

# Community update for Menindee and Lower Darling-Baaka

## Update on current environmental water flush

The flush of 45 GL from the upper Menindee Lakes through the lower Darling-Baaka River to help clear the blue-green algae has been completed. The results show a significant decrease in blue green algae. Currently, the sites at Tolarno, Pooncarie, Burtundy, and Ellerslie in the Lower Darling-Baaka river are on amber alert after two consecutive samplings. However, the sites at Tapio, upstream Pomona, and Pomona at the Boat Ramp need another sampling to lift the red alert.

## Current flows

NSW environmental water is currently being used to maintain a flow target of 400ML/day in the Darling at Weir 32. This is double the required minimum of 200ML/day for this time of year. The higher baseflow aims to maximise native fish recruitment particularly for Murray cod and maintain basic ecosystem functions.

Lock 10 at Wentworth will remain lower for another week as not all of the flush water has pushed through.

492 GL of inflows have already been received into the Lakes since the start of 2024. 30 – 70 GL is expected in the next 2 months,

## Vertical profiling buoys

There are now 7 multi-depth monitoring buoys installed in the Darling River and Menindee Lakes area. Access to map and data for all BCS buoys can be found here [Dashboard - Darling Barka River Health Program](#) (tago.run). Access to WaterNSW buoy and gauge data, and Operations updates can be found here [WaterInsights - WaterNSW](#).

## Satellite images

The latest Planet satellite imagery from 19 June highlights the turbid water has reached the Darling/Murray junction and is pushing into the Murray River (Figure 1). The turbid water extends for about 14 km by river downstream (the edge of the image).

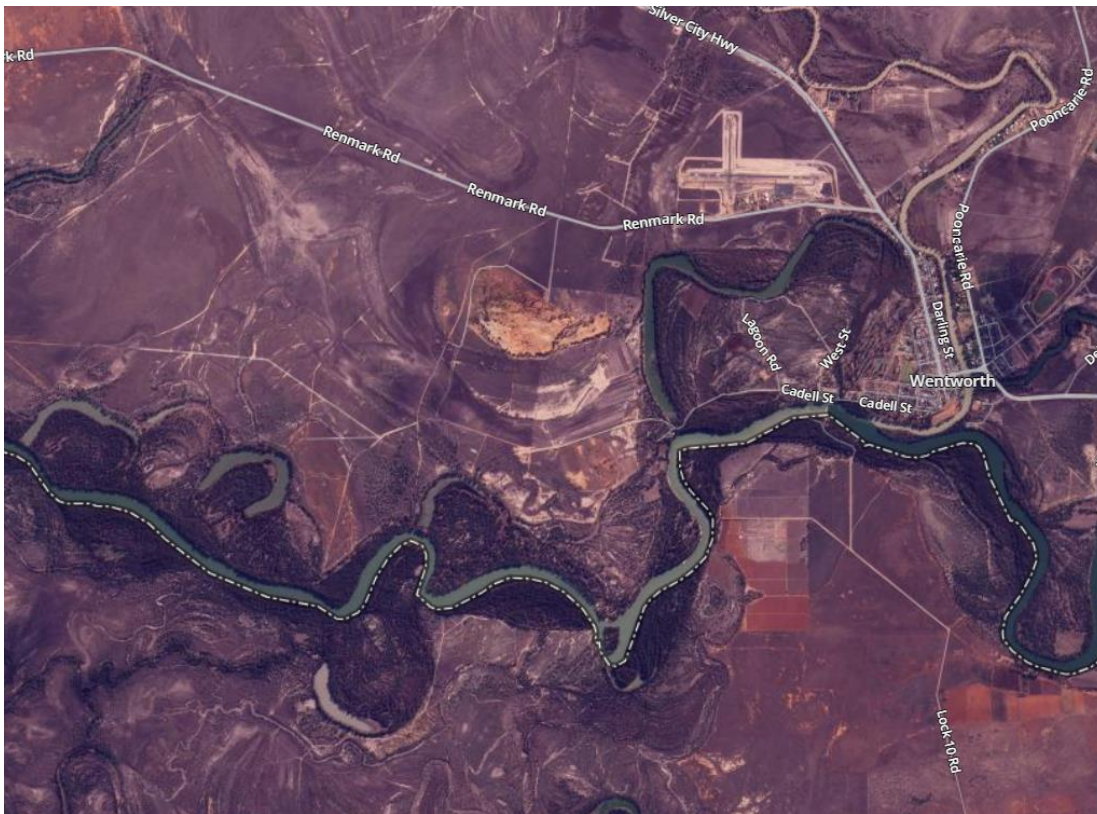


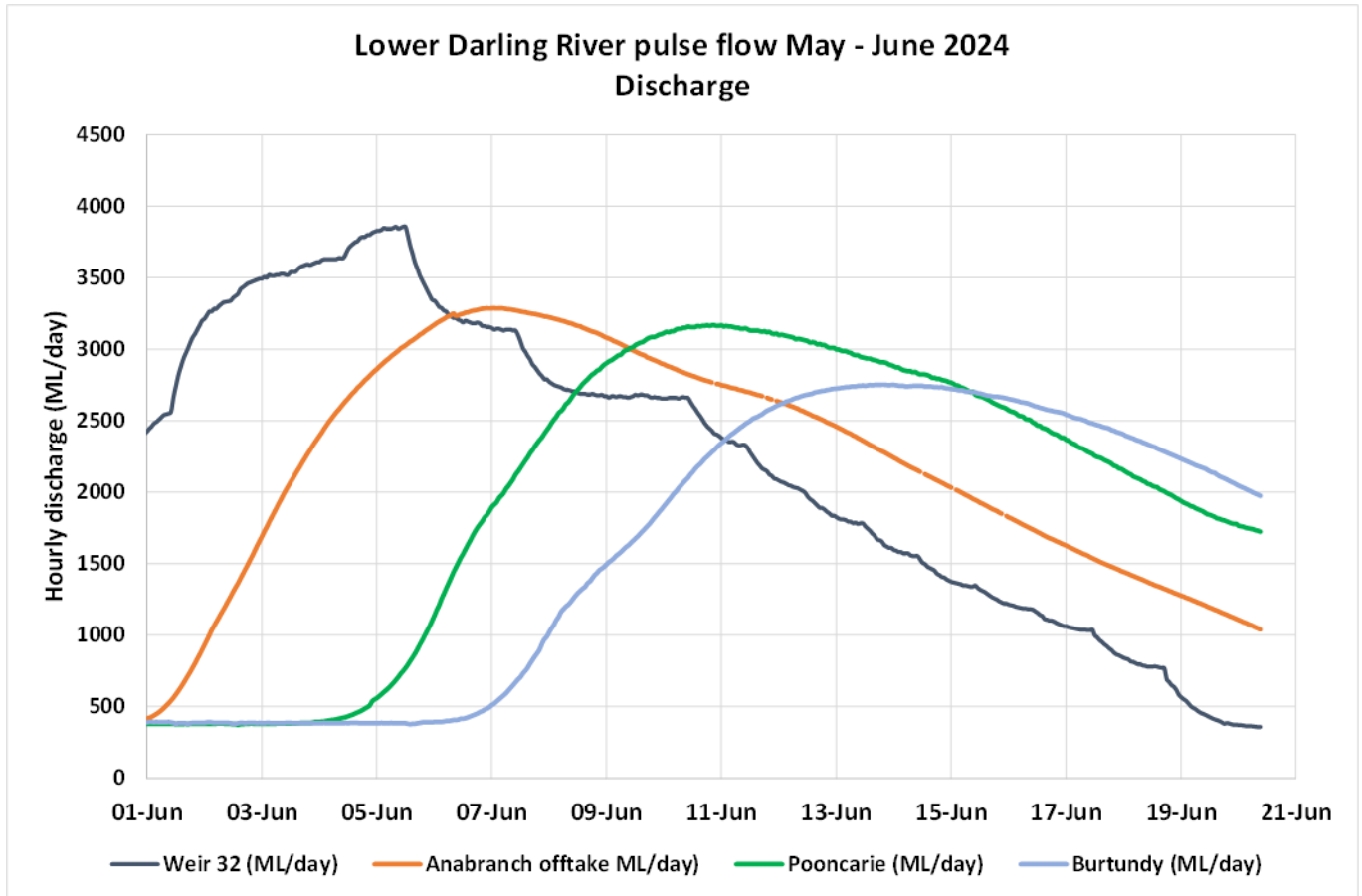
Figure 1



Photo taken by Scott Barnes of Wentworth Shire Council showing the Darling/Murray river junction at Wentworth.

## Tracking the pulse flows down river

Discharge at Weir 32 is levelling off at below 400 ML/day. Discharge is slowly declining at all other gauging stations on the lower Darling River (Figure 2 below).



## Old Town Weir Removal

The remaining sections of the Menindee Old Town Weir are scheduled to be removed in mid July 2024. Removing the remaining sections of the weir will improve boat safety and the recreational amenities at this location by eliminating unseen and potentially dangerous barriers below the surface. The works are expected to take approximately two weeks to complete.

Earthmoving equipment (e.g. excavators and dump trucks) will be used to deconstruct and remove the remaining sections of the old weir to the target level. The community will begin to see equipment and materials arriving at the site ahead of the works commencing.

## WaterNSW Operations update

Intermittent rainfall in parts of the northern Murray-Darling Basin over the past eight months has resulted in continued inflows to Menindee Lakes. Since the start of 2024 approximately 492 GL of water has entered the Lakes to date and have a current capacity of 1057 GL (61%).

Inflow from the most recent major rainfall event across the Northern catchments is now receding. Updated flow forecasting indicates that the Menindee Lakes may receive additional inflows estimated at 30 – 70 GL over the next two months. Currently, sufficient airspace is available within Menindee Lakes to safely capture the expected inflows. Management of the inflows are being undertaken to ensure the upper lakes are filled to Full Supply Level at the completion of the inflow event, with the volume surplus to this requirement passed into Lake Menindee.

## Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: [waterqualitydata@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:waterqualitydata@dpi.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 DCCEE 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>