

Operations update



Update on Releases from Menindee lakes

20 March 2020

Releases from Wetherell Lake Main Weir have continued since Wednesday 18 March. Ongoing water quality monitoring has shown continued mixing within the Wetherell storage, and improvement of water quality.

Based on these improvements, WaterNSW has today opened Wetherell outlet with the aim of passing 50 ML/day, providing a total release of approximately 250 ML/day.

Water quality monitoring will continue through the release process so that risks to remaining native fish can be reviewed.

It is expected that releases over Weir 32 will commence around the 26th of March, however the exact date is dependent on the progress of bank removal.

When releases over Weir 32 commence they will be increased over 3-4 days to a release rate of between 2,000 and 4,000 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.

WaterNSW is continuing to consult 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.

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.

Removal of the Lower Darling block banks is progressing. Removal of the bank at Karoola is now complete, and equipment is now being move to Court Nareen.

Based on no rainfall – it is now expected that all banks will be removed by 4 April. All privately licenced banks within the bed of the Lower Darling River should now be removed in preparation for the connectivity flows.

WaterNSW is working with MDBA to manage a drawdown of Wentworth Weir to assist in moving poor quality water through the weir pool as quickly as possible. MDBA has commenced consultation with key stakeholders and more information will be provided as the plan for drawdown is developed.

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