

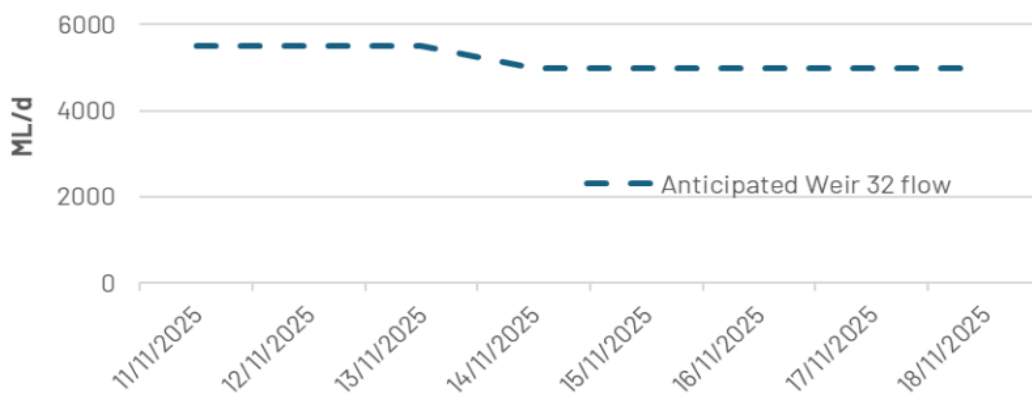
Community update for Barwon–Darling, Menindee Lakes and Lower Darling–Baaka river

Current conditions

The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) announced this week a further reduction in their call on Menindee from 5,500 ML/day to 5,000 ML/day. Flows at Weir 32 will decrease from today Friday 14 November and will remain at this level until further notice. The water level at Weir 32 for releases at 5,000 ML/day is around 2.35 metres. The reduction of 500 ML/day will be made from Lake Wetherell Outlet in order to maintain water resources in the upper lakes.

Figure 1. Forecast hydrograph for Weir 32 (subject to change)

Forecast hydrograph for Weir 32 (subject to change):



The decrease in the MDBA call on water is to support management of resources across the Murray-Darling Basin. Water quality within the Menindee weir pool is currently good with the department continuing to closely monitor any changes and ready to alter the release strategy if required.

Menindee Lakes currently holds 1,292 GL (74.6% of the total capacity). Operations have prioritised maintaining Lakes Wetherell and Pamamaroo at full supply level for as long as possible, however releases from these top lakes have now exceeded inflows. Consequently, expect to see the level of these lakes decline moving forward unless there are more rain events in the northern Basin.

Inflows

Flows from the northern Basin have receded considerably in recent weeks. WaterNSW’s latest inflow update was released 23 October and indicated 40-80 GL was expected to enter Menindee Lakes by the end of November. As at 14 November, flows at Wilcannia remain just above 1,000 ML/day and at Bourke flows have reduced to 827 ML/day.

Darling Baaka River Health – Community event

The Darling Baaka River Health Project is a research and monitoring program, led by the department’s Science and Insights division, that assessed the health of the lower Darling Baaka between Wilcannia and Wentworth following the 2023 fish deaths. Recently released findings highlight a river system under stress, with most of the lower Darling Baaka characterised by poor water quality, poor biological condition and high levels of hydrological stress. The Darling Baaka River Health report card is available [here](#). Figure 2 shows a snapshot of the report card.

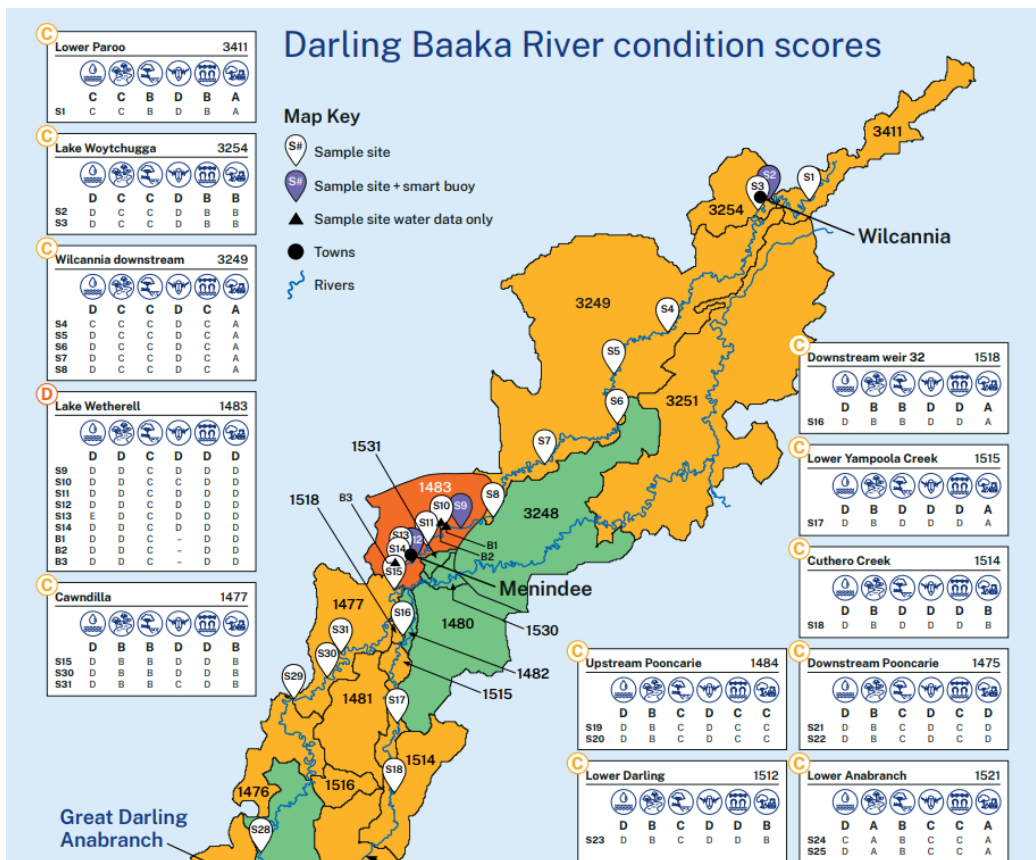
Next week the department’s Science and Insights division will be holding community events to talk about the findings of the Darling Baaka River Health Project.

We’ll be visiting both Wilcannia and Menindee with the project scientists and partners.

- Wilcannia, Baker Park: Monday 17 November 11 am- 2 pm (lunch provided)
- Menindee, CWA Hall: Tuesday 18 November 11 am – 2 pm (lunch provided)

For all enquiries please email: zacchary.larkin@environment.nsw.gov.au

Figure 2. Snapshot of the Darling Baaka River condition scores from the Darling Baaka River Health Project



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
The department- Strategic Science & Engagement	17 th November 11am-2pm	Darling Baaka River health report card community event and lunch	Wilcannia - Baker Park
The department - Strategic Science & Engagement	18 th November 11am-2pm	Darling Baaka River health report card community event and lunch	Menindee - CWA Hall

Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: water.enquiries@dcceew.nsw.gov.au
- To view community updates issued, visit water.nsw.gov.au/menindee-updates
- If you've got any questions regarding this update or other water matters **contact your local implementation officer, Kate McBride on 0458 945 149** or kate.mcbride@dcceew.nsw.gov.au
- To report dead fish, fish struggling or gasping at the water surface, or crayfish leaving the water please call the **NSW Department of Primary Industry Fisheries Phonenumber 1800 043 536** or fill in a fish kill protocol and report form at: 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 department's website at: water.nsw.gov.au/hypoxic-blackwater
- Additional information is also available on the Murray–Darling Basin Authority website at: www.mdba.gov.au/climate-and-river-health/water-quality/fish-deaths
www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/infrastructure/menindee-lakes
- WaterNSW operational updates are available in [WaterInsights](#)
- Water quality data collected after the fish deaths at Menindee is available on the Environment Protection Authority web page at: www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/updates-on-issues/menindee-fish-kill
- Real-time water quality data from The department – Strategic Science & Engagement monitoring buoys can be accessed from the [Darling–Baaka River Health Project dashboard](#)
- Data from the WaterNSW gauging network can be found in WaterInsights at: <https://waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/river-data>