



WATER FOR FOOD

Southern Forests water futures



The \$3.6 million Southern Forests water futures project targets an additional 12 gigalitres a year of sustainable irrigation water to meet expansion plans of the Warren-Donnelly irrigation district.

Current water constraints need to be addressed to increase the value of horticultural production in the district by 50 per cent over the next 15 years. The water expansion project will work closely with the Southern Forests Food Council which has helped establish a best-practice regime for produce from the region.

The project will assess the viability of new strategic community dams of up to 2 gigalitres each to harvest and store water in high rainfall years and provide a reticulated system to multiple properties.

Agriculture is a key economic driver in the Manjimup-Pemberton area with the sector building momentum through a \$6.8 million grant from the Royalties for Regions SuperTowns program to establish the Southern Forests Food Council whose brief includes agricultural expansion in the Manjimup district.

- Small community dam options
- Additional 12 GL/yr target
- Land options for expansion
- Improving water use efficiency
- Variable take water licensing

Approximately 4000 hectare are used for irrigation in the Warren-Donnelly requiring 33 Gl/yr stored in more than 480 licensed private dams.

The Southern Forests project will assist growers to increase water availability by improving water use efficiency and assess the benefits of adopting the Department of Water's variable-take water licensing trials allowing the on-farm storage of additional water from wetter years.



Advisory group

Providing technical support and operational advice to this project will be the recently established Southern Forests Water Futures Advisory Group

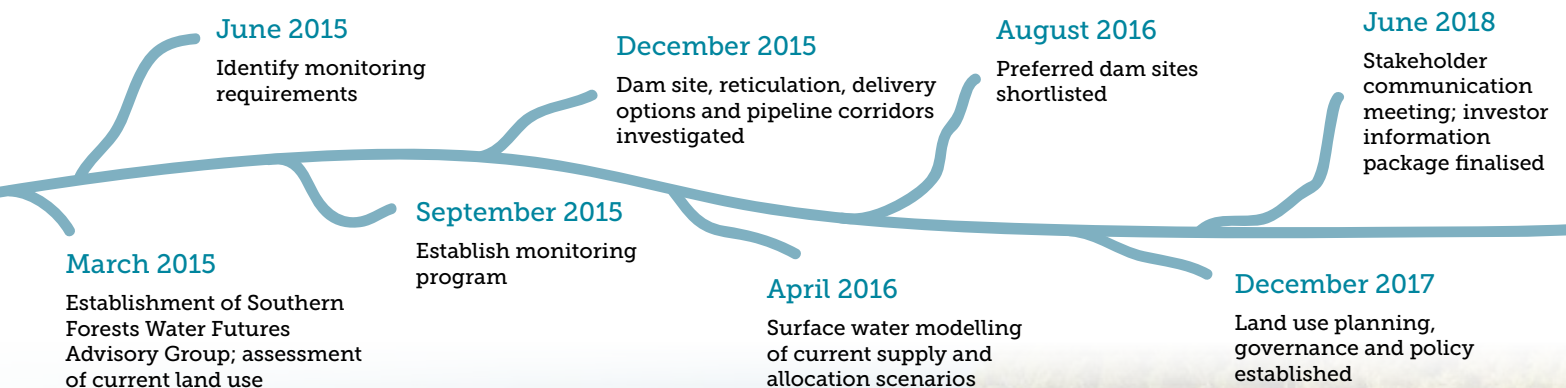
This group will contribute practical advice and guidance on the economic and financial viability around opportunities and issues related to the project.

The terms of reference of this group include advising on technical and operational viability of new dam sites, infrastructure and reticulation options; economic and financial viability of identified options; advising on procedural, policy and legislative reforms and the implementation of appropriate governance arrangements.

Membership of the group includes:

- Local growers representatives
- Southern Forest Food Council
- South West Development Commission
- Shire of Manjimup
- Department of Agriculture and Food
- Department of Water

Proposed Southern Forests timeline



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