

Main channel upgrade project to commence

Murray Irrigation is to commence work on the main channel upgrade project this winter to modernise Berrigan Canal infrastructure.

This project is a critical step in Murray Irrigation's modernisation program, and will unlock the full potential of the outlet and regulator upgrades due to be completed later this year.

Signalling the start of Murray Irrigation's Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program (PIIOP) Round 3, the project will substantially extend the life of the infrastructure and improve the efficient and productive use of water throughout Murray Irrigation's system.

Murray Irrigation Chief Executive Officer, Michael Renehan, explained that the Company is preparing for a big 12 months of construction, with the conclusion of PIIOP Round 2 and the commencement of PIIOP Round 3.

"The two projects are complimentary with outlet upgrades leading to better on-farm results for our customers while main channel upgrades, implementing new technology and automation, will give us better control of our system and improved efficiencies while extending the life of key assets," Mr Renehan said.

"The PIIOP round 3 investment also delivers significant economic benefits to the local community during the construction phase through employment, contract and business opportunities.

"The PIIOP projects provide an opportunity to partner with the Australian Government to make transformational improvements to our regional infrastructure, bringing it into the modern age of technology-driven agriculture.

"This investment, on top of funds committed under PIIOP Round 2, will deliver – not only for water users, but for our broader community for many years to come," he said.

Executive Manager, Major Engineering Projects, Warren Jose, said the PIIOP Round 3 project will be completed within three years with the program focusing on one section of main channel at a time, starting with the Berrigan Canal, to limit disturbance to customers.

"Working on the backbone channels, our only opportunity to undertake construction is during the winter shutdown period which means we have a very tight schedule to complete the program and realise the long-term benefits of system optimisation," Mr Jose said.

"We acknowledge the late notice and that the announcement of these works is coming at a critical time for customers as they prepare for the autumn watering program, but we have designed the program to minimise inconvenience and maximise construction efficiency.

Murray Irrigation is advising customers on the Berrigan Main Canal of the closure of the offtake on Monday 1 May to allow drainage, with construction to commence Monday 8 May 2017. To guarantee water delivery, customers in divisions one, two, four, five and six are advised to complete irrigation deliveries prior to Monday 1 May 2017.

Affected Murray Irrigation customers will be updated on progress as construction proceeds, and it is anticipated that there should be normal water delivery access for the commencement of the 2017/18 irrigation season. If Murray Irrigation customers have any queries regarding the upcoming works and end of season arrangements, they can contact Customer Support on T. 1300 138 265.

Murray Irrigation's PIIOP Round 3 project has received approval for funding of up to \$114.8 million from the Australian Government's Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program (PIIOP) in NSW.

Ends.

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