

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

Lake Pamamaroo releases reduced

Flows from Lake Pamamaroo have been reduced today (29 April) from 350 ML/day to 300 ML/day. This decision was made by the Menindee/Lower Darling Water Quality Working Group (WQWG) yesterday and the reduction is to conserve water in the upper lakes while also maintaining dissolved oxygen (DO) at safe levels for fish health in the Menindee weir pool. This follows similar reductions made in the past two weeks by the WQWG. 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 outlet is currently discharging ~100ML/day and the MDBA will continue to reduce their call in line with this recession. The current discharge of approximately 450 ML/day at Weir 32 is expected to decrease in the coming days, to a new target of 400 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.

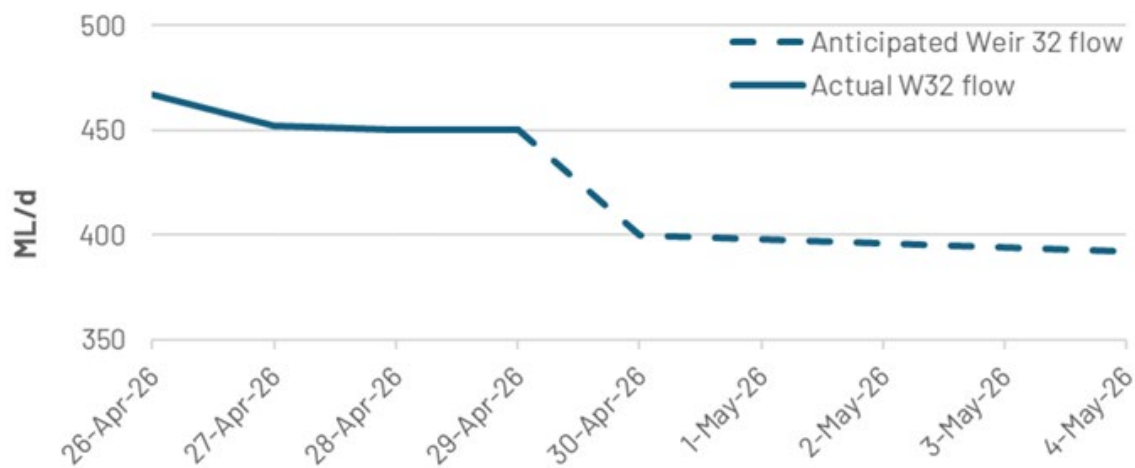


Figure 1. WaterNSW operational graph showing anticipated Weir 32 flow for the next week.

Inflow forecast

No further inflow update has been released since 8 April when the forecast was for 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 and have reached Lake Wetherell.

Discharge at Wilcannia peaked on Friday and has decreased slightly to 1, 267 ML/day today. Upstream, flows at Louth continues to fall, discharging 690 ML/day with Bourke discharging 449 ML/day.

Temporary Water Restrictions

Temporary water restrictions have been 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 for the Lower Darling-Baaka. If the upper lakes storage rises above 250 GL active, the restrictions set out in the s324 Order will no longer apply, while water sharing plan rules continue to be in place. If the active volume in the upper lakes once again falls to below 250 GL the temporary water restrictions will once again apply. The upper lakes are currently at 247 GL active volume.

Restricted licences:

- Barwon Darling: B and C Class licences (note that there is already a rule in the Barwon Darling water sharing plan that restricts floodplain harvesting when the upper lakes fall below 250GL)
- 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](#)

Fisheries – fishway trial update

Season 2 of the temporary fishway trial is coming to an end with plans to close the fishway on 18 May. Seasonal decommissioning will commence the following week, with the Fishheart unit to be removed for off-season maintenance before being installed again for Season 3 in spring 2026.

Over 25,000 fish have moved through the fishway so far in Season 2, dominated by Bony Herring and Golden Perch, as well as the first recordings of Murray Cod and Silver Perch for the trial.

For more information and interim results for 2026 visit [Tales from the Tube | Department of Primary Industries](#).

Menindee Review

The MDBA Menindee Review team will be back in Menindee on **Wednesday May 13**. A community drop-in session will be held at the **town hall between 12pm and 6pm** following a visit to sunset strip in the morning.

The review wants to hear

- What is most important to you about Menindee Lakes?
- What options should be considered to improve the lakes?
- What are the main issues you would like to see addressed?

NSW DCCEEW-Water Group staff will also be in attendance and are keen to hear from community and answer any questions regarding water matters.

For further information please contact Richard on 0448 456 237

Algae alerts

RED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Wetherell Site 1, Sunset Strip, Lake Menindee, Lake Menindee Outlet and Darling River at Weir 32 • Louth • Pooncarie
AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copi Hollow, Lake Cawndilla Outlet, Lake Pamamaroo Outlet and multiple sites along Lake Wetherell • Burtundy, Tolarno, Ellerslie and Tapio
GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darling River pump station (Menindee town), Lake Tandure, and Lake Pamamaroo centre • Bourke

Note/s:

- 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](#)
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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
- 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>