
Drought Relief For Inverloch Basin Dairy Farmers

In times of low rainfall, coming up with innovative ways of using water wisely and working with the community to assist in drought relief measures are front of mind for many in the region.

South Gippsland Water has identified over 100ML of raw water that has accumulated in a disused storage basin near Inverloch, which will be made available to local dairy farmers for on-farm watering.

The Corporation's decision to use the raw water from the disused basin came out of a *Tactics for Dry Times* workshop attended in December 2015. Organised by GippsDairy and Dairy Australia, the gathering of agency staff and local landholders focussed on looking at water availability and reliability options for dairy farmers in the Wonthaggi/Inverloch area.

Philippe du Plessis, Managing Director, South Gippsland Water said "It is important for there to be a collective approach to water use and drought relief across the region, we are keen to be innovative and supportive of the community in these dry times."

Many great ideas came out of the workshop and the use of the raw water at Inverloch is a welcome and exciting opportunity for local dairy farmers.

The water held in the infrastructure at Inverloch, which has not been used for over 15 years, cannot be used as part of the reticulated water supply system as there is no way of transferring it to the water treatment plant in its present state; it is not suitable for human consumption.

South Gippsland Water has agreed to make the water available to drought affected farmers in the area; landholders have agreed to provide infrastructure and machinery to access and transport the water in line with South Gippsland Water's health, safety and environmental compliance requirements.

The raw water will be trucked and pumped from the basin on Pearsalls Road Inverloch by five participating landholders. The local community should be aware that, for a time, this is likely to increase traffic along, and in the vicinity of, Pearsalls Road.

The availability of this water is a welcome but temporary measure providing, in the short-term, access for seven dairy farms to a water source for stock and on-farm use.

Mr du Plessis added, "We encourage all landholders to work closely with their industry bodies and partners in planning for effective and efficient on-farm water use that supports productivity and business outcomes during these dry times."

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