

## Applications open for Snowy Advance project

Murray Irrigation has today opened applications for participation in its 2016/17 Snowy Advance project to allow farmers time to consider their options while regulatory approval is pending.

Murray Irrigation and Snowy Hydro Limited have agreed on arrangements to make up to 200GL water available as an advance to Murray Irrigation for the 2016/17 irrigation season which must now be reviewed by the appropriate regulatory agencies.

The majority of this volume will be made available to Murray Irrigation shareholders, with the remainder offered to invited corporate partners.

Murray Irrigation Chairman Mark Robertson said the project is positive news for local irrigators and a “good news story” for the entire Murray region.

“The idea behind the project is to increase the productive use of water in our region and support our farmers during low allocation years,” Mr Robertson said.

“This advance will provide our customers with another tool to plan their winter and summer farming programs.

“While recognising the property right of water, Murray Irrigation is committed to maximising the productive use of this additional volume within our footprint.

“A condition of Murray Irrigation shareholders participating in the advance is that the volume exercised is used on-farm (not traded).

“It’s great that we have been able to negotiate the deal with Snowy Hydro to this point to give our farmers time to consider the proposal when making their business decisions.”

Murray Irrigation Chief Executive Officer Michael Renehan said access to the advance will be offered via two avenues.

“If we get the required approvals, the advance will be offered to Murray Irrigation shareholders, as well as invited industry partners who will make volume available to their members for production,” he said.

“We have commenced discussions with corporate entities who represent the interests of food producers in our area of operations including SunRice, Tatura Milk, Murray Goulburn Dairy, Fonterra, Parmalat and Kagome.”

Murray Irrigation has negotiated an option and exercise arrangement whereby participants pay an option fee of \$8 per megalitre for the right to access a nominated volume (limits apply) and a separate one-off exercise fee of \$39 per megalitre if they wish to proceed and have the water delivered to their allocation account.

“Unlike previous ‘borrows’, there will be no roll-over fee or single repayment date associated with this agreement,” Mr Renehan said.

“Murray Irrigation has developed a schedule for repayments with Snowy Hydro commencing when NSW Murray General Security announced allocation reaches 40 percent.

“In the event the full volume is not repaid in the first water year, the repayment trigger will be reset to 40 percent in the second water year when volume repayments will recommence, until such time as the individual’s full volume is repaid. This will happen automatically with no associated or ongoing fees.”

Mr Renehan said irrigators who choose not to participate will not be affected in any way.

“It is not new water. It is an advance, delivered from ‘above target water’ to ensure there is no negative impact on other water holders and those who do not participate in the scheme.”

Murray Irrigation and Snowy Hydro are working with the NSW Department of Primary Industries – Water to ensure the required Government approvals are received.

# Media release



Friday 15 April 2016

However, to ensure customers have adequate time to consider their options for the next water year, Murray Irrigation is calling for applications, contingent on receiving regulatory approvals.

Applications to participate in the 2016/17 Snowy Advance project close at 5.00pm Friday 13 May 2016. Late applications will not be considered.

For full details on the project, or to access an application form, visit the 'Snowy Advance' section of Murray Irrigation's website: [www.murrayirrigation.com.au](http://www.murrayirrigation.com.au), or call reception on T. 1300 138 265.

Ends.

*For more information contact Murray Irrigation CEO Michael Renehan on T. 1300 138 265.*