

Reconnecting River Country

Fact sheet - roles and responsibilities partner agencies

The Reconnecting River Country Program brings together the expertise and resources of several state government departments to deliver on the NSW Government's commitment to work with communities to implement the program.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Water Infrastructure NSW is leading the program in partnership with the department's Biodiversity, Conservation and Science division and the Department of Regional NSW's Local Land Services.

This approach integrates the relevant skills and knowledge of each agency in designing and implementing the program.

Together, we are focused on delivering local community benefits first and foremost, as part of the NSW Government's continued commitment to sensible, community driven Murray-Darling Basin Plan outcomes.



Tocumwal Murray River

Roles and responsibilities

Water Infrastructure NSW

The department's Water Infrastructure NSW is leading the design and implementation of the program with responsibilities including:

- program strategy and planning
- overall strategic stakeholder engagement and communications
- engagement of peak bodies, regional focus groups and First Nations
- engagement of public landholders
- interjurisdictional liaison
- data management
- developing the Landholder Negotiation Framework
- monitoring and evaluation of program components
- developing business cases and regulations
- developing the Impact Management Toolbox
- coordinating planning approvals
- monitoring and evaluation of engagement and communications (including data management).



Darlington Point Cookoothama

Biodiversity, Conservation and Science division

The department's Biodiversity, Conservation and Science division is contributing expertise to a range of key program components including:

- **flow modelling** – co-ordinating modelling work to provide accurate maps of inundation footprints in each project area, and to describe the likely pattern of river flows over time
 - **environmental benefits assessments** – leading the assessment of environmental benefits for native fish and waterbird populations, native vegetation communities and ecosystem functions in the project areas, and the southern connected Basin more broadly. The outcomes of these assessments will be a key input to the evaluation of project options forming part of business cases and will also play a key role in community engagement
 - **flow options and river operations planning** – estimating the frequency (how often), timing and duration (how long) of flows under a range of potential new flow limit options in the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers
 - **community engagement** – delivering a range of engagement opportunities for recreational fishers, business owner/operators, community service clubs and recreational river users to share information and seek feedback. Community snapshots will provide an opportunity for selected individuals across the catchments to explore key elements of the program
 - **First Nations engagement** – working with Water Infrastructure NSW to deliver a Nation-by-Nation approach to community consultation and engagement. The approach aims to support the cultural values of First Nations people throughout implementation of the program. A range of methods will be used to engage with communities including visual storytelling, on-Country activities, workshops and targeted information materials. Case studies will provide an opportunity for First Nations people to collaborate on mitigation measures and flow options as part of the program's implementation.
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Murrumbidgee River near Collingullie

Local Land Services

The Department of Regional NSW's Local Land Services is leading engagement with a representative sample of private landholders across the Murray and Murrumbidgee catchments during the initial collaboration phase.

Team members will be assigned to individual landholders to ensure a consistent approach for the duration of this collaboration phase.

By participating in this phase, landholders will help shape the future of this important program by:

- helping to increase the accuracy of the most recent inundation maps for their property
- helping to identify appropriate impact mitigation measures including local infrastructure investment
- having the opportunity to hear more about flow options for their region and provide feedback on preferred flow ranges
- learning more about the potential for investment and flow-on benefits for their local community
- helping to improve and strengthen our stakeholder engagement and communications processes.

Department of Primary Industries - Fisheries division

The Department of Primary Industries - Fisheries division (Fisheries) has been involved in Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism planning since 2015 and Reconnecting River Country Program (formerly known as the Constraints Measures Program) development, since mid-2020.

Fisheries has contributed to the program in several ways including:

- stakeholder engagement and communications planning
- Environmental Benefits Assessments with specific input to fish population models for possible flow options
- Environmental Water Requirements and flow regime planning
- legislative and policy advice on infrastructure, approvals and permitting under Fisheries Management Act 1994.



Mundarlo Bridge on Murrumbidgee near Wantabadgery

COVID-19 Safety

The safety of our communities is our number one priority as we work with stakeholders to develop and implement the program. We will provide a range of opportunities to engage with us in a COVID-19 safe way, including online channels, over the phone and on-site visits (COVID-19 restrictions permitting). Each engagement opportunity will be assessed, and safety precautions implemented, as per NSW Health's requirements. We will continue to provide a range of online resources to support the process.

Acknowledgement

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and the Department of Regional NSW's Local Land Services acknowledge 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 commitment to proving places where First Nations communities are included socially, culturally and economically.

Find out more

Website dpi.nsw.gov.au/reconnecting-river-country-program

Phone 1300 795 299

Email admin.rrc@lsls.nsw.gov.au

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