

# Impact Management Toolbox summary



## Ensuring fair and equitable outcomes under the Reconnecting River Country Program

The Reconnecting River Country Program aims to improve wetland and floodplain connectivity by striking a balance between economic, social, cultural and environmental outcomes across southern NSW.

To deliver these outcomes, changes to river management are required. These changes will likely result in periodic low-level inundation of land, with benefits and impacts to landholders and communities.

To mitigate impacts, landholders, land managers and communities will see investment in infrastructure and on-farm works, with the potential for improved agricultural productivity resulting from floodplain flows, as well as improved recreational fishing and tourism.

The program will also potentially deliver a range of outcomes benefitting First Nations communities, such as improved connection with Country.

We are working with landholders and the community to deliver transparent, consistent, fair and equitable outcomes for affected stakeholders. This includes holding open and constructive conversations with landholders on what the NSW Government can offer to mitigate potential disruptions caused by higher water for the environment flows.

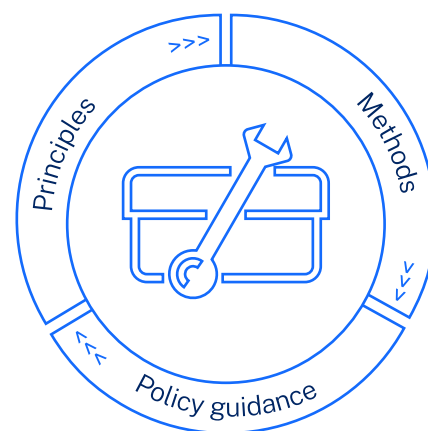
This negotiation process will be conducted in accordance with the Landholder Negotiation Scheme (formerly known as the Landholder Negotiation Framework) once this is passed as an amendment to the Water Management (General) Regulation 2018.

## Impact Management Toolbox

To inform these discussions, the NSW Government is developing a way to identify, measure and mitigate the potential impacts of program called the Impact Management Toolbox. The toolbox will help ensure landholders are fairly compensated for impacts arising from the program.

It will include a set of resources to assist private landholders, leaseholders and third parties to negotiate mitigation measures with the NSW Government, and will include:

- a set of agreed mitigation principles
- tools to support decision making, including methodologies for costing mitigation measures, modelling and technical investigations
- guidance on policies and legal agreements.



A range of potential mitigation/management options will be made available to landholders including:

- the voluntary negotiated purchase from landholders of enduring easements allowing inundation under certain circumstances and up to specified limits
- the voluntary negotiated purchase from landholders of riverine land, for conservation or for later resale with easements allowing inundation
- funding for infrastructure to mitigate program impacts (e.g. on-farm road works or culverts to provide continued access and the protection of farm assets)

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- one-off compensation for other types of impacts to a farming business, such as inconvenience and maintenance (i.e. where these are not included in an easement valuation)
- adequate, timely and effective notification of environmental water releases where inundation is expected.

The exact mitigation measures for each landholder will be tailored to individual circumstances.

The program is currently working with landholders, First Nations people, local communities, peak body groups and local councils to develop components of the toolbox.

Following this engagement, the NSW Government is seeking to finalise the toolbox in 2023.

## Negotiation Assistance Package

A Negotiation Assistance Package is also being developed to provide financial and other assistance to landholders, leaseholders and third parties needing support to undertake negotiations. This assistance package will be made available to landholders once it is confirmed they are subject to the flows proposed by the program and negotiations commence.

## How we propose to negotiate

The NSW Government proposes to establish a statewide Landholder Negotiation Scheme (LNS) embedded in legislation, to provide assurance of a defined, transparent, equitable, fair, and consistent negotiation process. This will apply to negotiations to mitigate the potential impacts of changes to environmental flows above existing operational practice. A draft amendment (Landholder Negotiation Scheme) to the Water Management (General) Regulation 2018 will be put on public exhibition for stakeholder feedback.

## Guiding principles

The program will develop guidelines on how the LNS will be applied to accommodate different settings. A set of mitigation principles will guide how the NSW Government will negotiate with stakeholders on mitigation measures.

The draft principles have been reviewed by case study participants and some stakeholders. The feedback has been analysed and will input into the revised list of mitigation principles currently being developed. The program will continue to seek stakeholder feedback on the revised mitigation principles in 2023.

## How to get involved

Visit the [program webpage](#) to subscribe for updates, ask a question and access more information.

## Acknowledgement

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges we stand on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

## Find out more

For more information about the program:

- visit [dpie.nsw.gov.au/reconnecting-river-country-program](https://dpie.nsw.gov.au/reconnecting-river-country-program)
- phone **1300 081 047**
- email [winsw.engagement@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:winsw.engagement@dpie.nsw.gov.au)
- sign up for [program updates](#)