Operations update

WaterNSW

Releases to commence from Menindee lakes

13 March 2020

WaterNSW advises customers and stakeholders that water release from Menindee Lakes system will commence from Monday 16 March 2020 after a prolonged dry spell.

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

The flows from the Darling River has reached Menindee Lakes system on 11 March. WaterNSW is consulting with customers and community regarding the shape of release from storage, with the key aims of minimising risks to remaining native fish and provide a flushing of the river.

Meanwhile, as a first stage, the water supply to the top section of the Darling River between Main Weir and Weir-32 section will commence on Monday 16 March.

The release will be made at a rate of up to 400ML/day from Lake Wetherell and the water is intended to fill Weir-32. The town pool will need to be raised from current level 52.06m to 52.86m that is about 80 cm before it spills over Weir-32. Very little water is expected to flow over Weir-32 at this stage.

Removal of the Lower Darling block banks is planned to commence on Monday 16 March. All privately licenced banks within the bed of the Lower Darling River should now be removed in preparation for the connectivity flows.

Further, planning is underway for the second stage of connectivity flow to the Murray River at Wentworth. It is expected that releases will commence no earlier than 20 March, with flows increased over four days to a release rate of at least 2,000 ML/day. The higher release is likely to be maintained for a period of days and may be adjusted based on how quickly or slowly water is moving through the system and the water quality results. The releases will then be reduced gradually to 300 ML/day.

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