

SOLAR PROJECT TO DELIVER SAVINGS TO TASMANIAN IRRIGATORS

A new solar project that will deliver direct savings to farmers and strengthen the sustainability credentials of Tasmania's agricultural sector is now underway.

Tasmanian Irrigation's exciting new renewable energy initiative – the Energy on Farms Solar Project – involves the installation of solar arrays at up to 13 Tasmanian Irrigation pump station sites around the State.

The solar installations will offset electricity usage and generate surplus power to be fed back into the grid.

Tasmanian Irrigation is working with landowners to accommodate the installation of solar arrays at existing pump stations at Smithton, South Riana, Shannon River, Bothwell, Hollow Tree, Stoneycroft, Liffey, Cottons Bridge, Milford and Sprent.

Tasmanian Irrigation Chief Executive Officer Andrew Kneebone sincerely thanked the Tasmanian Government for its \$2.5 million commitment to the Energy on Farms Solar Project.

"Farmers may on average save up to \$5 per megalitre as we utilise the sun's rays to power up to 13 of our irrigation pump stations," Mr Kneebone said.

"This is great news for Tasmanian farmers and another example of Tasmanian Irrigation's commitment to delivering high-surety irrigation water as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

"Construction is on track to commence in December 2022, with the project expected to be completed by December 2023.

"Tasmanian Irrigation also thanks landowners for their cooperation as we access existing pump stations to work on these important upgrades."

The Tasmanian Government has allocated a total of \$5.5 million to three Energy on Farms Projects to increase the use of renewable and energy efficient technologies.

As well as the solar array installations, the funding will be utilised to refurbish the Meander Mini Hydro Power Station and install more energy-efficient motors at existing pump stations across the State.

Mr Kneebone said the new pump motors will replace existing motors to reduce energy consumption, and are expected to save approximately \$1 to \$2 per megalitre.

"Tasmanian Irrigation now manages 18 operational irrigation schemes and is well advanced with the planning on a further six irrigation projects, including the Don Irrigation Scheme that is already under construction," Mr Kneebone said.

"There is no doubt that this irrigation water is giving Tasmanian farmers the confidence to invest, expand, diversify and intensify, resulting in more jobs and economic growth for our State."