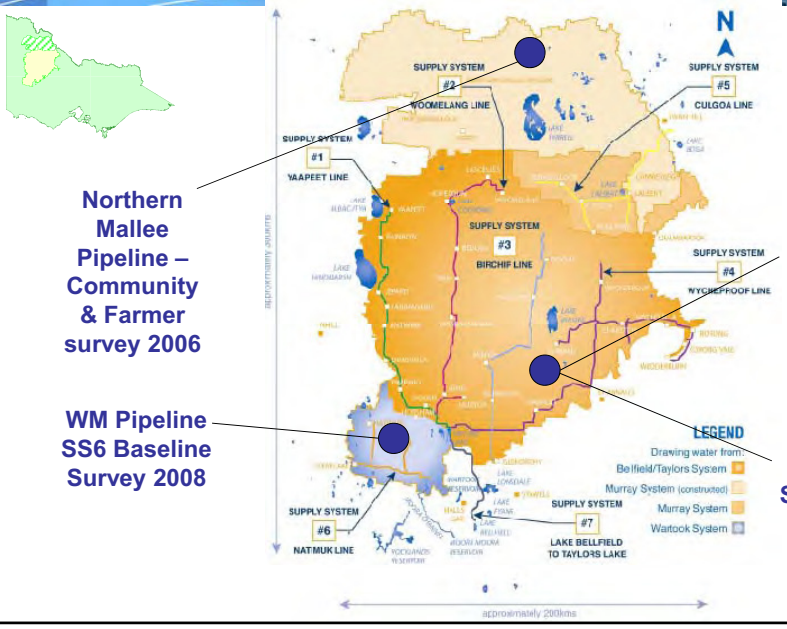
widcorp
water in drylands
collaborative research program

Longitudinal study of farmer perceptions

Aims

- Investigate attitudes & aspirations of farmers towards NM and WM pipelines – change over time
- Identify whether differences in farmers perceptions exist – farmer typology
- Identify drivers and barriers to adoption

WIDCORP Farmer Surveys



Northern Mallee Pipeline – Community & Farmer survey 2006

WM Pipeline SS6 Baseline Survey 2008

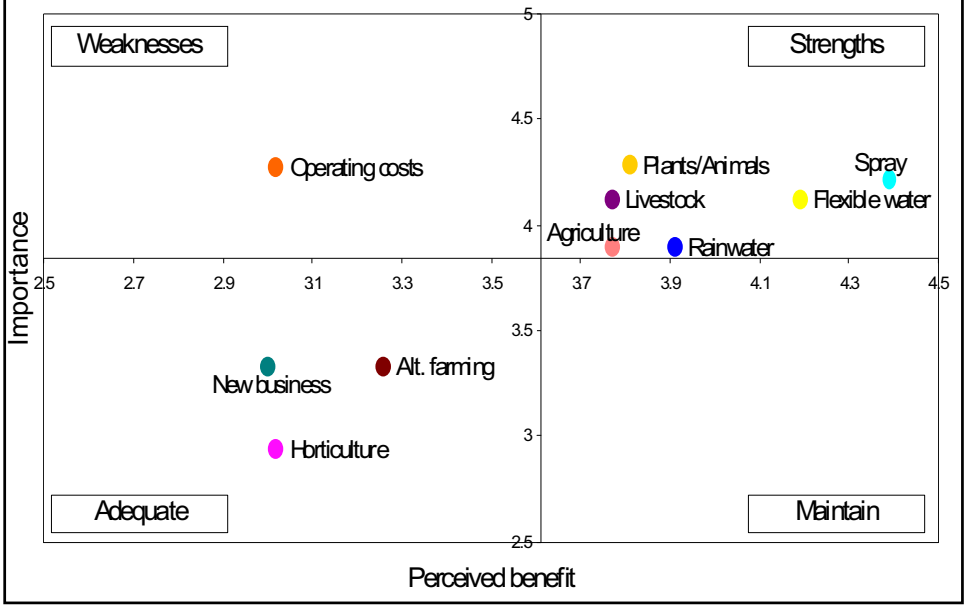
WM Pipeline SS1-5 Baseline Survey 2007

Follow-up SS1-5 survey 2008

Research methods: Farmer surveys

	NM Pipeline Survey 2006	WM Pipeline Survey 2007	WM Pipeline Surveys 2008	
Type	Retrospective	SS1-5 Baseline	SS1-5 Follow-up	SS6 Baseline
Method	Self-administered	Multimode (telephone & email) Interviews	Multimode	Multimode
Sample	42	527	249	211
Focus	Perceived attitudes, benefits, concerns, opportunities			

NM Survey 2006 – Farmer impacts



Lessons learnt from Northern Mallee

- Pipeline had positive impact on current farming practices
  - Security of water supply for stock
  - Increase effectiveness of spray units
- Very few new agricultural enterprises were developed
- Major concerns were cost, loss of recreational water use, and loss of wildlife
- Perceptions changed over time from somewhat sceptical to very positive

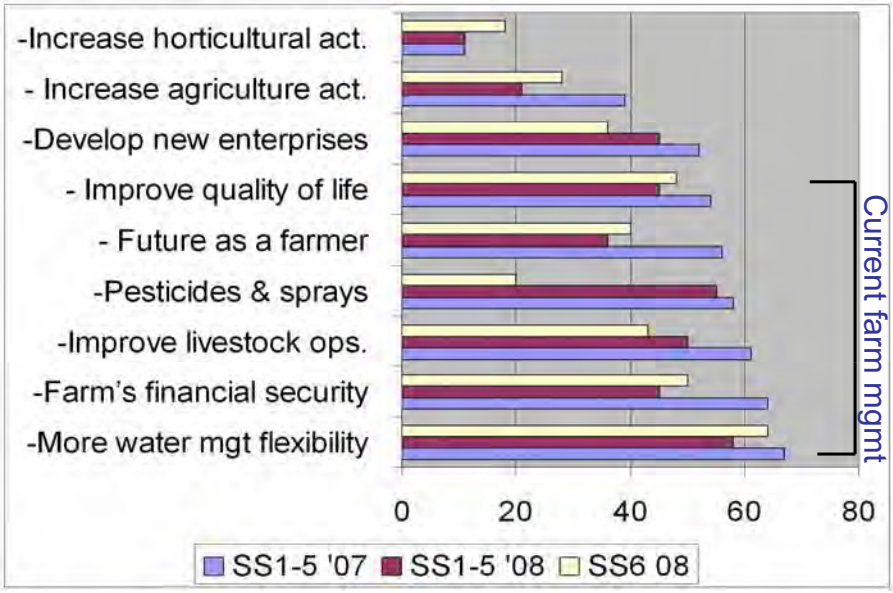
WMP survey - Farmer perceptions

Perceptions of WM Pipeline	SS1-5 2007	SS1-5 2008	SS6 2008
Positive Attitude	82% (Intensive livestock farmers less positive)	⇧ 84%	73%
Knowledge			
- Construction	46%	48%	50%
- When access	31%	⇧ 54%	48%
- How much	25%	⇧ 41%	45%
Concerns			
-Cost of water	77%	⇩73%	76%
-Set-up costs	65%	⇩ 58%	63%
-Loss of recreational	59%	61%	46%

WMP survey - Farmer perceptions

Water sources and uses	SS1-5 2007	SS1-5 2008	SS6 2008
Main uses			
-Livestock	**83%**	81%	**86%**
-Domestic	65%	68%	**82%**
-Crop spraying	60%	62%	39%
- Intensive livestock	6%	5%	9%
- Horticulture	2%	2%	8%
Main sources			
- Channels	**77%**	46%	16%
-Rainwater	38%	**50%**	**74%**
- Carted	12%	12%	27%
- Dams	32%	26%	40%
- Pipeline	-	**26%**	-

WMP surveys – Perceived benefits



WMP surveys – Future intentions

- 3/4 have not explored any new opportunities (2007, 2008)
  - 1/4 have explored either intensification/diversification or new market opportunities

Different farming styles

Style W (Innovative)

Knowledgeable and few concerns about pipeline

Satisfied with farm -seek out new ideas and knowledge

Business minded

Style M (Experimental)

Less knowledge and more concerns about pipeline

Less satisfied with farm – have shorter term goals

Less business minded

Style P (Traditional)

Less knowledge and more concerns about pipeline

Farm is a long term investment, value its tradition

Business minded

Lifestylers

Small holdings

Off-farm income/retired

Try new ideas

Liveability on farm

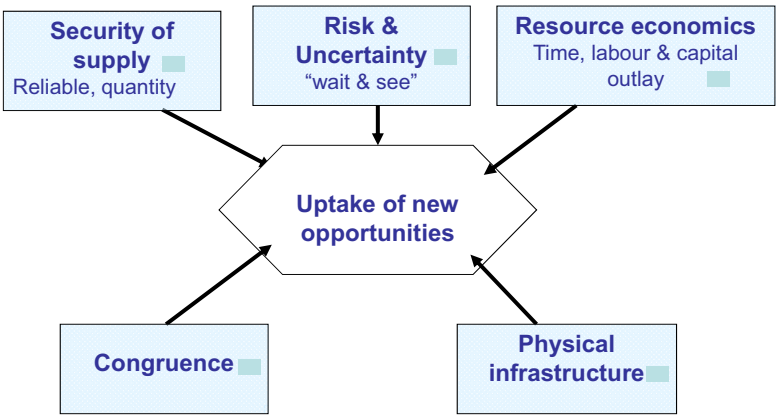
Interest in livestock development

Typologies – Different aspirations

Average rating equal or over 3.5

Farm management benefits	Inn	Exp	Trad	L/sty
Flexible water management				
Effectiveness of sprays				
Livestock condition/stock rates				
Improve quality of life				
Opportunities benefits				
Increase horticultural activities				
Increase agricultural activities				
Allow for intensive livestock/ new enterprise				
Opportunities explored	24%	**33%**	17%	24%

Factors influencing uptake of new opportunities



Summary

- General positive attitude towards pipeline
- Improved knowledge and less concern over time
- Benefits of pipeline relate to current farm practices rather than new enterprises
- 25% have explored opportunities
- Styles assist to tailor programs to engage with different farmer groups
- Addressing barriers/drivers may improve uptake
- Follow-up research continues in mid-2009

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Full and summary reports available on website

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