

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

## Lake Pamamaroo releases reduced

Flows from Lake Pamamaroo have been further reduced today (20 April) from 400 ML/day to 350 ML/day. This reduction is to conserve water in the upper lakes while also maintaining dissolved oxygen (DO) at safe levels for fish health. Following a meeting of the Menindee/ Lower Darling Water Quality Working Group this morning, the decision to further reduce releases was made, following a similar reduction last week. The department will continue to monitor water quality conditions and will implement a change to releases if required.

Lake Menindee Outlet will remain fully open, with a natural recession of flow as the lake level recedes. The MDBA will continue to reduce their call in line with this recession. The current discharge of approximately 598 ML/day at Weir 32 is expected to decrease in the coming days, to a new target of 550 ML/day due to the reduction of discharge from Lake Pamamaroo.

Customers and landholders are advised to monitor river levels closely to make necessary arrangements to ensure infrastructure and livestock are not impacted.

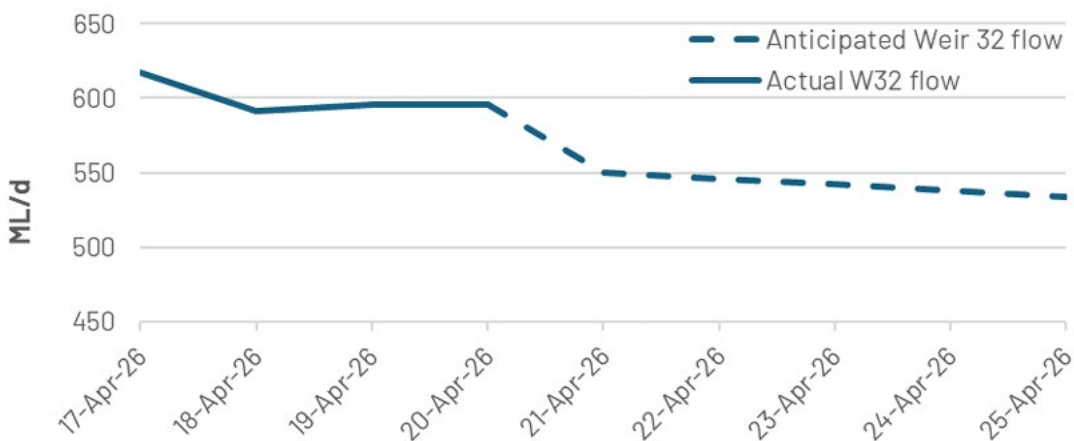


Figure 1. WaterNSW operational graph showing anticipated Weir 32 flow for the next week.

## Inflow forecast

No further update has been released since 8 April, which forecast a further 20-40 GL to enter the Menindee Lakes by the end of May. The inflows from the Culgoa catchment continue to move through the Darling system.

Discharge at Wilcannia has increased significantly in the last week to 1,307 ML/day. Upstream, Darling at Louth has begun to reduce from last week's peak and today is discharging 1,540 ML/day.

## Temporary Water Restrictions

Last week temporary water restrictions were implemented in the Barwon Darling and northern tributaries. The restrictions are to provide vital protection of flows and will reduce the risk of critical water shortages in the lower Darling.

As dry conditions and minimal inflows are continuing, protecting water supply for critical human and environmental needs is a key priority. The overarching aim of the restriction is to ensure that critical needs (town water supply, basic landholder rights, domestic and stock, and environmental needs) are met if there are inflows following an extended dry period in the Lower Darling.

The restrictions were put in place following the upper Menindee Lakes falling below 250 GL active storage. This represents less than 12 months' supply for critical needs downstream.

Restricted licences:

- Barwon Darling: B and C Class licences
- Northern Murray-Darling Basin regulated river valleys: floodplain harvesting and supplementary licences
- Certain unregulated river access licences in the Gwydir and Macquarie valleys that link the regulated systems to the Barwon Darling

For more information see our website: [Temporary water restrictions | Water](#)

## Algae alerts

<b>RED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lake Wetherell Site 1, Sunset Strip, Lake Menindee, Lake Menindee Outlet and Darling River at Weir 32</li> <li>• Louth</li> <li>• Pooncarie</li> <li>• WaterNSW will continue to undertake weekly sampling at these sites</li> </ul>
<b>AMBER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copi Hollow, Lake Cawndilla Outlet, Lake Pamamaroo Outlet and multiple sites along Lake Wetherell</li> <li>• Burtundy, Tolarno, Ellerslie and Tapio</li> </ul>

**GREEN**

- Darling River pump station (Menindee town), Lake Tandure, and Lake Pamamaroo centre
- Bourke

## Note/s:

- Pooncarie has been updated to RED alert.
- Sites currently on RED alert will continue to be sampled weekly by WaterNSW.
- For the latest algal alerts and information, go to [Algae Alerts NSW map - WaterNSW](#)

## More 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](mailto:water.enquiries@dcceew.nsw.gov.au)
- To view community updates issued, visit [water.nsw.gov.au/menindee-updates](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://www.mdba.gov.au/climate-and-river-health/water-quality/fish-deaths)  
[www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/infrastructure/menindee-lakes](http://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](http://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.watarnsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/river-data>