

# Community update for Menindee and Lower Darling-Baaka

## Menindee Old Town Weir removal complete

Works to remove the remaining sections of the Menindee Old Town Weir are now complete.

By removing barriers below the water's surface, the site will now see improved boat safety and recreational amenities. During the mass fish death event in March 2023, the old town weir changed how flows moved downstream and allowed sediments and decomposing fish to build up behind it. The removal should allow flows and sediments to move downstream more naturally, and builds on works completed in 2020 to improve water quality.

To enable the removal of the weir, a rock platform was installed across the river (see Figure 1). This platform is now being removed and the rocks are being recovered for reuse by the Central Darling Shire Council in local road projects.

Works to clean up the site will continue into next week.

We would like to thank the community for their patience and support during the weir removal.

For more information email [water.enquiries@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:water.enquiries@dpie.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 081 047.



Figure 1

## Water quality update

Water quality monitoring undertaken upstream and downstream of the weir removal worksite has shown that there were localised impacts near Menindee township, including an increase in turbidity and lower dissolved oxygen levels near the riverbed. Monitoring further downstream showed that dissolved oxygen levels were recovering again before reaching the inflows from Lake Menindee. Throughout the project, dissolved oxygen levels nearer the water surface were well above the critical levels for fish health and provided a large volume of oxygenated water for fish to move into. Water quality monitoring will continue after the completion of the project. Figure 2 below shows the location of vertical profile monitoring buoys. Consideration is being given to changing water releases from Lake Menindee back to Lake Wetherell while inflows remain higher than proposed releases and while the upper lakes are at full supply. Further updates will be provided as they become available.



Figure 2

## Fisheries in Menindee for the Fish Passage Program

Members of the DPIRD Fisheries project team will be in Menindee next week to begin the very early stages of planning for the Menindee fish passage program. This trip is the first step in working with the local community on what that program of work looks like. They will be discussing the permanent fish passage business case and the tube fishway trial, including asking the community how they would like to be engaged throughout the program. DPIRD Fisheries staff are also planning to be in Menindee later in the month.



## Darling Anabranh update

Environmental water was used in the Great Darling Anabranh throughout 2023-24 primarily to maintain connectivity for golden perch dispersal and improve riparian vegetation condition. Over the winter, environmental water managers are implementing a cease-to-flow period. This dry phase is in keeping with the naturally intermittent wetting and drying cycles of the Anabranh.

A spring 2024 rewetting phase will promote physio-chemical process, instream productivity and provide opportunity for golden perch dispersal from nursery habitat in Lake Cawndilla to the greater southern connected basin.

## Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: [waterqualitydata@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:waterqualitydata@dpie.nsw.gov.au)
- To view community updates issued, visit [Community updates and frequently asked questions | Water \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
- To report dead fish, fish struggling or gasping at the water surface, or crayfish leaving the water please call the **NSW DPI Fisheries Phonenumber 1800 043 536** or fill in a fish kill protocol and report form at: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/habitat/threats/fish-kills-2019-2020/info-sheet>
- Information on recent fish deaths is available at: [Fish kills in NSW](#). When reporting, please include the name of the river/waterbody, location and date of your observation and provide photographs. If possible, please also record what species are affected and an estimate of number of each species observed.
- Further information on blackwater events can be found at the DCCEEW Water website at: [Hypoxic blackwater | Water \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
- Additional information is also available on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority website at: <https://www.mdba.gov.au/climate-and-river-health/water-quality/fish-deaths>  
<https://www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/infrastructure/menindee-lakes>
- Operational updates are available at: [WaterInsights - WaterNSW](#)
- Water quality data collected after the fish deaths at Menindee is available on the Environment Protection Authority web page at: <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/updates-on-issues/menindee-fish-kill>