



Media Release

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IRRIGATORS IN THEODORE and EMERALD TO DECIDE THEIR FUTURE

Irrigators in Theodore and Emerald will hold meetings this week to decide if they support a proposal to own and manage the channel schemes, currently owned by SunWater.

The schemes in Theodore and Emerald are two of eight Queensland channel schemes that the government is considering for Local Management Arrangements (LMA). In June last year the Minister for Energy and Water Supply, Mr Mark McArdle, appointed chairs to interim boards in each area to investigate if the irrigation assets could be more efficiently run by irrigators.

Following the most intensive engineering due diligence of the channel assets ever conducted, the Theodore and Emerald Interim boards will this week seek the support of scheme customers, before submitting their business proposals for government consideration.

Chair of the Theodore Interim Board, Liz Alexander, said the interim board is recommending that irrigators take over the scheme.

“Local management of the scheme by irrigators will ensure that much-needed repair and reconfiguring of the scheme can finally be undertaken,” Ms Alexander said. “We believe that irrigators are best placed to revitalise Queensland’s oldest scheme and turn it into something that pays its way and proudly generates wealth for Theodore and the State.”

Irrigators in Theodore will meet at 6pm at the Theodore Hotel Motel on Tuesday 29 April, while irrigators in Emerald will meet at 9am at the Emerald Town Hall on Friday 2 May.

Chair of the Emerald Interim Board, Annette Smith, said irrigators were weighing up the responsibility of owning the assets against having the ability to control many of the costs.

“The Emerald interim board is in no doubt that an irrigator owned and controlled entity would provide a more certain future for the industry than leaving the assets in the hands of the State,” Ms Smith said.

If customers vote to support their interim board’s bids, they will join irrigators in St George and Eton who supported their areas move to local management earlier this year.

For a summary of each scheme’s proposal and more about the LMA project got to www.lmairrigation.com.au.

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