

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 17 September 2008

*Our Ref : M2008/00001/MS
Trim Ref : 08/9538*

19 September, 2008



Rainfall and Inflows

Over the past week the best falls of rain were received along the eastern highlands from Victoria to central NSW. The heaviest falls occurred across the upper Murray and the central tablelands with Orange receiving 58 mm of rain (see map). Western NSW was the only part of the Basin to record no rain, with most of the Basin receiving at least 1 to 10 mm.

Streams in the upper Murray had the largest response to the rain with Jingellic temporarily increasing from 5 000 to over 10 000 ML/day and Biggara increasing from 1 000 to over 4 000 ML/day. Streamflow response in the Ovens and Kiewa catchments was relatively poor. The rain is expected to increase September inflows to the Murray system by about 60 GL (excluding Snowy release and inflows to Menindee Lakes). September inflows are tracking at around 300 to 350GL, above the minimum (123 GL) recorded in 2006 but still significantly below the long term average of about 1 600 GL.

River Operations

The recent rain brought an increase in storage in Dartmouth Reservoir of 15 GL to a total 795 GL (or 20% of capacity) and storage in Hume Reservoir increased by 62 GL to reach a total of 962 GL (31 % capacity). A minimum release is still being maintained at both Hume Reservoir (460 ML/day) and Dartmouth Reservoir (200 ML/day) to help maximise water storage for use later in the season. If conditions remain dry, the release from Hume is likely to be increased above the minimum next week in order to meet increasing river transmission losses and water demands further downstream.

The release from Yarrawonga Weir was reduced from 4 500 to 4 000 ML/day over the past week and is likely to be maintained at this level or higher as losses and demands downstream increase. Torrumbarry Weir pool is now at Full Supply Level (FSL) and may be partially drawn down by a maximum of 20 cm over coming weeks to boost downstream flows and increase variability in the water levels between Echuca and Torrumbarry.

NSW State Water will be temporarily increasing the water level in the Edward River upstream of Stevens Weir by about one metre during the last week of September. This will enable stock and domestic replenishment flows to be gravity fed into the Colligen/Niemur and Wakool/Yallakool systems (see media release attached). The Murray-Darling Basin Commission has purchased a large grazing property in New South Wales to help manage Indigenous cultural heritage sites on the shores of Lake Victoria and to ensure its future as a major water storage (see media release attached).

NSW has commenced releasing water from Menindee Lakes, with the aim of delivering about 170 GL into the Murray System over the next few months. The release from Weir 32 will be progressively increased to 4 000 ML/day by early October and is currently 350 ML/day. The higher flows are expected to reach the Murray within the next two weeks.

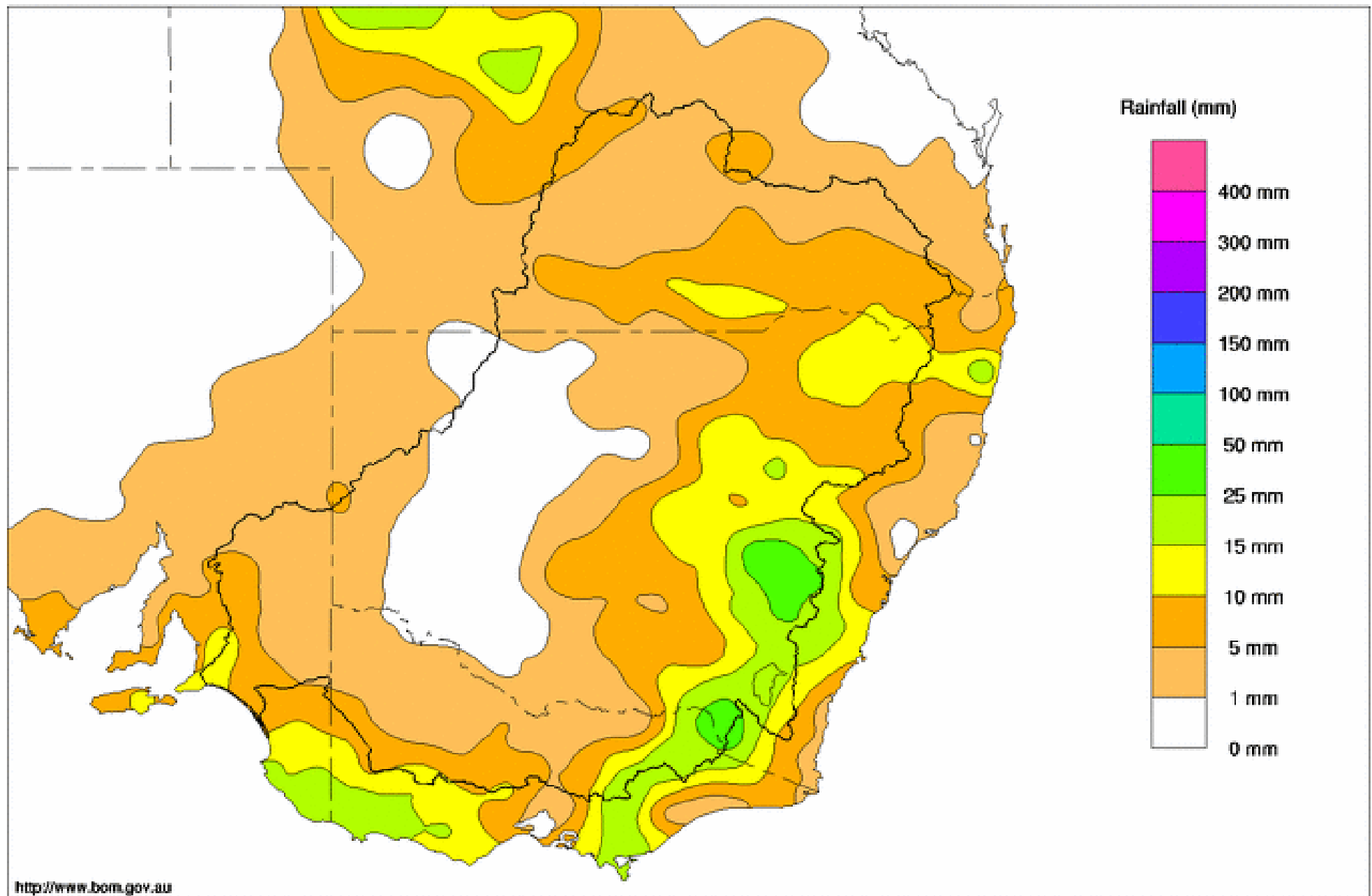
Locks 6 to 1 are all near, or at, FSL and release from Lock 1 has remained steady at around 1 800 ML/day. The water level in Lake Alexandrina decreased slightly over the past week and is now -0.26 m AHD, down 3 cm. Lake Alexandrina is expected to continue to gradually fall further if dry conditions persist and warmer temperatures set in. The water level in Lake Albert has also decreased slightly over the past week, falling 3cm to -0.21 m AHD.

For media inquiries contact: Sam Leone, phone 0407 006 332

DAVID DREVERMAN
General Manager

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 17th September 2008

Product of the National Climate Centre



Water in Storage

MDBC Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	MDBC Active Storage (GL)	Change in Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	415.72	793	20%	80	713	+13
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	178.17	953	31%	30	923	+50
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	23.77	321	47%	100	221	+1
Menindee Lakes		1 731 *		500	29%	(- -) #	0	-5
Total		9 352		2 567	27%	--	1 857	+58

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **22%**

NSW takes control of Menindee Lakes when storage falls below 480 GL, and control reverts to MDBC when storage next reaches 640 GL

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	479	47%	3	476	+5
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	808	50%	24	784	-2
Eildon Reservoir	3 390	767	23%	100	667	+19

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 16-Sep-2008

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2008
Lake Eucumbene - Total	346	+70	Snowy-Murray	+4	313
Snowy-Murray Component	170	+37	Tooma-Tumut	+14	108
Target Storage	1 240		Nett Diversion	-9.5	205
			Murray 1 Release	+20	407

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2008
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	1.1	29.0
Wakool System loss	0.0	.1
Western Murray Irrig.	0.3	.9
Licensed Pumps	1.1	5.9
Lower Darling	0.2	.6
TOTAL	2.6	36.6

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2008
Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	2.5	8
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	3.4	4
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	1.5	5 *
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.5	1
Licensed pumps - LMW	0.1	2
TOTAL	8.0	20 *

* Please note that these values do not include Millewa pumping figures.

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	135 *	
Flow this week	18.0	(2 600 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	39	
Flow last month	64	

* Reduced to approx. 70 GL during September drought contingency operations

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2008
Swan Hill	70	80	90
Euston	80	90	90
Red Cliffs	130	130	130
Merbein	130	130	130
Burtundy (Darling)	390	380	350
Lock 9	140	150	200
Lake Victoria	250	230	230
Berri	430	440	450
Waikerie	-	600	490
Morgan	570	560	510
Mannum	510	510	510
Murray Bridge	540	520	570
Milang (Lake Alex.)	3 540	3 630	3 540
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	2 780	2 960	3 080
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	5 030	4 970	4 990
Goolwa Barrages	14 090	15 310	18 300



River Levels and Flows

	Minor Flood stage (m)	Gauge height		Flow (ML/day)	Trend	Average flow this week (ML/day)	Average flow last week (ML/day)
		local (m)	(m AHD)				
River Murray							
Khancoban	-	-	-	3 590	F	4 770	4 570
Jingellic	4.0	2.14	208.66	8 400	F	7 370	6 860
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.50	218.39	820	R	760	810
Heywoods	5.5	1.12	154.75	460	S	460	460
Doctors Point	5.5	1.70	150.17	2 170	F	1 660	1 600
Albury	4.3	0.82	148.26	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	0.50	126.52	1 310	R	1 310	1 680
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	0.80	115.84	4 000	S	4 060	4 450
Tocumwal	6.4	1.23	105.07	4 080	S	4 240	4 200
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.19	79.74	3 010	F	3 340	2 890
Swan Hill	4.5	0.76	63.68	3 130	S	3 010	2 820
Wakool Junction	8.8	1.83	50.95	3 560	S	3 300	3 670
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	0.71	42.55	3 200	R	3 170	3 890
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 610	F	2 900	3 570
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.81	27.57	2 490	R	2 720	3 380
Rufus Junction	-	2.72	19.65	2 260	F	2 120	1 700
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-0.18	-	1 840	S	1 740	1 870
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.85	155.08	1 990	F	1 450	1 400
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	8.62	146.30	2 565	R	2 520	3 780
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.08	92.50	326	F	360	400
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	0.69	80.47	430	S	590	500
Edward at Liewah	-	1.12	56.50	522	F	560	660
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.86	54.35	0	F	0	0
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.32	56.28	112	F	120	140
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.23	-	85	F	130	20
Darling at Bourke	-	3.93	-	5	S	10	10
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.69	-	58	R	50	40

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	10 520	10 720
---	--------	--------

Weirs and Locks

Pool levels above or below design level

Murray	FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s		FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s
Yarrowonga	124.90	-0.37	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	-0.12	+0.41
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	-0.02	-0.04
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.01	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	-0.01	+0.04
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.00	+0.02	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	-0.01	+0.25
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.00	+0.17	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	-0.03	+0.11
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.02	-0.02	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.01	+0.12
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.01	-0.07	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.01	-0.93

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-0.77	0.39	69.74	106
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.68	0.025	61.325	172.305



Lower Lakes

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

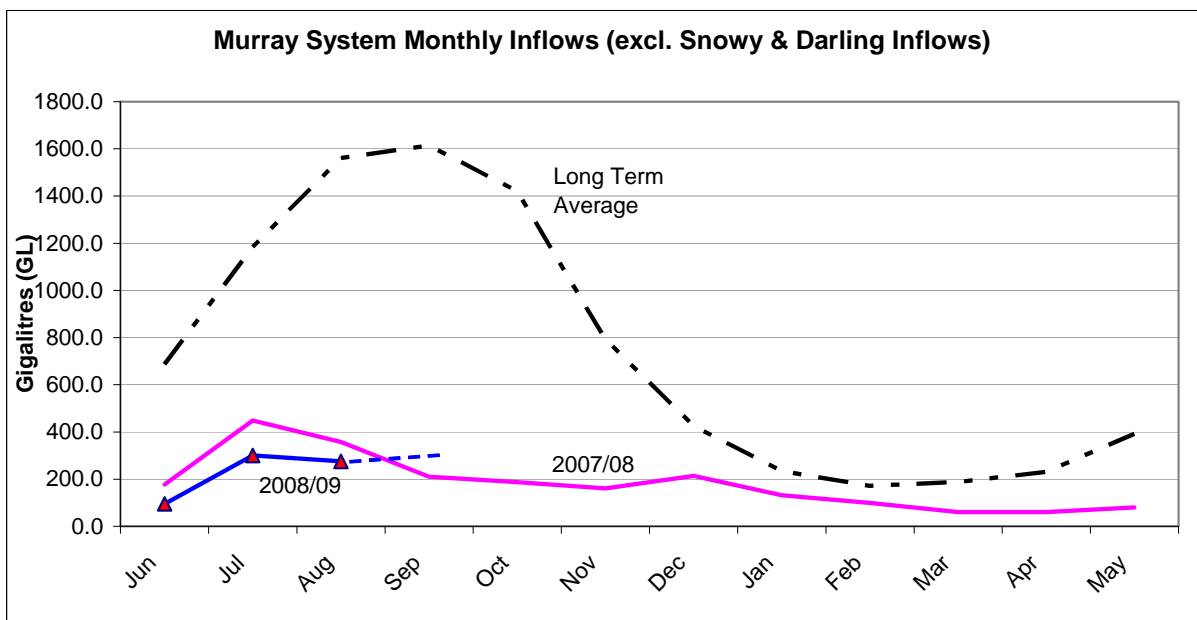
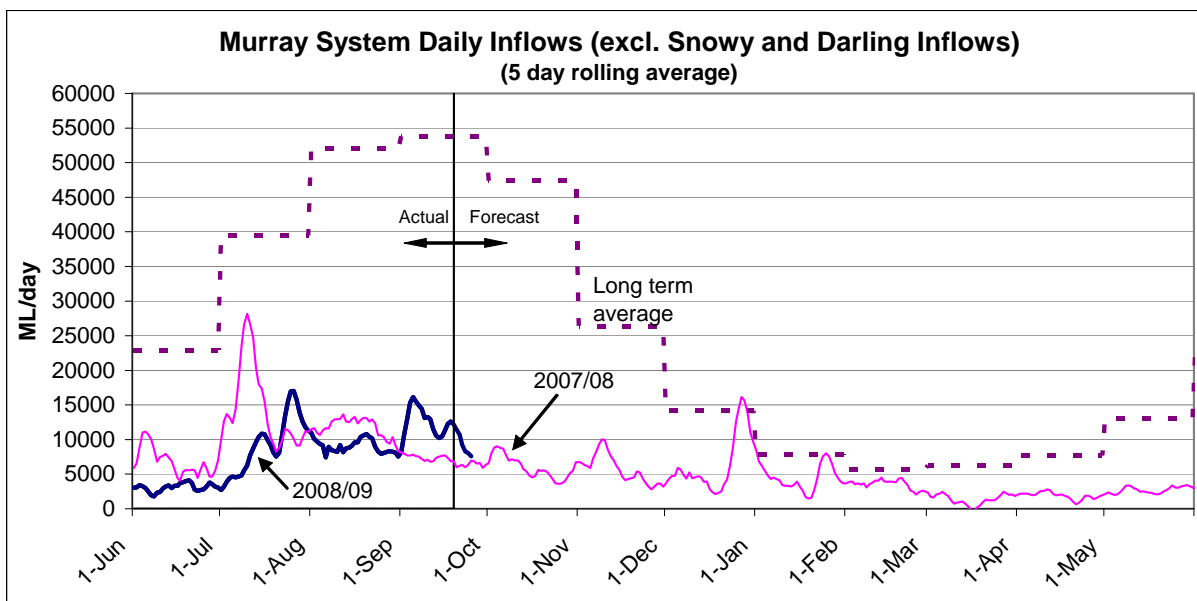
	(m AHD)
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days	-0.26

Barrages

Fishways @ Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	Status	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	-0.13	All closed	-	Closed
Mundoo	26 openings	-0.30	All closed	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed	-	-
Tauwicheere	322 gates	-	All closed	Closed	Closed

AHD = Level relative to Australian Height Datum, i.e. height above sea level



State Allocations (as at 17th September 2008)

NSW - Murray Valley

High security	50%
General security	0%

NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley

High security	75%
General security	0%

NSW - Lower Darling

High security	100%
General security	0%

Victoria - Murray Valley

high reliability	6%
------------------	----

Victoria - Goulburn Valley

high reliability	4%
------------------	----

South Australia - Murray Valley

irrigation allocation	11%
-----------------------	-----



- NSW : http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mr_toc_currnr.html
- VIC : <http://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/allocations/current.asp>
- SA : <http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/media.html>

EDWARD RIVER LEVEL TO RISE

17 September 2007

State Water today advised that the water level in the Edward River upstream of Stevens Weir will be temporarily increased by about one metre during the last week of September.

General Manager Water Delivery Dan Berry said that the increase in water level upstream of Stevens Weir was necessary to gravity supply stock and domestic replenishment flows into the Colligen/Niemur and Wakool/Yallakool systems.

"On 29 September, State Water will commence replenishment flows into the Wakool/Yallakool and Colligen/Niemur systems at the Yallakool and Colligen Creek offtakes.

"In order to gravity flow water into the Yallakool Creek, the water level at Stevens Weir needs to be increased by about one metre above the current level of 3.3m.

"The Edward River level at Deniliquin is also expected to initially rise by about one metre above the current level of 0.75m but will then rise and fall as river flows vary over the coming weeks.

"After replenishment flows into the Wakool/Yallakool system are completed in November, system requirements will be reviewed and a determination made on if the Stevens Weir pool level will be maintained or reduced back to a level similar to current operating requirements," Mr Berry concluded.

River users are advised to consider the expected changes in river levels when planning their activities.

Further advice regarding stock and domestic replenishment flows into the Colligen/Niemur and Wakool/Yallakool systems will be provided at a later date.

Customers requiring further information regarding river levels and flows should contact the Duty Operations Officer on (03) 5898 3925.

-ENDS-

Media enquiries and interviews:

Tony Webber 02 6841 2006 or 0428 613 478



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 17 September 2008

Station purchase helps balance Lake Victoria water storage and Indigenous heritage

The Murray-Darling Basin Commission (MDBC) today announced the purchase of a 48,000 hectare grazing property in New South Wales to help manage Indigenous cultural heritage sites on the shores of Lake Victoria and to ensure its future as a major water storage.

Acting Chief Executive David Dreverman said that the \$5 million purchase of Nulla Station was made on behalf of the participating governments in the Murray-Darling Basin Commission by the New South Wales Department of Water and Energy (DWE).

“There are no irrigation water entitlements on the property,” Mr Dreverman said. “This is a strategic purchase from a willing seller that allows us to operate the Lake Victoria water storage in accordance with the conditions under the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

“Under that arrangement, the MDBC is required to manage the water levels and grazing pressures on the lake foreshore to maximise native vegetation and to reduce erosion. This protects significant numbers of Aboriginal burials and artefacts discovered when the lake water level was lowered in 1996.”

Mr Dreverman said Lake Victoria is essential to ensure efficient management of water downstream of the Barmah Choke (near Echuca) including South Australian irrigation and urban water needs.

To achieve the balance between water supply and cultural conservation, the MDBC developed the Lake Victoria Cultural Landscape Plan of Management with representatives of the local Indigenous community, landholders, and NSW and SA government agencies.

“Vegetation around parts of the lake shore has suffered badly over time because of river regulation and stock grazing,” Mr Dreverman said.

“The MDBC has spent more than \$10 million on conservation projects to balance the needs of water users, the protection of cultural heritage and minimising negative impacts on the lake shores natural environment.”

Nulla Station is the third and largest Lake Victoria property the Commission has bought since 2002. All properties were bought through the NSW DWE.

“Removing the stock grazing impacts on the two previously purchased properties in conjunction with other improvements have led to a spectacular vegetation response, particularly given the prevailing drought conditions,” Mr Dreverman said. “Nulla Station was the last remaining area of the lake where we did not have such a stock grazing management strategy.”

Mr Dreverman said most of the Nulla Station land did not front Lake Victoria and much of it would not be required to protect the cultural heritage of the lake foreshore. The MDBC will eventually dispose of those portions not required after consultation with stakeholders.”

Media contact: Sam Leone, Phone: 0407 006 332

Trim ref: 08/9500