

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

## Current conditions

Water conditions and flows in the Darling River around Menindee remain stable, with dissolved oxygen (DO) levels continuing to stay above critical thresholds for fish health. Releases from Lake Pamamaroo and Lake Menindee are being fine-tuned to meet the 1200 ML/day flow target at Weir 32. Flows from Lake Menindee continue to naturally decrease as the total volume of that lake decreases which means flows from Lake Pamamaroo need to be slightly increased. While we were hopeful that rainfall from the recent cyclone would contribute to inflows, very little rain penetrated inland and only an additional 15-30 GL is estimated to flow into the Lakes until the end of April. We continue to closely monitor conditions and will provide updates as they arise.

## Restoring the Darling-Baaka program update

The NSW Government is pleased to share the first six-monthly update on the Restoring the Darling-Baaka Program. This Program was our response to the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) Review of the 2023 mass fish deaths in Menindee. The update shows we have made significant progress in addressing the recommendations outlined in the Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) Report, delivering the projects that aim to improve ecological conditions. Thank you for your continued interest in the program. To read the NSW Government's six-month progress report, visit: <https://water.nsw.gov.au/restoring-the-darling-baaka-program>.

## Dissolved oxygen water quality updates - Murray Darling Basin

The latest Dissolved Oxygen Water Quality Update provides crucial insights into current water conditions and our efforts to maintain healthy oxygen levels. With ongoing monitoring and strategic flow adjustments, agencies are working to minimise risks to aquatic life and water quality. This update includes key findings from the summer season, recent dissolved oxygen trends, and management actions taken to prevent hypoxic blackwater events. For more information, or to read the full summary, visit [Hypoxic blackwater | NSW Government Water](#).

## 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.

Agency	When	Reason for visit / Activity	Location
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	8-13 April	Lower Darling-Baaka Temporary Fishway Trial opening events	Darling River Menindee

## Opening the Lower Darling-Baaka Temporary Fishway Trial

### DPIRD Fisheries would like to invite you to the Lower Darling-Baaka Temporary Fishway Trial opening events

The Menindee and Lower Darling-Baaka Temporary Fishway Trial project is part of the \$25 million *Restoring the Darling-Baaka River* program in response to the Office of Chief Scientists and Engineer's (OCSE) Independent Review into the 2023 Mass Fish Deaths in the Darling-Baaka River at Menindee ([Menindee Fish Deaths | Chief Scientist](#)). The project aims to trial fishway technology that can be easily and cost-effectively retrofitted to existing structures to create temporary opportunities for fish to migrate upstream, helping to reduce fish biomass in the Menindee town weir pool on the Lower Darling-Baaka River.

#### Event details

**Date:** 8 - 13 April 2025, with formal opening Saturday 12 April

**Location:** Lake Wetherell Outlet Regulator, Main Weir Road, Menindee

#### Program

**Tuesday April 8 to Friday April 11:** Site tours running for 2 hours in the morning (9am-11am) and afternoon (2pm-4pm) with small groups and less formal opportunity for project partners (gov and non-gov), interested parties and general community to come to site to hear and see the temporary fishway in action.

**Saturday April 12:** Formal open day (10am – 3pm) for the temporary fishway trial project including welcome, monitoring demonstrations and displays, painting of tubes, and catering.

**Sunday April 13:** Site tour running for 2 hours in the morning (10am-12pm) with a small group and less formal opportunity for community to finish art installation.

If attending, please RSVP via the following link by **Monday 31 March 2025** – **Lower Darling-Baaka Temporary Fishway Trial opening events**

## 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>