

Media Release

Tuesday, 21 June 2022

\$1.1 BILLION FOR A STRONGER NSW WATER FUTURE

The NSW Government will invest \$1.1 billion as part of the 2022-23 NSW Budget to ensure the State has sustainable, secure and healthy water resources both now and into the future.

Minister for Lands and Water Kevin Anderson said the commitment would help to create a more secure water future for New South Wales with funding for the planning and delivery of a raft of major water infrastructure projects, as well as new policies and programs that will better support the community even in the driest times.

“One of our biggest water investments for 2022-23 is \$369.6 million over the next four years for the Safe and Secure Water program, including \$90 million in new funding to expand the program, which co-funds vital water and sewerage infrastructure projects in every corner of regional New South Wales,” Mr Anderson said.

“The new funding comes on top of the \$1 billion the NSW Government has already invested in the program since it started in 2017—supporting 233 projects across country New South Wales, including 23 completed projects that are now benefiting over 300,000 people.

“These projects include new water or wastewater treatment plants in places such as Bourke, Junee and Bundarra, dam safety upgrades at Dumaresq and the new Coonabarabran groundwater pipeline.

“Today’s announcement builds on the success of the program and will allow us to continue to work with councils to support the safe and continuous operation of water and sewage services that their communities rely on.”

The Budget also includes:

- \$255.7 million over four years to deliver five accelerated Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) projects, with funding provided in part by the Commonwealth Government
- \$138.6 million over four years to fund regulatory and compliance activity, including money to investigate suspicious activities and alleged breaches to water regulation in New South Wales and manage dam safety, as well as regulate new non-urban metering and prepare for new floodplain harvesting regulations
- \$102.3 million committed as part of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal final price determinations to be used for water planning and management and rural bulk water services in New South Wales

- \$102 million over two years for the Off-Farm Efficiency Program, including \$70 million for Murrumbidgee Irrigation Limited to improve water delivery infrastructure to create water savings for the environment
- \$82.2 million over three years as part of a joint \$92.5 million investment from the NSW and Commonwealth governments to improve critical water supply infrastructure for the towns of Wilcannia and Cobar, including the new Wilcannia Weir and Nyngan, Hermidale and Cobar pump stations
- \$19.8 million over the next three years to begin implementing the NSW Water Strategy, including:
 - delivering the State’s first Groundwater Strategy
 - a dedicated Aboriginal Water Strategy
 - developing Southern Floodplain Management Plans
- \$14.8 million over two years to modernise and streamline the water licensing and approval systems for water users
- \$8.9 million over four years to maintain assets within the Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme to help minimise flood risk across the Newcastle and Hunter regions

Mr Anderson said the Budget would also help boost household budgets with \$151.6 million set aside to deliver water rebates for low-income households.

“Every dollar counts when you’re on a tight budget, which is why we’re continuing to put money back in the pockets of eligible families via water rebates,” Mr Anderson said.

“We are also rolling out a record investment in regional water infrastructure including funding for the new Wilcannia Weir, pump stations at Nyngan, Hermidale and Cobar, and five accelerated SDLAM projects in the Murray and Murrumbidgee.

“These investments are helping to build an even brighter, more secure and more confident regional New South Wales delivering new jobs and more economic opportunities for locals.

“Water is the lifeblood of our communities, and this Budget is investing in projects, strategies and initiatives that will support secure, sustainable and healthy water resources for decades to come.”

MEDIA: Louise Donnelly | Minister Anderson | 0438 627 163