



Government
of South Australia

Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Minister for Climate Change and Water

Hon Karlene Maywald
Minister for the River Murray

Hon Paul Caica
Minister for Agriculture, Food and
Fisheries

Media Release

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LOWER LAKES IRRIGATION PIPELINE DELIVERS FIRST WATER

Work on the irrigation pipeline from Jervois to the Langhorne and Currency creek regions has been completed in time to deliver water to irrigators for this 2009-10 irrigation season.

To mark the completion of the pipeline, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, Minister for the River Murray and Minister for Water Security, Karlene Maywald, and Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Paul Caica, visited Angas Vineyards at Langhorne Creek.

There they 'turned on the tap' to witness the delivery of pipeline water to drip-irrigate the vineyard's vines.

The Lower Lakes Pipelines project is a key component of the State Government's *Murray Futures* program. The Australian Government has committed \$610 million towards this program under its *Water for the Future* initiative, including \$120 million towards an integrated set of pipelines to assist communities around the Lower Lakes.

"The pipelines project is now delivering secure potable and irrigation water supplies to local communities that previously needed to draw water directly from the Lower Lakes," Minister Maywald says.

Senator Wong says the new irrigation pipeline will contribute to the long-term viability and sustainability of the irrigation industries and communities around the Lower Lakes.

"In this era of climate change and extended drought, we are facing significant water security and environmental challenges in the Lower Lakes region," Senator Wong says.

"Of the Rudd Government's \$610 million commitment to South Australian priority projects, \$330 million is towards long-term solutions for the Lower Lakes region.

"This pipeline project is an excellent example of what can be achieved when Federal and State governments work together, along with the local community."

Minister Maywald says the *Murray Futures* program positions South Australia to respond to the threats and challenges facing the River Murray in a future of increased climate variability.

“It comprises an integrated package with a range of immediate and longer-term measures to secure the future for river communities in South Australia,” Minister Maywald says.

Construction works on the pipeline began in May this year under the direction of SA Water, and included the construction of three pumping stations and the laying of more than 100 kilometres of pipe. The pipeline draws water from the River Murray near Jervois.

Participating irrigators contributed \$10 million to the cost of the pipeline, which is owned and operated by the Creeks Pipeline Company.

Irrigators accessing the pipeline must have a River Murray licence or lease River Murray water, and are subject to River Murray allocations.

Minister Caica says participating irrigators accessing the pipeline collectively represent some \$950 million of asset value and business activity in the region. This is a very important agricultural region for the economy of this State, including the dairy and wine industries.

“The Pipeline project was “case managed” by my department, Primary Industries and Resources SA, to ensure the best outcome between all stakeholders and their expectations of the pipeline.”

As a result of the Creeks Pipeline Company’s investment, the pipeline will help secure the region’s economic future, he says.

About 250 workers have been engaged in building the pipeline, and towns and businesses have benefited from increased trade as the work has progressed.

Many workers have had to find accommodation in the area, and motels and caravan parks in the region have been heavily booked during the construction process.

In addition to the Lower Lakes Pipelines project, the 10-year \$610 million *Murray Futures* program, funded by the Australian Government also includes:

- **\$200M Lower Lakes & Coorong Recovery** to develop an enduring solution to the environmental problems facing the Lower Lakes and Coorong icon site. This project is supplemented by a further \$10 million in Commonwealth funding for additional bioremediation works to help protect against acidification.
- **\$110M Private Irrigation Infrastructure Program** to improve the efficiency and productivity of irrigation water use and management.

- **\$100M Riverine Recovery** to improve how we manage river wetlands and floodplains from the SA border to Wellington.
- **\$80M Water Buy Back** to purchase water entitlements from willing sellers in South Australia, with water to be held by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder.

For more information on this project visit www.environment.gov.au/water