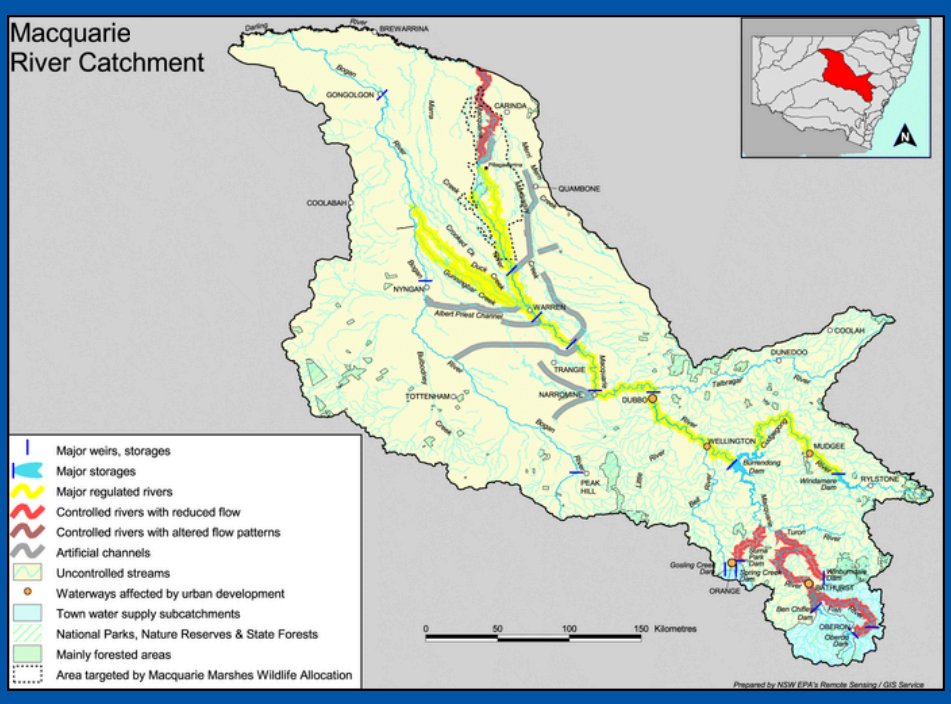
Water in MACQUARIE VALLEY



Fast Facts

Where:	Northern NSW
LGAs:	Bathurst Orange Dubbo Warren
Basin:	Murray-Darling
Catchment area:	7% of Murray-Darling Basin
Contribution to Basin:	8.4% of Murray-Darling Basin

Wiradjuri Country

The Wiradjuri (Three Rivers) people are the Traditional Owners of the upper and middle Macquarie Valley. In 2021, Wambuul (meaning winding river) was recognised as an official dual name for the Macquarie River. In the western plains, the catchment also includes the Wailwan, Ngemba and Ngiyampaa Nations.

Wiradjuri Dictionary - Learn about the Wiradjuri language.

Water for Country - Incorporates Aboriginal knowledge in environmental water planning

Macquarie Rivers

Distributaries

flow away (*takes*) from Macquarie River

- Marthaguy Creek
- Ewenmar Creek

Tributaries

flow towards (*adds to*) *Macquarie* River

- Fish River
- Campbell River
- Turon River
- Cudgegong River
- Bell River
- Little River
- Talbragar River

Macquarie Catchment

Boundaries

- East – Great Dividing Range and Central Tablelands
- West – Barwon River and Barwon floodplain
- North – Castlereagh catchment and Border Rivers
- South – Lachlan catchment and Central West uplands

Key Ecosystems

- Macquarie Marshes - One of Australia's largest, inland, semi-permanent wetland systems. They are internationally recognised under the Ramsar Convention and provide habitat for large waterbird breeding colonies.

Economy

- Agriculture - Extensive livestock grazing accounts for 70–80% of the land area in the catchment.
- Mining is a major contributor to economies in the upper and central catchment, particularly around Orange, Parkes and Wellington.

Other

- The Macquarie, Castlereagh and Bogan Rivers run parallel across the western plains, connecting through creeks and flood channels during floods.

Sustainable Rivers Audit | Macquarie Water Plan | Macquarie Marshes

Burrendong

Completed in 1967



Closest Town:	Wellington
River:	Macquarie
Dam Size:	78 m x 1,116 m
Capacity:	1,154 GL
Reservoir:	72 km^2

Windamere

Completed in 1984



Closest Town:	Mudgee
River:	Cudgegong
Dam Size:	67 m x 825 m
Capacity:	367 GL
Reservoir:	20 km^2

Oberon

Completed in 1959



Closest Town:	Oberon
River:	Fish
Dam Size:	33.5 m x 232 m
Capacity:	45 GL
Reservoir:	4 km^2

Water Users

Local water users can join WaterNSW's Customer Advisory Groups (CAGs) and meet regularly to raise issues, provide advice, and share information.

The federal and state governments hold water licenses and plan how they use water for the environment.

Irrigators | Livestock | Cotton | Industry | Mining | Towns | Recreation | Cultural | Environment

Managing Water

Water is a precious resource that is protected by laws and carefully managed by three main agencies in NSW.

Dept of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment & Water (DCCEEW)

Makes the rules

Plan and develop laws, policies, and guidelines for everyone to follow

WaterNSW

Implements the rules

- Manage NSW's river systems & 41 dams
- Organise most users' licensing & approvals
- Monitor water for other agencies

Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR)

Enforces the rules

Oversee and investigate to make sure everyone is following the rules

Native Species



Golden Perch



Murray Cod

The Macquarie Valley is home to many native species, including threatened plants and animals. DPIF manages threatened fish.



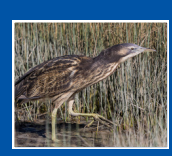
Straw-Necked Ibis



Broad-shelled turtle



Eel-Tailed Catfish



Australasian Bittern

Local River Projects

Macquarie Marshes Water Usage: An interesting mini documentary highlighting the different users of the marshes and their perspectives on water management

Macquarie-Wambuul Water Security Project: A project aimed at strengthening drought resilience while protecting flows to the Macquarie Marshes.

Macquarie Re-regulating Storage: A proposal to constructing a new re-regulating gated weir and fishway structure on the Macquarie River.