

Rural Water Roundtable

21 November 2024

COMMUNIQUE

Members of the Rural Water Roundtable met on 21 November 2024 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 2024 Progress Report and identify priority activities for 2025. Members were also given a presentation on the Catchment Yield Science Update Project summarising the steps to update the Department's surface water hydrological models with new climate science. An update was also provided on progress of the new National Water Agreement and development of the Closing the Gap Inland Waters Target.

Highlights of the Rural Water Use Strategy Progress Report

Key achievements from 2023-2024:

- Completed the review of Tasmania's water accountability framework and commenced stakeholder engagement to implement the findings from the review.
- Developed a 3D geological model to better understand the groundwater resource in the Smithton Syncline groundwater area, north-west Tasmania.
- Undertaken a study to better understand groundwater and surface water interactions in the South Esk River/Longford basin area.
- Initiated a new project to undertake groundwater investigations and develop water security strategies for King and Flinders islands to meet community needs.
- Secured \$1.3 million in funding from the Australian Government through the National Water Grid Fund to progress Phase 2 of work to incorporate current climate change projections in water management, including updating our hydrological models.
- Continued to investigate causes of change in river health. NRE Tas has undertaken an additional two rounds of biological sampling at 70 sites and monthly water quality sampling at 50 sites across the State.
- Delivered the *Water Miscellaneous Amendments (Delegation and Industrial Water Supply) Act 2023*.
- Secured \$4.58 million in funding from the Australian Government through the National Water Grid Fund for TasWater to develop a business case for the North West Water Supply Scheme to streamline water supply

Refer to Rural Water Use Strategy Progress Report 2024 for further details.
<https://nre.tas.gov.au/Documents/Rural%20Water%20Use%20Strategy%20Progress%20Report%202024.pdf>