

# Community update for Barwon-Darling, Menindee Lakes and Lower Darling-Baaka river

## Current Flows

Releases from Lake Pamamaroo were reduced to 1,200ML per day on 22 January (they were at 1,500ML/day), and flows from Lake Menindee will recommence at the rate of 300ML/day (they are currently at 0ML/day). Water quality will continue to be monitored, and flows adjusted as required to maintain adequate water quality conditions for fish health.

Conserving water in the upper lakes is necessary to manage water quality and support the health of fish in the weir pool. By carefully managing flows, we can better prepare for periods of poor water quality.

Dissolved oxygen (DO) has improved as higher DO water from Lake Pamamaroo continues to move down the Weir Pool. DO at Weir 32 has increased to 5.4 mg/L as of 22 January. Water quality will continue to be monitored daily.

## Algae Update

WaterNSW is closely monitoring algae levels in the Menindee Lakes. In Lake Wetherell, algae are more active near the surface during the day, while the water below stays still and separated. In the Darling River downstream of Menindee, the water is mixing well each morning, which helps keep oxygen levels safe for fish, but these are being closely monitored as part of ongoing efforts to maintain suitable water quality. [You can check alerts online on the WaterNSW website.](#)

## Lower Darling-Baaka Tube Fishway Trial - site work update

Access continues to be restricted to the site during placement of the Fishheart unit, with access to the nearby boat ramp closed during this period. Vehicle access on Main Weir Road will not be impacted, but please be aware of changed traffic conditions. Releases from Lake Pamamaroo will cease briefly on Thursday morning, whilst the new pontoon for the fishway is lowered into the river.

Progress continues to be made on the Lower Darling-Baaka Tube Fishway Trial project out at the Lake Wetherell Outlet Regulator near Menindee. The Fishheart team and contractors have worked through the summer to connect pipes, construct road crossings and secure equipment onsite. Plans are on track to have the Fishheart unit in the water before the end of January, with testing and calibration to follow. Please see the indicative map of the construction footprint for your reference and more information on the project can be found [here](#).

## Upcoming agency trips to the area

Below is a table outlining the dates and times our agencies will be visiting Menindee and the surrounding areas. Each agency will provide notice to the community if needed.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Reason for visit / Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
Biodiversity Conservation & Science	Week of 20 Jan	Sampling the lower Darling-Baaka between Menindee and Wentworth and the Anabranch for water quality	Wentworth - Menindee
WaterNSW	Wed 22 Jan	Algae monitoring	WaterNSW office Menindee
The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	10-14 Feb	Water monitoring	Darling River from Wilcannia to Pooncarie
Environment Protection Authority	Week of 17 Feb	Discussion with community on Draft Menindee Mass Fish Death Event Sub Plan	Menindee

## Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: [water.enquiries@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:water.enquiries@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>
- WaterNSW 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>
- Real-time water quality data from DCCEEW-BCS monitoring buoys can be accessed from the [Darling-Baaka River Health Project dashboard](#).
- WaterNSW buoy data can be found here <https://waterinsights.watarnsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/river-data>