



NSW Government

Department of Water & Energy

Groundwater payments start flowing

9 November, 2007

The NSW Government has announced \$37.8million has been paid to 260 water licence water holders throughout NSW.

The payments are the first to be made under the NSW and Commonwealth Government's \$135 million Achieving Sustainable Groundwater Extractions (ASGE) Program.

Licence water holders doing it tough in this drought are finally receiving the financial assistance they need to adjust to reduced groundwater entitlements.

Under the ASGE Program 922 offers of financial assistance have been sent to licensees in the Upper and Lower Namoi, Lower Gwydir, Lower Macquarie, Lower Murrumbidgee and Lower Murray groundwater sources.

So far the Department of Water and Energy has received more than 300 replies accepting funding offers and a Deed of Agreement.

The Department is hopeful that it will receive more replies over the coming days and weeks to enable it to quickly distribute the remaining funds to affected licence holders.

Groundwater reductions are being implemented over 10 years through water sharing plans made under the NSW Government's *Water Management Act 2000* for each of the major groundwater sources in NSW.

These reductions will ensure that groundwater extraction in NSW is sustainable for the long-term – increasing security of water supply for licensed users and maintaining the health of the environment.

Funding will be offered to groundwater licence holders in the Lower Lachlan once amendments to the water sharing plan have been finalised.

Offers to licensees currently involved in legal proceedings in the Land and Environment Court will not be made until those proceedings are finalised.

For more information on the ASGE Program contact the Department of Water and Energy's Tamworth office on (02) 6701 9603. For information regarding Letters of Offer contact the Parramatta office on (02) 9895 7641.
