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Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Joan Rylah, Liberal Member for Braddon

Benefits to flow from the Don Irrigation scheme

The Tasmanian majority Liberal Government recognises agriculture is the corner stone of our economy, and that investing in our farming businesses and communities is investing in Tasmania's future.

That is why the State and Commonwealth governments are jointly investing \$170 million to deliver nation leading irrigation infrastructure to support rural and regional Tasmania, creating jobs and expanding farm production to meet the growing demand for Tasmania's premium produce.

Minister for Water, Guy Barnett, said he was proud today to announce the preferred design option for the Don Irrigation Scheme.

"This will deliver up to 5,000 megalitres of irrigation water at 95 per cent reliability to high quality agricultural land in the Don, Barrington and Sheffield areas in the North-West," he said.

"The estimated \$28.5 million project will provide reliable irrigation water that will enable farmers to diversify, value add and expand their existing farming operations, driving the farm gate value of Tasmania's agricultural sector towards the Government's target of \$10 billion a year by 2050."

Minister Barnett said the Don region in Tasmania's North West is renowned for the production of high-quality vegetables, other high-value crops and dairy, and this announcement provides surety, meaning farms are one step closer to diversification and expansion, increasing profitability and creating more regional jobs.

"Once fully operational and the water utilised, the Don Irrigation scheme is expected to deliver 130 direct and indirect jobs," he said.

When completed, the proposed ten irrigation schemes in the Pipeline to Prosperity are expected to provide almost 78,000 megalitres of water, create up to 2,600 full-time jobs, trigger an additional \$150 million in on-farm private investment and inject an estimated \$114 million each year into the sector, and economy more broadly.

The Don Irrigation scheme is the first of 10 Tranche Three irrigation projects to progress through the planning and approvals process.

Liberal member for Braddon, Joan Rylah, said these vital irrigation schemes will provide producers in each district with confidence to invest further in enhancing their existing capacity, currently limited by water reliability.

“A community meeting will be held at the Lower Barrington Hall on 10 March 2020 to inform irrigators of the preferred scheme design,” she said.