

The renewed Surface Water Management Program in the Shepparton Irrigation Region

June 2019

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) is currently funding a renewed Surface Water Management Program (SWMP) in the Shepparton Irrigation Region (SIR). The SWMP, which extends until June 2020, is implementing recommendations from the 2015 SIR Drainage Strategy.

State Government funding for the current SWMP, in excess of \$10 million over four years, is the result of continued community support for drainage works in the SIR and recognises the continued risk to agricultural land, environmental values and infrastructure from inadequate drainage (pictured).



The updated SIR Drainage Strategy (the Strategy) proposes a new approach to managing rainfall-driven waterlogging and drainage issues in priority irrigated sub-catchments, as well improving on-farm management of irrigation run-off.

Effective drainage infrastructure helps to protect productive agricultural land from waterlogging and salinity impacts, maintains and enhances environmental values in the landscape and protects civil assets including roads.

The Strategy identifies a revised area of 103,373 hectares of irrigated land requiring improved drainage in the SIR.

This is reduced considerably from the previous SIR drainage strategy (229,000 hectares), yet the cost of works is still estimated to be over \$60 million.

This means that the renewed SWMP is prioritising where the limited funding for new Surface Water



Irrigation Areas in the Shepparton Irrigation Region

Management Schemes (SWMS) can provide the best outcomes.

The renewed SWMP is being delivered in three complementary sub-programs:

1. Priority Construction Projects
2. Hybrid SWMSs
3. On-Farm Drainage Options

A key part of the Strategy is the 'Hybrid SWMS' concept, which aims to improve natural drainage by implementing Drainage Course Declarations (DCDs) under Victoria's Water Act. DCDs allow artificial obstructions to water flow to be removed, and link fragmented drainage lines.

Further information on the renewed SWMP, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is available on the Goulburn Broken CMA website.

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