By supporting a range of industries and businesses, including agriculture, mining and tourism, our regional towns help to contribute billions of dollars to the State’s economy.
To ensure regional towns and businesses continue to thrive, expand and grow, we need to secure regional water supplies and build healthy, sustainable environments.

Watering WA is a new initiative to support liveable, climate resilient regional communities. It will increase the use of non-drinking water for country towns and farms and improve the health of waterways in the Avon.

The $30 million State Government initiative, led by the Department of Water and made possible by Royalties for Regions, will create the actions and infrastructure needed for farms and towns to expand the use of non-drinking water.

With on-ground works, local partnerships and the clean-up of local waterways, Watering WA will enable regional communities to continue to be attractive places in which to live, work, holiday and invest.

Regiona communities are a central part of Western Australia’s identity and economy.

Watering WA accelerates the work of the highly successful State Government Rural Water Plan, which has helped secure water supplies for regional farms and towns for the past 20 years.

It is the State’s biggest ever investment in regional community non-drinking water projects.
Five central strategies

Built on local knowledge and experience, Watering WA will provide regional grants and support partnerships between state government agencies, local government, Regional Development Commissions, natural resource management groups, community groups and Aboriginal communities. Together, these groups will deliver on-ground works, infrastructure development and environmental restoration.

**Harvest storm water**
Collect and store water from natural runoff areas and infrastructure such as buildings and roads.

**Store water**
Construct and restore water storage infrastructure, such as dams and tanks.

**Reuse town wastewater**
Treat and reuse wastewater to irrigate parks, gardens and sporting grounds.

**Build water infrastructure**
Drill bores and install water distribution systems to create efficiency and deliver water where it is needed.

**Rehabilitate Avon waterways**
Improve the health of waterways with on-ground works such as fencing, revegetation, sediment removal and better farm nutrient management.
Watering WA builds on the elements of the State Government’s Rural Water Plan and accelerates these programs through further investment.

Farms and rural businesses
Incorporating:
- Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme
- Farm Water Rebate Scheme
- Pastoral Water Grants Scheme
Improving on-farm water supplies with more secure water options.

Regional waterways
Restoring the health of local waterways.

Regional towns
Incorporating:
- Community Water Supply Program
Increasing the use of local non-drinking water supplies for regional communities and facilities.

The $30 million Watering WA investment made possible by Royalties for Regions, will support towns, farms, rural business and waterways.

Farmers in the dryland agriculture area that have access to scheme water will be able to apply for rebates of up to $20,000 to improve on-farm water sources.

Regional communities, including local government, businesses and community groups will be able to apply for grants of up to $2 million to target on-ground projects that result in significant community benefit.

$4 million will be spent on improving the health of Avon waterways.
**A changing climate**

We need to plan for and manage our water to respond to our changing climate.

Across the south-west of Western Australia, climate change is likely to lead to increased temperatures, declining rainfall and reduced recharge into water systems. In the north, climate variability is increasing, with the potential for droughts to become more intense.

Watering WA is a coordinated and significant investment to address the challenge of decreasing rainfall by improving water security for country towns and farms.

**Reducing scheme water reliance**

Many regional communities rely on valuable, treated scheme water for all their water needs. This water is often pumped hundreds of kilometres from the source of supply.

For many on-farm and community uses, water does not need to be treated to drinking water standards. Making local, non-drinking water sources available will reduce reliance on scheme supplies.

Watering WA will increase the use of local, non-drinking water supplies for livestock, fire-fighting and irrigating parks, gardens and sporting grounds.

This reduces costs to regions and provides greater certainty for communities and farms.

**Unique inland waterways**

Historical land use has led to erosion and increasing levels of nutrients entering waterways. This causes algal blooms, sediment build up and reduced water quality.

Rehabilitating inland Avon waterways will help protect the biodiversity of these ecosystems and increase their appeal and recreational use.

Watering WA will help restore priority waterways in the Avon and apply science for effective long-term management.

**Water is central to the sustainability of our regional areas. Watering WA will help regional communities and farmers respond to a changing climate.**

**Supporting liveable regions**

Watering WA is a holistic approach to addressing the water challenges facing regional communities.

Access to secure reliable, local and economical water sources ensures that our regional communities can water schools, ovals and parks to create healthy and vibrant towns.
The first two years of Watering WA will focus on the dryland areas of the State – those that receive less than 600 mm of rainfall a year – before expanding to the rest of regional Western Australia.

The Avon Basin covers approximately 120,000 km² and is the largest river catchment area in the south-west of Western Australia. These waterways flow into the Swan Estuary.
Rural Water Plan

Watering WA is built on the foundations of the Rural Water Plan, an initiative that has supported water security, planning and efficiency for farmers and regional communities for more than 20 years.

Led by the Department of Water, the plan has significantly improved the management, use and availability of farmland, community and pastoral water supplies.

The Rural Water Plan, built on collaboration, local knowledge and partnerships, has helped to increase water efficiency and self-sufficiency for more than 3900 farmers and supported over 120 town projects throughout the dryland areas of Western Australia.

Watering WA will accelerate the progress made under the plan and continue to support local solutions for regional water challenges.