

Rural Water Roundtable

13 November 2023

COMMUNIQUE

Members of the Rural Water Roundtable met on 13 November 2023 as part of their ongoing role to guide the implementation of Tasmania's Rural Water Use Strategy (RWUS). The focus of the meeting was to share highlights from the recent release of the RWUS 2023 Progress Report, identify priority activities for 2024, opportunities for future engagement and hear about recent river health results. Members were also given a presentation on the Catchment Yield Science Update Project and were provided with an update on progress of the new National Water Initiative. Presentations were also provided by NRM North on the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Freshwater Report Card and TasWater on urban water projects.

Highlights of the Rural Water Use Strategy Progress Report

Key achievements from 2022-2023:

- Progressed work to incorporate contemporary climate change projections in water management.
- Developed a new Groundwater Risk Assessment Tool to assess potential economic, social, and environmental risks to our groundwater resources and support groundwater management decisions.
- Reviewed surface water and groundwater monitoring networks managed by NRE Tas to help prioritise future investment in monitoring across the State.
- Identified requirements for updating the State's water licencing and dam permitting system to meet future needs.
- Designed a study to investigate causes of change in river health and commenced the first round of instream river health sampling in four catchments and water quality sampling across the State.
- Reviewed river health and water quality monitoring that is collectively undertaken by Tasmania's key water agencies, which has identified opportunities for collaboration and data sharing.
- Commenced the design of a new, collaborative, statewide water quality monitoring program which incorporates existing monitoring conducted by the State's key water agencies.
- Advanced the review of Tasmania's water accountability framework.

Refer to Rural Water Use Strategy Progress Report 2023 for further details.
<https://nre.tas.gov.au/Documents/Rural%20Water%20Use%20Strategy%20Progress%20Report%202023.pdf>