



Gabrielle Upton
Minister for the Environment

MEDIA RELEASE

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ENVIRONMENT WATER FLOWS FOR FARMERS

The NSW Government will release environmental water to farmers for irrigation and stock watering to assist them during the drought, Environment Minister Gabrielle Upton announced today.

“Up to 15,000 megalitres of NSW water previously reserved for environmental purposes will be made available for purchase by farmers.

“This extra water could make that vital difference for farmers, allowing them to keep crops growing and stock alive.

Water will be made available within the Gwydir, Macquarie, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Murray-Lower Darling valleys, Minister Upton said.

“All proceeds raised from purchases of this water will be held in trust with the Department of Primary Industries and used for priority drought-related projects.

“An additional 450 megalitres of groundwater will also be made available in the Riverina area,” she said.

“At the same time we will continue to maintain the health of NSW river systems and deliver important environmental water flows into wetlands such as the Macquarie wetlands and Yanga National Park.

“These wetlands provide critical drought refuge for waterbirds, fish and other native animals and are key to ensuring that our rivers can recover when rainfall and river flows return.

“I have also asked that operational assistance be provided to our rural communities. Where practical, the National Parks and Wildlife Service will make trucks and trailers available for feed transport and other pressing transportation needs.

“In other measures, we will waive the fees for existing ‘grand-fathered’ grazing permit holders in the Riverina for at least 12 months and apiary fees for national parks across NSW for 12 months. The bee keeping industry is often overlooked but they are an important industry that also provides broader agricultural benefits.

“This measure demonstrates proper balance between protecting the environment and doing what we can to provide vital assistance to drought stricken farmers,” Ms Upton said.

MEDIA:
Kevin Wilde 0428 090 130