



Media release

Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy
The Honourable Dr Anthony Lynham

St George locals now in charge of their water

Water management and its allocation for the St George region is now in the hands of those who know it best - St George locals.

Natural Resources Minister Dr Anthony Lynham said following the formal transfer, irrigators in St George now own and manage all water assets down-stream from their key water source - the EJ Beardmore Dam.

“This is an outcome of five years of consultation and work between St George irrigators and the Queensland Government and it means that St George’s irrigators now have full control of their local channel irrigation scheme, including its, pump stations, channels, 112km of pipeline and weir infrastructure,” Dr Lynham said.

“This is the result of St George’s irrigators coming together and voting on the local management of their water supply with local company Mallowa Irrigation formed to manage and run the irrigation scheme.

“The Palaszczuk Government now has transferred ownership and has supplied Mallowa Irrigation with \$5.1 million to operate St George’s irrigation channels.

“Mallowa Irrigation has a board of local irrigators and independent directors all of whom have a direct interest in the region’s water being put to its best possible use,” Dr Lynham said.

Mallowa Irrigation Board Chair Luke Stower said the transfer was the result of St George irrigators voting overwhelmingly in favour of the water scheme’s local management.

“The transfer means our irrigators can now focus on the future of the St George scheme, take responsibility for its ongoing sustainability, determine the level of service required and manage our own costs at a level we can afford. It also provides an opportunity for many of the services previously provided from the Brisbane-based SunWater, to be sourced within the local region,” Mr Stower said.

The scheme comprises 112 kilometres of pipelines and channels between the Balonne River and Buckinbah pump station, has six local employees and distributes water to around 50 customers, irrigating 10,000 hectares of land in the St George region.

SunWater Chief Executive Officer Nicole Hollows said she looked forward to a positive working relationship with Mallowa Irrigation.

“SunWater will continue to manage the St George Bulk Water Supply Scheme – including EJ Beardmore Dam and Jack Taylor Weir– and work closely with our customers to meet their needs.

“We look forward to a positive, collaborative relationship with Mallowa Irrigation and achieving positive outcomes for local irrigators and the St George community.”

Irrigators in Theodore, Emerald and Eton are also negotiating for the transfer of their water assets to local management.

For more on Local Management Arrangements (LMA) for SunWater’s irrigation channels go to www.lmairrigation.com.au (external site) (<http://www.lmairrigation.com.au/>).

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