

Draft Water Allocation Plan for the River Murray Prescribed Watercourse

Long Term Environmental Watering Plan - LTWP

Background



The Basin Plan requires a *Long Term Environmental Watering Plan* (LTWP) to be developed for each Water Resource Plan (WRP) area. The LTWP specifies the priority environmental assets and their functions, as well as the environmental objectives, targets and environmental water requirements needed for a healthy, functioning ecosystem over the longer term. The LTWP provides direction for the effective and efficient use of environmental water, and guides decision making and coordination of environmental watering.

Environmental water requirements are defined under the Landscape Act as *those water requirements that must be met in order to sustain the ecological values of ecosystems that depend on the water resource, including their processes and biodiversity, at a low level of risk*. The Landscape Act requires a water allocation plan to outline the environmental water requirements of a prescribed water resource area.

The draft Water Allocation Plan for the River Murray Prescribed Watercourse (the draft plan) replicates the environmental water requirements that are described in the LTWP for the SA River Murray WRP area. The LTWP is reviewed every five years to include the most up to date knowledge. The first LTWP was published in November 2015 and a revised version is in preparation to be published in November 2020. The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board is updating the draft plan to reference the LTWP, including changes to the revised environmental water requirements.

What are the proposed changes?

Environmental water requirements are outlined in Section 3.4 of the draft plan. Three priority environmental assets are identified in the LTWP that rely on water from the River Murray. They are:

- The South Australian River Murray Floodplain
- The South Australian River Murray Channel, and
- The Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth

The environmental water requirements for these assets have been revised as part of the process of updating the LTWP with new knowledge, expert opinion and with the use of revised modelling outputs to maximise the likelihood of achieving the ecological objectives and targets outlined in the LTWP.

This includes new target values for each metric measuring environmental water requirements e.g. for discharge (flow), number of days, timing of year and rate of water level rise and fall. These target values represent the hydrological conditions required to give the greatest certainty of achieving ecological outcomes along the SA River Murray.

The proposed changes do not impact on water licensees.

I want to find out more about...

The Water Allocation Plan for the River Murray Prescribed Watercourse:

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Environmental Water Planning:

Visit:

www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray/about-river-murray/improving-river-health/environmental-water/environmental-water-planning

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