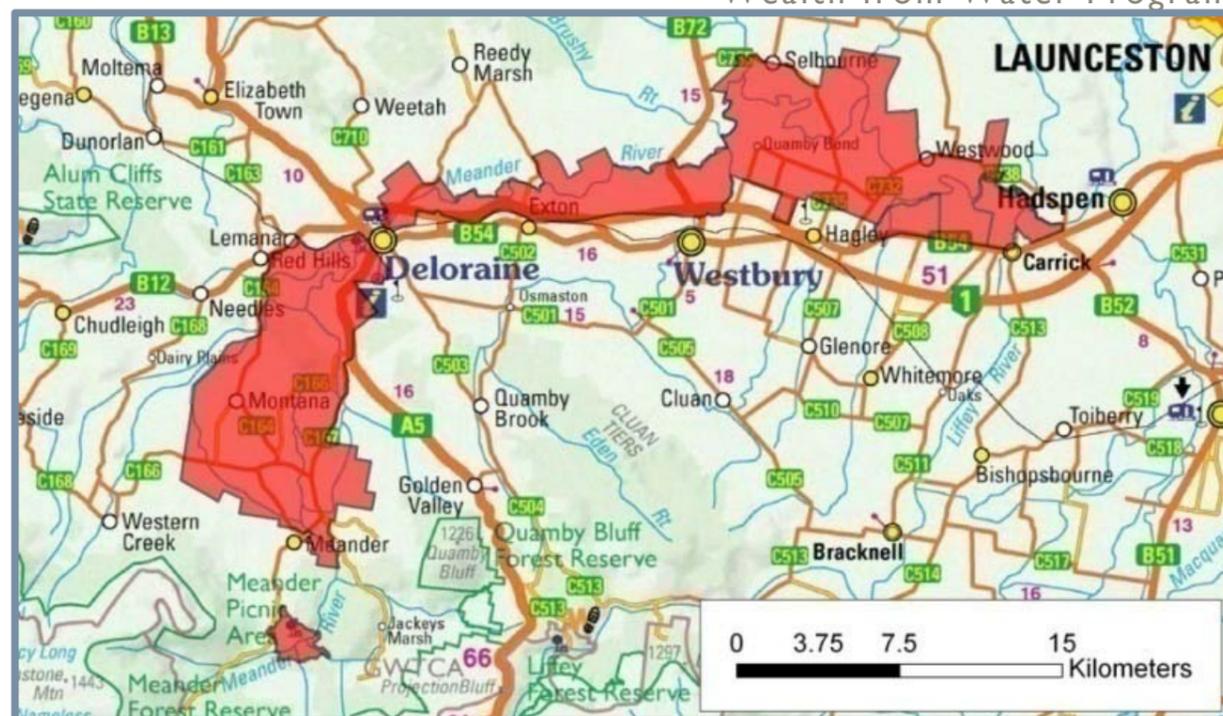


Wealth from Water Program

Information Guide

Wealth from Water Program



The Wealth from Water Meander Valley case-study area

The Meander Valley Case-study

The Meander Valley Irrigation Area is a valuable area to trial the Wealth from Water Program. The construction of significant new irrigation infrastructure is following the commissioning of the Meander Dam in 2007. The area also includes a wide diversity of industries, land systems and microclimates and much supporting data already exists.

The case-study will focus on a small number of existing and potential industries to fine-tune the Program design. It will also help to improve the proposed approach and ultimately the information and tools produced.

The Meander East and Meander West Irrigation Districts – an area of some 20,000 ha – is the focus for testing the land assessment, microclimate and enterprise suitability work.

Wealth from Water staff will be contacting

many of the landholders in this area to ground-truth the mapping and discuss farm development issues. Broader consultation is already underway with local farming groups, the Meander Valley Enterprise Centre and the Meander Valley Council.

It is envisaged that in future years the work would extend to the remaining irrigation districts in the Valley.

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Why Wealth from Water?

The Tasmanian food and agriculture sector is an innovative and adaptable part of the State's economy. It is currently experiencing a once in a generation transformation.

A \$400 million public-private partnership is seeing the construction of new irrigation infrastructure across many of Tasmania's productive farming districts.

Dams, pipelines, pivot irrigators and sprinklers are part of the story. How agricultural land is used is also changing.

The aim of the Wealth from Water Program is to assist farmers and potential investors to make informed business decisions – and assist the transition to producing high-value food and agricultural products from irrigation.

Sound planning is vital. By using the irrigation water sustainably and to its full economic potential all Tasmanians can benefit from this new infrastructure.

“The Wealth from Water Program is a key part of *Tasmania's Innovation Strategy*... encouraging innovation in primary production.

The Program will provide farmers and agribusinesses with information they need to confidently invest in irrigated agriculture in Tasmania.”

Program Partners

The Wealth from Water Program is a key part of *Tasmania's Innovation Strategy* and is a partnership between:

- Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE)
- Department of Economic Development, Tourism, and the Arts (DEDTA)
- Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR).

What is the Wealth from Water Program?

The Wealth from Water Program will classify land according to its suitability for various agricultural enterprises.

It will provide landowners and potential investors with comprehensive soil, microclimate, crop and enterprise information.

This will be complemented by information on market opportunities and trends and alternative business models.

Agricultural advisers will then play an important role in helping take the information to farmers and agribusiness: assisting them to improve their existing production, and potentially transition to higher-value enterprises, based on identified market needs.

Importantly, the information provided will aim to reduce potential production, financial and environmental risks from irrigation development.

What will it look like?

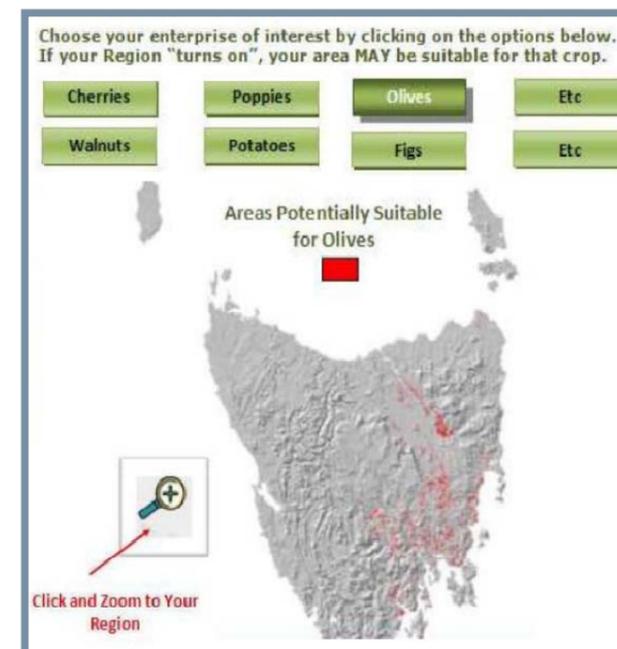
Users will be able to access the information and tools produced by the Wealth from Water Program to:

- Identify new and existing markets for products and analyse market trends – what are the market opportunities?
- Investigate different farm business structures and examine how to

transition from one production model to another.

- Determine which locations are potentially suitable for different enterprises and crops.
- Understand the farm management practices required to increase existing production and/or potentially expand into a new enterprise or a new crop.
- Understand how to manage environmental limitations and agricultural production issues.
- Apply the information in the development of Property Management Plans and in farm business planning.
- Inform commercial discussions with potential financiers, suppliers or clients.

A key tool produced by Wealth from Water will be an internet-based portal: *Enterprise diversification – what can I grow?*



Example of the proposed internet-based portal

Who will use the information and tools produced?

Landowners and potential investors will have access to comprehensive information that classifies land according to its suitability for various agricultural enterprises.

Market, business and financial information will assist farmers and potential investors to match crops and agricultural enterprises with market requirements.

Agricultural advisers will be able to use the tools produced to assist new and existing irrigators to make better on-farm decisions.

When will the information be available to use?

As featured in *Tasmania's Innovation Strategy*, the Wealth from Water Program is a three-year initiative that will roll out across the State's irrigation districts commencing late 2011. On completion, this will equate to the mapping of approximately 300,000 hectares of agricultural land.

The first phase of the Program is now underway with a case-study in the Meander Valley Irrigation Area in the State's north. In early 2011, local farming, community and industry representatives will have the opportunity to provide input so that the information produced is targeted and relevant.

From late 2011 onwards, there will be opportunity for other irrigation districts in the State to be involved.

“The Meander Valley Irrigation Area is the focus for the first year. Commencing in late 2011, Wealth from Water will then roll out across Tasmania's irrigation districts over the remaining three years”