



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Minister for Climate Change and Water

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RUDD GOVERNMENT PROVIDES \$3.2 MILLION FOR NEW SOUTH WALES WATER PROJECTS

The Rudd Government today announced \$3.2 million in funding towards a range of projects in New South Wales to reduce community and agricultural reliance on groundwater.

“These projects will help secure the future of local communities in the face of increasing water shortages due to drought and climate change,” Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, said.

“This investment is part of the Rudd Government’s \$12.9 billion *Water for the Future* plan, which aims to secure our water supplies, use water wisely, tackle climate change, and support healthy rivers.”

Under a joint funding arrangement with the New South Wales Government, projects to be funded include:

- \$2.1 million for the Liverpool Plains Shire to find alternative water supplies for the town of Quirindi and reduce its reliance on overdrawn groundwater systems
- \$1.3 million for the Namoi Catchment Management Authority for two projects: a water use efficiency program for groundwater irrigators, and a hydrological investigation of Gins Leap Gap
- \$615,000 for the Gwydir Valley Irrigators Association to investigate and invest in horticultural alternatives for cotton growers
- \$150,000 for the Murray Regional Development Board for farmer-driven irrigation research and extension
- \$200,000 for a stormwater and effluent re-use system to reduce the Tocumwal Golf Club’s demand on river and groundwater resources.

The projects have been funded through the community development component of the New South Wales *Achieving Sustainable Groundwater Entitlements* project. New South Wales will provide \$1.2 million to support these projects.

The previous Federal government, which entered into an agreement with the New South Wales Government for this fund, did not approve any funding applications during its term of office. Proposals inconsistent with the aims of *Water for the Future* funding have not been approved.

The Rudd Government is providing up to \$80 million to the *Achieving Sustainable Groundwater Entitlements* project. The majority of the funding is for financial assistance provided directly to irrigators affected by reductions in groundwater entitlements.

“These projects are in addition to Rudd Government funding commitments of up to \$1.35 billion to New South Wales for new priority water projects in the Murray-Darling Basin. This is a substantial injection of funds to support more efficient and sustainable irrigation, and assist irrigation communities to adjust to a future with less water,” Senator Wong said.

Additional information on the funded projects is attached.

Joint Commonwealth and New South Wales funding for *Achieving Sustainable Groundwater Entitlements* projects

Recipient	Description	Funding
Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Funding to provide a partial alternative water supply to Quirindi to replace existing groundwater use.	\$2.1 million
Namoi Catchment Management Authority	Funding for a water use efficiency program for groundwater irrigators.	\$900,000
Namoi Catchment Management Authority	Funding for a hydrological investigation of Gins Leap Gap to increase knowledge of groundwater recharge and discharge in the region.	\$400,000
Gwydir Valley Irrigators Association	Funding to investigate and invest in horticultural alternatives for cotton growers in the Lower Gwydir region.	\$615,000
Murray Regional Development Board	Funding for farmer-driven irrigation research and extension at Murray Valley Field Station.	\$150,000
Berrigan Shire Council	Funding for a stormwater and effluent re-use system to provide the Tocumwal Golf Club with an alternative water source and reduce the demand on river and groundwater resources.	\$200,000
Total		\$4.365 million