



Shepparton Irrigation Region Catchment Strategy

Sub-surface Drainage Program Research and Investigation Strategic Plan Newsletter

**Achievements
2005/06**




Purpose

The purpose of this newsletter is to present the key outcomes from the Shepparton Irrigation Region Catchment Strategy (SIRCS) Sub-surface Drainage Program (SSDP) Research and Investigation Strategic Plan for 2005/06.



Background

In 2003, following extensive stakeholder consultation, a five year SSDP Research and Investigation Strategic Plan was developed. This Plan consisted of 42 individual projects, and also included a management and reporting framework. By 30 June 2006, the original list of 42 individual projects had expanded to 53 with the inclusion of some key emerging issues.



2005/06 was the third year of implementation of the SSDP Research and Investigation Strategic Plan.

Plan Delivery

The development of the SSDP Research and Investigation Strategic Plan is the responsibility of Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) with projects being managed by G-MW and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and supported by specialist consultants. Key outcomes from the projects delivered this year are outlined in this newsletter.

Overview of Plan Outputs

- 28 projects were progressed over the 2005/06 financial year
- Three projects were completed
- One sub-project was completed
- Nine additional new projects were initiated during the year
- Two additional new issues were identified and assessed as sufficiently important to warrant inclusion in the SSDP Research and Investigation Strategic Plan
- 12 Project Plans were completed

Project Achievements 2005/06

- Assessing the impact of future climatic, social, political, market and financial uncertainties (i.e. Irrigation Future Scenarios) on the SSDP as part of the Goulburn Broken Irrigation Futures Project
- Supporting the G-MW system reconfiguration process by providing input to the SSD components of the G-MW risk atlas
- Completing a Social Assessment of the impact of the SSDP which indicated a high level of social gain is attributable to the SSDP
- Developing a SSDP information system that captures the corporate knowledge relating to the operational components of the SSDP to ensure consistent information on the program is readily available
- Establishing a Steering Committee to focus specifically on the 16 salt related projects which are essential to the future soundness of the SSDP

Financial Progress 2005/06

The total expenditure for the SSDP Research and Investigation Strategic Plan in 2005/06, (including DPI and G-MW expenditure) was approximately \$1.6 M.

Looking forward

The SSDP Research and Investigation Strategic Plan addresses key issues that may impact on the subsurface drainage aspects of the SIRCS. This work plays a vital role in maintaining the effectiveness of the subsurface drainage components of the catchment strategy.

A review of the Research and Investigation Strategic Plan is currently being undertaken. This review has identified over 250 issues which could be addressed and is expected to result in about 50 potential projects.

During 2006/07, new projects from the review will be blended into the current program to ensure key emerging issues are addressed in a timely manner.

Conclusion

The SSDP Research and Investigation Strategic Plan needs to remain adaptable to changing circumstances and ensure that expenditure goes to high priority projects.

The SSDP will continue to embrace a long-term, integrated, forward looking, strategic planning process that is innovative, is based on sound science and continues to improve community awareness of salt management issues and strategies at a community level by promoting sustainable management in the region.

For more information on the Sub-surface Drainage Program Research and Investigation Strategic Plan contact:

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