners impacted by construction	60
Scheme capacity	25,500 megalitres
Current water entitlement take up	93% - 23,720 ML
Water entitlement sales price	\$1440 / ML
Irrigation season duration	180 days (flow rate based on 150 days)
Length of pipeline	152.4 km
Pump stations	3
Balance tank	1
Buffer dam	1

Key dates

Funding approved	June 23
EPBC approval	July 24
Start of construction	Aug 24
Practical completion	
Poatina buffer dam	Sep 25
Pipelines, Pump Stations, Balance Tanks	Sep 26
Commissioning	Dec 26

Get in Touch:

Phone: (03) 6398-8433

Email: enquiries@tasirrigation.com.au

www.tasmanianirrigation.com.au