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## Replacing southern inland floodplain management plans



The department is currently preparing to replace the 10 existing rural floodplain management plans in the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Lachlan valleys, in response to an independent review.

Scoping of technical components, such as mapping and flood modelling, and early planning for community engagement is underway. We will begin reaching out to key stakeholder groups for early feedback in the next 12 to 18 months.

The department will be using the [Technical Manual for Rural Floodplain Management Plans under the \*Water Management Act 2000\*](#) to guide the planning process. Rural floodplain management plans provide the legal framework for coordinating flood work development on a whole-of-valley basis.

These plans do not deal with floodplain harvesting water take, which is managed through the water sharing plans.

Visit our [website](#) for more information or email [floodplain.planning@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:floodplain.planning@dpie.nsw.gov.au) to register your interest in the program.

## Murray and Murrumbidgee regional water strategies: time to have your say



*The Diggings, Kosciuszko National Park, Snowy Mountains. Image credit: Destination NSW.*

The regional water strategies are tools to manage the water needs in each NSW region over the next 20-40 years. They bring together the latest climate evidence with a range of solutions to manage the water needs in each NSW region over this period.

The strategies aim to ensure we can deliver the right amount of water, at the right time, to communities, businesses and the environment. This will help ensure NSW is a vibrant and thriving state for years to come. We are currently preparing 12 strategies in partnership with water service providers, local councils, communities and Aboriginal people.

Several strategies have already been publicly exhibited, and we are beginning the next round of consultation for 2022. We are currently seeking your feedback on the strategies for the Murray and Murrumbidgee regions. To see the strategies, and for more information, [please visit our website](#).

## Residual chlorine level boosted at Summervale



The Aboriginal Communities Water and Sewerage Program (ACWSP) has worked with partners to construct a new chlorine dosing system to boost the chlorine residual at Summervale. These works will help ensure the community receives water that consistently meets the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011).

The length of the gravity main at Summervale made it difficult to consistently maintain a chlorine residual in the community. The works to install the new system included a new sodium hypochlorite building, which was prefabricated and then integrated at the Walcha treatment plant. This new system will deliver chlorine residual of  $\geq 0.2$  mg/L.

The ACWSP worked with Summervale Local Aboriginal Land Council, Walcha Shire Council, and Hunter H2O to develop options, and with Trility to successfully construct the system.

Providing quality water in line with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011) is an essential aspect of the work done under the ACWSP. Caring for Water is Caring for Country.

[Learn more about Aboriginal Communities Water and Sewerage Program.](#)

## Water for wildlife in 2022-23





*Community members at Gwydir Wetlands. Image credit: Colin Ritchie (licensed).*

Planning is underway to identify the rivers, wetlands, and wildlife to be supported by environmental flows in the coming year. Our department's Environment and Heritage Division is the lead agency managing water for the environment in NSW. The agency works closely with community members, scientists, First Nations, landholders, and relevant government agencies through its Environmental Water Advisory Groups (EWAGs). This work helps to determine the water needs of rivers, creeks, wetlands, and wildlife.

EWAGs consider:

- the expected availability of water in the coming year
- the conditions of the previous year
- the current health of the plants and animals in these ecosystems.

Priority statements are published in July-August each year, summarising the rivers, creeks, and wetlands likely to receive environmental flows that year.

[Find out more or contact your local EWAG here.](#)

## River Styles and Improving Water Quality in NSW Rivers Projects recognised by Chief Scientist



*Professor Kirstie Fryirs (Macquarie University), Fergus Hancock (DPE Water) and Dr Simon Mould (DPE Water) at the Research Impact Showcase, NSW Parliament House. Image credit: Simon Mould*

The NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer recently recognised two of our key river health projects in the Research Impact Showcase at Parliament House.

Our Surface Water Science team has collaborated with Macquarie University for over 20 years to develop the state-wide [NSW River Styles Database](#), which captures information for more than 219,000 km of river reaches across NSW. It has generated geomorphic data and helped develop tools which now underpin many aspects of river management in NSW.

The database is the largest of its kind in Australia, is freely available and used by government agencies and community groups to efficiently monitor changes in river health. It is also used to identify management priorities for current and future needs. The tool has additionally proved valuable in river rehabilitation projects, helping support decision making and providing a shared understanding of risks to rivers.

Our Ecohydrology team was also recognised on the night for the Improving Water Quality in NSW Rivers Project. The team collaborated with the University of Technology Sydney to investigate critical flow levels for rivers to break down thermal stratification and reduce toxic algal blooms. This work will help reduce the risk of fish deaths in the Barwon Darling.

For more information on River Styles [visit our website](#).

Work begins on new water monitoring stations for communities in the northern Murray-Darling Basin



Work has begun on the first five of twenty new or upgraded gauging stations for communities in the northern Murray-Darling Basin. The new gauging stations are located near Wilcannia, Bourke, Walgett, Quambone and Brewarrina, and are part of the Hydrometric Network and Remote Sensing Program, funded by the Australian Government.

The NSW Government is seeking to identify another fifteen sites in the northern Murray-Darling Basin after a review of the hydrometric network last year. This review was part of our obligations under the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact.

These gauging stations will deliver transparent, accurate and accessible data to water users, communities and agencies across the basin. They will enhance the existing network of more than 500 sites so that stream connectivity, compliance, environmental water release and extreme events are better managed. The gauges will be installed by WaterNSW.

The data will be available to the public through tools including [WaterNSW's Water Insights portal](#) and [WaterLive App](#) and the Bureau of Meteorology's [Water Information Portal](#) and [Water Data Online](#).

Irrigated agriculture water a high priority for NRAR





Water entitlements in NSW are worth about \$29 billion, and the irrigated agriculture industry produces around \$3-4 billion annually. Fair sharing and measurement of water take by the irrigated agriculture industry is a current NRAR regulatory priority in four key risk areas of the state: the Hunter, Murrumbidgee, Murray and Far North Coast of NSW.

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) is a risk-based regulator which means we focus on activities that have the potential to cause the most harm.

NRAR's [irrigated agriculture compliance program](#) uses datasets and satellite imagery to monitor water use across NSW and track rainfall, including the amount of water that evaporates and transpires. This reveals how much water is being used to irrigate crops and identifies sites of potential non-compliance.

NRAR is currently focused on the Hunter Valley and will be visiting properties in the region soon.

## Non-urban metering

### Northern Inland region water users – compliance deadline was 1 December 2021

Water users in the Northern Inland region were required to have compliant equipment installed by 1 December 2021. Water users are expected to have made efforts to comply with the new metering rules before their deadline, and are encouraged to act quickly to become compliant.

Follow the steps below to find out if the metering rules apply to you, and what you need to do comply:

1. Check your licence and approval details on the NSW Water Register. WaterNSW can assist you to amend your approval if necessary.
2. Use our interactive online metering guidance tool to see if and how the rules

apply to you.

3. Contact a duly qualified person (DQP), such as a certified meter installer (CMI), to discuss your situation. A list of DQPs can be found on Irrigation Australia's website.

For more information visit our website.



## Almost 90 per cent of 2020 group have an accurate meter

Water meters are the key tool for measuring and monitoring water usage in NSW. The non-urban water metering framework is being rolled out in stages over 5 years to ensure water sharing is fair and equitable.

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) has found that almost 70 per cent of water pumps that were required to be fitted with accurate meters, independently certified and connected to telemetry in December 2020, are now fully compliant as of December 2021. Importantly more than 80 per cent of the pumps we inspected in this group are now connected to accurate meters that have been independently certified.

NRAR will continue to enforce the law with the 2020 group and will be contacting water users required to comply with the rules by 1 December 2021 in the coming weeks. This group includes all works, including pumps 100mm and above and bores 200 mm and above in the Macquarie, Gwydir, Namoi, Border Rivers and Barwon-Darling regions, as well as some at-risk groundwater sources and smaller pumps with existing metering conditions.

Water users are expected to have made efforts to comply with the [new metering rules](#) before their deadline, and to have entered a formal arrangement with a meter installer.

Do you need to comply? Check the rules, using the department's [metering guidance tool](#), and meter your supply.



For information about the Natural Resources Access Regulator's (NRAR) approach to compliance visit the [NRAR website](#).

## Non-urban metering Southern Inland information sessions on compliance by 1 December 2022

If you are a water user in the Southern Inland region you may need to comply with the non-urban water metering rules by 1 December 2022.

The NSW Government is holding information sessions on the non-urban metering requirements to help you understand whether the new metering rules apply to you and what you need to do to comply. You will also be able to ask questions to a panel from the department, WaterNSW and the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR).

Trade stalls will be held after the information sessions so you can meet and connect with some of the metering suppliers and installers working in NSW. Panel members and departmental staff will also be available to speak to you.

Follow the links below to register for information sessions:

- Online – Thursday 5 May, 10 am – 12 pm
- Broken Hill – Tuesday 17 May, 10 am – 1 pm
- Dareton – Wednesday 18 May, 9 am – 12 pm

For more information about non-urban metering, visit the department's website.

## New on the Water website

### **Non-urban metering**

Keep up to date with all the latest information, and how it applies to you through our [non-urban metering page](#)

### **Draft Alluvial Groundwater Sources Water Sharing Plan**

Find out more about the Draft Alluvial Groundwater Sources Water Sharing Plan including outcomes of the community consultation process on our [project page here](#)

## Have your say

Current and upcoming consultations and information events:

### **Floodplain Management Plan**

**11 April - 20 May**

*Review of the Barwon Darling Valley Floodplain Management Plan*

- Learn more [here](#)
- Have your say [here](#)

### **Draft Regional Water Strategies**

**11 April - 22 May**

## *Draft Regional Water Strategies for Murray and Murrumbidgee Region*

- Learn more [here](#) - Murray Region
- Learn more [here](#) - Murrumbidgee Region
- Register for an [online seminar](#) :
  - May 3, 12:00pm - 1:30pm
- Attend a [public information session](#) :
  - Wentworth: May 10, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
  - Balranald: May 11, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
  - Tumut: May 13, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
  - Queanbeyan: May 18, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

### **Non-urban water metering information sessions**

**26 April – 18 May**

*Providing information on the non-urban metering requirements to help you understand if the new metering rules apply to you and what you need to do to comply.*

- Register for an [online seminar](#)
  - May 5, 10am - 12pm
- Attend a Public information session
  - [Broken Hill](#): May 5, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
  - [Dareton](#): May 18, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

### **New Dungowan Dam and Pipeline update**

**4 May - 11 May**

*Online and in-person information sessions to keep up to date on this project, including information on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)*

- Register for an [online webinar](#)
  - May 10, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
  - May 11, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
- Attend a [public information session](#)
  - Tamworth : May 4, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm  
May 6, 9:00 am - 11:00 am
  - Dungowan : May 5, 9:00 am - 11:00 am  
May 5, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

### **Wilcannia Weir Replacement Project**

**11 May**

*An information session to find out more about the progress of the project, the upcoming public exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the early works of this project*

- Learn more [here](#)
- Attend a [public information session](#)
  - Wilcannia : May 11, 9:00 am - 11:00 am

[View all](#)

## Latest water news from the department

- [Water security plan for Lower Hunter](#)

- [Metering experts roll into southern inland towns](#)
- [Strategy to secure Murray and Murrumbidgee's water future unveiled](#)
- [NSW Government secures additional funding for new Dungowan Dam](#)

[View all](#)

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## Contact us

Water News is our monthly update on water planning, management and reform in NSW. If you have any questions or feedback contact us at:

NSW Government – Water Relations  
Phone 1300 081 047  
[water.relations@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:water.relations@dpie.nsw.gov.au)

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