



Curlwaa Drainage Improvement Works

Western Murray Irrigation (WMI) is planning drainage improvement works in the Curlwaa Irrigation Area. An upgrade to the Bergman's Pump 150mm pipeline is scheduled for 2026/27.

As you know, following the record rainfall event in March 2026, several areas of Curlwaa experienced significant inundation as the irrigation drainage system was overwhelmed by the volume of water. One affected area was the Bergmans Swamp area, including neighbouring properties. WMI worked quickly to monitor conditions, clear blockages and assist customers. This was supported by our contractors and additional resources including mobile pumps which were deployed across the district. The focus since then shifted to repair and recovery to drainage and other infrastructure impacted by the event.

Some customers have recently raised questions regarding the proposed replacement of an existing drainage pipe that passes through the Curlwaa levee. WMI wishes to reassure customers that this is not a new levee crossing. The existing pipe and pump infrastructure have been part of the drainage system since the 1950's, although they have not operated for decades as the irrigation area declined, and are now almost obsolete.

There are three other existing drainage crossings through the Curlwaa levee managed by WMI, all regularly in use and in good condition, including the James Highway Pump and Tubewell Outfall.

The proposed project will replace the deteriorated pipeline to enable temporary pumping of water from the adjoining surface drain and Bergman's Swamp towards Tuckers Creek during future major inundation events. This will improve WMI's ability to manage local drainage and reduce the volume of standing water following significant rainfall.

Protecting the integrity of the Curlwaa levee is a key priority. The project will be designed and constructed in accordance with recognised levee management guidelines, including requirements for underground pipe crossings. The works will also restore the levee profile to minimise any risk to levee performance.

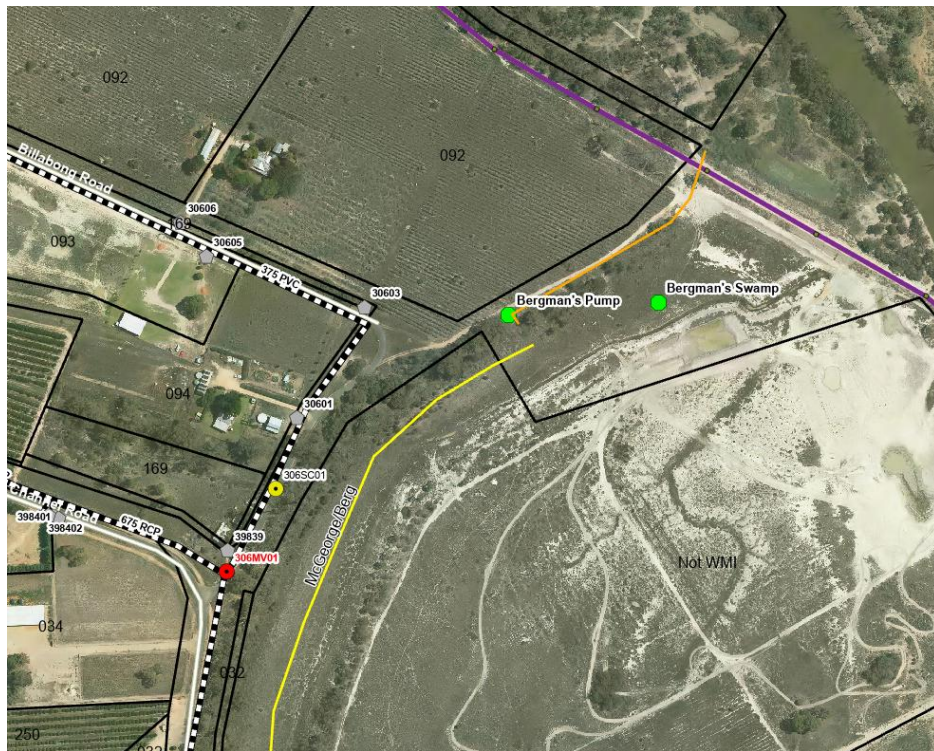
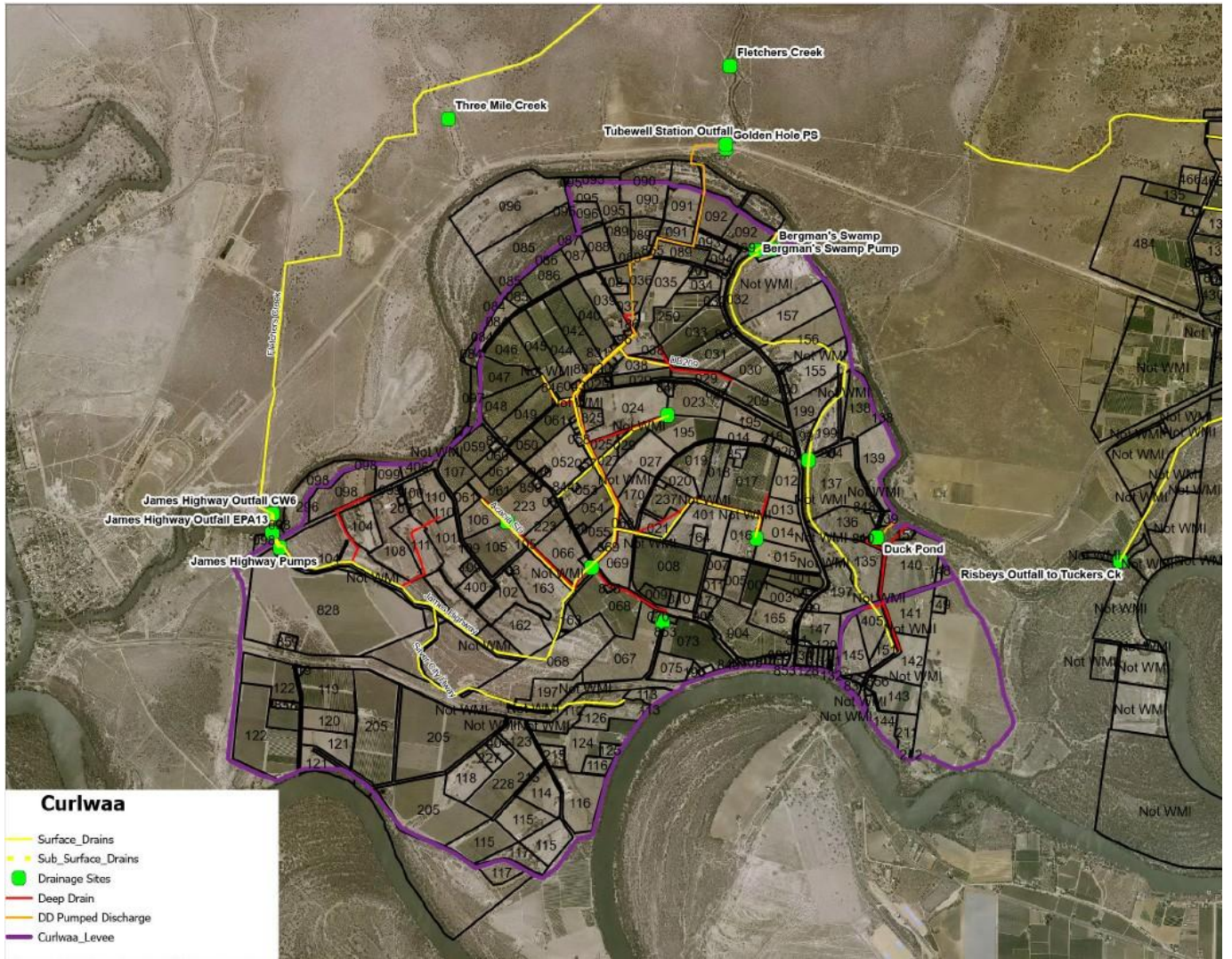
It is important to note that no drainage system can completely eliminate flooding during extreme rainfall events. WMI's drainage network was originally designed to manage irrigation drainage and local run-off associated with irrigated agriculture. It is not designed or approved to function as a flood mitigation scheme. Nevertheless, WMI continually reviews opportunities to improve drainage performance and reduce the impacts of future inundation events where practical and cost-effective.

Customers with additional questions are encouraged to contact the WMI office.

Judith Damiani

Chief Executive Officer

18 June 2026



Yellow line = surface drain | Orange line = pipe | Purple line = levee | Black & White line = supply pipe