

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Working together to help those in need

Griffith farmer, Tony Sergi, has spearheaded a group of fellow MIA irrigators who are donating water to drought affected communities in Far West NSW.

Mr Sergi, who is also a Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) board member, came up with the concept in October last year after hearing stories of the devastation the drought was causing across the state.

Farrer MP Sussan Ley liaised with Regional Development Australia and WaterNSW to find out the areas needing water the most, and the 28 megalitres donated to the cause will soon be delivered to these areas. MI are playing their part, waiving all charges associated with transferring the water.

“It is pleasing to see that the concept is now coming to fruition and we are able to help those in desperate need of this water,” Mr Sergi said.

“Of all the people I called to participate, not one refused, not one.”

“Many of our farmers in the MIA are dealing with the challenge of low water allocations, but realise it is even tougher out west,” he added.

“We need to help our fellow farmers.”

Mr Sergi thanked all the generous donors from across Griffith, Leeton and further afield.

“People have called me from as far away as Newcastle and Victoria to offer their support,” he said.

“I would also like to make special mention of Peter Cremasco who has been fantastic in helping to promote this initiative across the region.”

MI Senior Customer Services Officer, Belynda Henderson, has been working together with Mr Sergi, and the rest of the donors, to move all the individual irrigator donations into the one holding account.

“Putting them into the one account makes the transfer process a lot easier,” she explained.

“We then worked with WaterNSW to trade the water from our Murrumbidgee Irrigation Bulk Water Licence to an Essential Water Licence in Broken Hill.”

The project is being coordinated on the ground by Regional Development Australia, Far West NSW, in conjunction with Department of Primary Industries Water and State and Federal Government Drought staff, with the water going to families around Tibooburra, Milparinka and Silverton.

*Photo: MI Senior Customer Services Officer, Belynda Henderson and local irrigator Tony Sergi worked together to ensure donated water reached drought affected communities in Far West NSW.*