

Groundwater Assessment

FACT SHEET – January 2025

Groundwater is a valuable water resource supporting activities like irrigation, livestock watering, and town water supply. It also sustains rivers, streams and other groundwater dependent ecosystems.

As demand for groundwater grows, it has become the primary summer water source in some parts of Tasmania and in others it supplements surface water particularly during dry periods when stream flows are low. To ensure certainty of water supply for farmers and landowners and support river baseflows and other ecosystems, it is important that groundwater extraction does not adversely impact on water availability for other water users and the environment.

Key points

- Tasmania's groundwater resources, including availability, quality, and recharge rates, are not well understood because of the state's complex underground water systems.
- The Tasmanian Groundwater Assessment Project aims to enhance our understanding of groundwater use, identify risks and opportunities, and explore how groundwater and surface water are connected. This will support more integrated and sustainable water management.
- The project will support NRE Tas and responsible water managers to make informed groundwater policy and management decisions based on the best available science.
- This project will provide important scientific information that will help us manage our rivers and groundwater systems.

How are we assessing groundwater?

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) is undertaking the Groundwater Assessment Project to gain a better understanding of the State's groundwater resource so we can manage it sustainably.

The first part of the project has developed a Groundwater Risk Assessment Tool (GRAT) which has been designed to be a risk screening tool that can be applied consistently to identify areas for further investigation or inform water management.

The next part of the project will further our knowledge by undertaking a range of studies to:

- better understand the properties of the State's groundwater resource,
- investigate how groundwater and surface water interact together, and
- determine how much groundwater is available and predict how much groundwater is being used.

What are the benefits of the project?

- Better information to identify, assess and manage the risks and opportunities linked to groundwater access and use.
- Enhanced knowledge of Tasmania's groundwater systems, including usage and availability, for more effective water resource management.

Timeline

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- 2022-2024**
- Development of the Groundwater Risk Assessment Tool and Management Framework
 - 3D geological model of the Smithton Syncline area

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- 2024-2026**
- Studies to understand groundwater-surface water interactions
 - Expansion and enhancement of the groundwater monitoring network
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This project is being delivered under Tasmania's Rural Water Use Strategy and is jointly funded by the Tasmanian Government and Australian Government through the National Water Grid Fund.



Australian Government



National Water Grid®



More information

Learn more about this project – www.nre.tas.gov.au/water/water-legislation-policies-and-strategies/rural-water-use-strategy/activities-underway/groundwater-assessment

Read more about the Rural Water Use Strategy – www.nre.tas.gov.au/rural-water



Tasmanian Government