

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

## Increased releases from Pamamaroo

Releases from Lake Pamamaroo will increase today following an order from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) to increase the baseflow in the Lower Darling over winter to support juvenile native fish. This flow will include 200 ML/day of environmental flows in addition to 200 ML/day of minimum baseflows.

Releases from Pamamaroo Outlet will increase from 250 ML/day to approximately 380 ML/day from today to achieve this flow target, while Menindee Outlet will remain fully open. Pamamaroo Outlet will be adjusted as required to maintain a flow target of 400 ML/d at Weir 32.

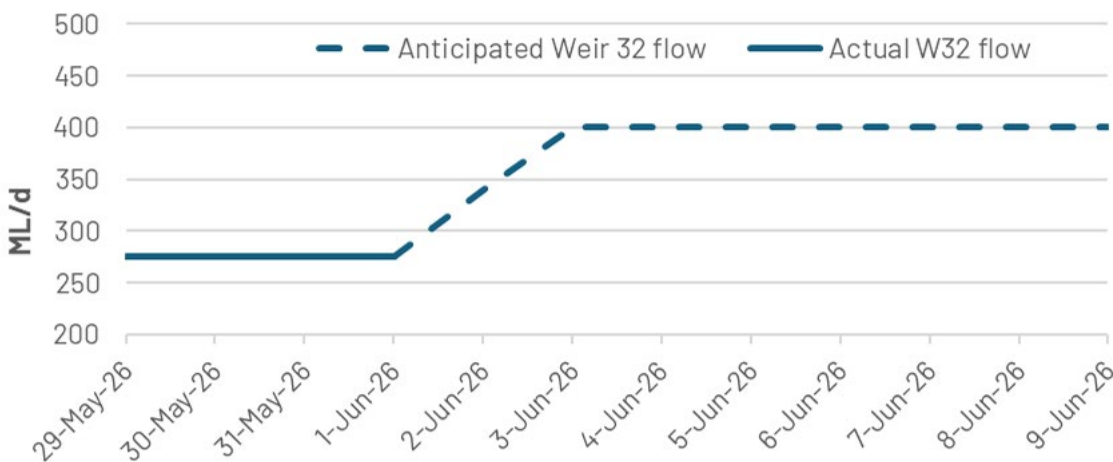


Figure 1: Water NSW operational graph showing anticipated Weir 32 flow for the next week.

As of this morning, current flows over Weir 32 are 262 ML/day. WaterNSW advises users in the weir pool and downstream of Weir 32 that flows may fluctuate over the coming days and should be considerate of the variable changes. Customers and landholders are advised to monitor warnings and river levels closely to make necessary arrangements to ensure infrastructure and livestock are not impacted.

The community has raised concerns regarding the impacts of this flow on critical needs in coming months. Environmental water holders recognise these concerns, especially in dry conditions, and considered this in making their decision. More information is available in CEWH’s media release: [Murray cod to be given fighting chance – DCCEEW](#).

Detailed scientific advice can be found on the CEWH's website: [Latest water use – lower Darling / Baaka region - DCCEEW](#). You can also contact the CEWH via email at: [ewater@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:ewater@dcceew.gov.au).

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## Current conditions

Significant algal activity continues at many local sites, and the Pamamaroo Inlet Regulator remains closed to manage water quality conditions within the upper lakes. Please see updated algal alerts for the region below.

The most recent inflow forecast from 6 May indicated only a further 10-15 GL is expected to reach Menindee Lakes by the end of June. At this stage there are no further significant flows identified across the Barwon-Darling Catchment. Upstream, flows continue to recede with Wilcannia discharging 411 ML/day and 247 ML/day passing Bourke.

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## Improved access to potable (treated) water- Sunset Strip

Following meetings between the Sunset Strip community and Essential Water regarding potable water, a new water access tap has been installed in Menindee.

The tap is located at the **Menindee Elevated Water Tank**, on the corner of **Candilla Street** and **Bourke Street**. The tap is mounted on a white pole outside the fenceline.

To help ensure this asset remains available and protected for long-term community benefit, access to the tap is restricted via a metal enclosure secured by a combination padlock. Please contact Essential Water or Kate McBride (phone number below) for the access code.

Essential Water kindly asks all users to make sure the enclosure is properly secured after each use by closing it and resetting the lock.

If you have any questions or encounter any difficulties while accessing the tap, please don't hesitate to reach out to Essential Water on 1800 441 888 for support.

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## Temporary Water Restrictions in the northern Basin

In April, temporary water restrictions were implemented in the Barwon-Darling and northern tributaries to provide protection of flows to reduce the risk of critical water shortages in the Lower Darling. The restrictions were put in place following the upper Menindee Lakes (Pamamaroo, Wetherell, Tandure and Copi Hollow) falling below 250 GL active storage.

With the upper lakes active storage currently at 258 GL, the restrictions have been temporarily lifted as this is above the 250 GL trigger. You can find the announcement here: [WaterInsights -](#)

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WaterNSW. Once the upper lakes fall below 250 GL active storage, which is expected in coming weeks, the restrictions will be reinstated immediately.

The combined active storage of the upper lakes (see below) is updated daily and available at: WaterInsights - WaterNSW.

## Combined Upper Lakes Active Storage



[View historical dam storage data](#)

[Read more](#) 



Figure 2 Screenshot of Combined Upper Lakes Active Storage from the WaterInsights page.

While the restrictions are temporarily lifted, water sharing plan rules remain in place. For more information see our website: [Temporary water restrictions | Water](#)

## Algae alerts

<b>RED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunset Strip, Lake Menindee, Lake Menindee Outlet and Darling River at Weir 32</li> <li>• Louth</li> <li>• Tolarno, Pooncarie and Burtundy</li> </ul>
<b>AMBER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copi Hollow, Lake Cawndilla Outlet, Lake Pamamaroo Outlet and all Lake Wetherell sites, including Lake Tandure</li> <li>• Darling River Pumping Station (Menindee Town)</li> <li>• <b>Ellerslie</b>, Tapio and Silver City Highway (Great Darling Anabranh)</li> <li>• Wilcannia</li> </ul>
<b>GREEN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>

### Note/s:

- Sites currently on **RED** alert will continue to be sampled weekly by WaterNSW (excluding Louth and the centre of Lake Menindee, and other sites as required).
- Bold indicates a change since our last community update.
- Local residents and landholders are encouraged to sign up to the WaterNSW [WaterInsights](#) portal for automated BGA notifications, or monitor the [WaterNSW Algae Alerts Map](#).

## 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.dcceew.nsw.gov.au/menindee-updates](http://water.dcceew.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](#).
- 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.waternsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/river-data>