

Fact sheet

Hattah-Kulkyne National Park

Autumn 2021 delivery of water for the environment

Delivering water for
the community and
our environment



About Hattah-Kulkyne National Park

Hattah-Kulkyne National Park lies in Mallee country only 60 kilometres drive from Mildura, in far north-west Victoria. With its beautiful native woodlands, freshwater lakes and vast open spaces, it is a place deeply loved by many.

The Ramsar-listed lakes provide vitally important drought refuge for birds, animals and vegetation, while the significant cultural and social values of the landscape continue to connect Traditional Owners and community members with this amazing part of the country.

Hattah Lakes

Hattah Lakes are a system of interconnected wetlands intermittently filled by creeks connected to the Murray River. When river flows are not high enough to naturally connect the creeks to the river, environmental infrastructure can be used to get water to where it's needed most, without impacting on other river users. Hattah Lakes remains one of the best sites in the Murray-Darling Basin to witness the life-giving power of efficient water management.

Water for the environment and the community

The delivery of water to Hattah will reach 11 of the 18 recognised lakes in the Hattah Lakes system. This water will fill the lakes to retention level and provide excellent aquatic environment for wetland plants and animals.

Watering during May will allow the wetland plants and animals time to establish in the wetlands prior to the spring delivery and will stimulate productivity and cues in the lakes.

Delivery of environmental water is anticipated to start in May 2021 and be completed in early June 2021.

Access to certain camping grounds during the watering event may be impacted, for more information visit the Parks Victoria website www.parks.vic.gov.au.

Benefits of Autumn delivery

Delivery during Autumn reduces the chance of introducing carp to the lakes as there will be very low numbers of juveniles in the Murray and larger fish are less likely to be pumped through. This means aquatic vegetation will be able to establish undisturbed by carp turning the wetland base over.



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How will the community benefit from the lakes filling?

Hattah Lakes is a sought-after recreation destination, with camping, walking, bike riding and canoeing very popular activities providing great opportunities for the community to connect with nature and learn about the importance of the lakes.

Over many years and in partnership with Parks Victoria and Traditional Owners, the Mallee Catchment Management Authority has worked with a wide variety of community members including school children, bird watching groups, aspiring citizen scientists and bat monitors to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Hattah Lakes. Autumn watering will reduce the cues for breeding of pest animals, and will significantly reduce the growth and development of the pest animal populations.

How are we working with the community?

Mallee CMA and Parks Victoria have been working with numerous local groups to undertake citizen science activities, site tours and other events, such as bug monitoring and bat observations. These activities see citizen scientists play a key role in assessing the health of the area and informing future watering events.

Water for the environment – where have we come from?

Following two years of very little water delivery into the Hattah Lakes (2018-19 and 2019-20), the lakes have undergone a draw-down and drying event. During these dry years Lake Kramen was filled to provide refuge while the main Hattah lake system was completely dried to align with a more natural regime within basin conditions during limited flows. This management practice also enabled the drying of the two deepest lakes, Mornpall and Hattah. Drying of these two lakes is important as it provides the opportunity for lake bed herb land to develop, and allows enough time for these plants to complete a seed set event.

In addition to the establishment of lake bed herb lands, complementary outcomes such as the management of invasive species like European carp occurred.

Currently the most effective way to remove carp from a wetland is to instigate a drying cycle. The flow-on effect by minimising the impact of carp during re-inundation is of great benefit to the wetlands, including assisting the re-establishment of rooted wetland plants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) acknowledges and respects Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations. We recognise the diversity of their cultures and the deep connections they have with Victoria's lands and waters.

We value partnerships with them for the health of people and country. The Mallee CMA Board, management and staff pay their respects to Elders past and present, and recognise the primacy of Traditional Owners' obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for their traditional lands and waters.