

Media Release



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Extra water savings go to Northern Victoria irrigators

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) says it is pleased to have been involved in discussions with Victorian Water Minister Lisa Neville who has announced irrigators will receive their share of an additional 2 GL of water recovered from the Connections Project in Northern Victoria.

VFF Water Council Chair Andrew Leahy said the VFF strongly advocated for irrigators to receive their share of the additional water recovered under the project.

“The VFF has been in discussions with Minister Neville over recent weeks regarding the distribution of additional water savings from the Connections Project.”

“An additional 2 GL was found at the final audit of the project beyond the target of 429 GL. The VFF argued strongly that irrigators must receive their share of this additional water.”

“We are pleased Minister Neville has honoured the original intent of the project and that irrigators will receive their third.”

“This project first started in 2007 and it’s a great result to actually over-deliver on the water savings that were achieved,” Mr Leahy said.

Mr Leahy said the VFF would work with the Government to ensure the extra water for irrigators is used in the best way for their benefit.

“We understand that it is too difficult to distribute 681 megalitres across 11,000 delivery shares and the VFF is keen to work with Government on how the proceeds will be distributed.”

Mr Leahy also said the VFF would carefully watch the water that Melbourne retailers and the Environmental Water Holder will set aside for Traditional Owners.

“The costs associated with water for Traditional Owners cannot be met by existing entitlement holders,” Mr Leahy said.

“We believe the Commonwealth should acknowledge the Traditional Owners’ 1.36 GL towards Basin Plan water recovery targets.”

“Water for Traditional Owners is an emerging issue and is a complicated issue for the farming community that needs more clarity and transparency. The VFF will continue to work with the Government to ensure irrigator interests are protected,” Mr Leahy concluded.

ENDS

Media Contacts: Ryan Moloney, VFF, 0400 874 589