

MEDIA RELEASE

Date: 6 October 2021

SPRING DELIVERY FOR THE MALLEE

After months of planning the first spring delivery of water for the environment has commenced in the Mallee.

The Mallee wetlands are home to some very unique animals and are a haven for waterbirds. It's vital to maintain and improve the condition of the plants and trees within the wetlands to ensure they can continue to provide food and shelter for many threatened and rare animals.

The spring watering in the Mallee will benefit a broad area, including wetlands within Merbein Common, lower Murray wetlands, local floodplains to support the significant flora and fauna at the sites and the Wimmera Mallee Wetlands. The Living Murray Icon sites Hattah Lakes, Lindsay, Wallpolla and Mulcra islands are also benefiting from watering during spring.

With over 730 kilometres of Murray River frontage within the Mallee CMA region, 22 wetlands on the river floodplain will receive water during spring 2021, with the aim to complete all water deliveries by the start of summer 2021.

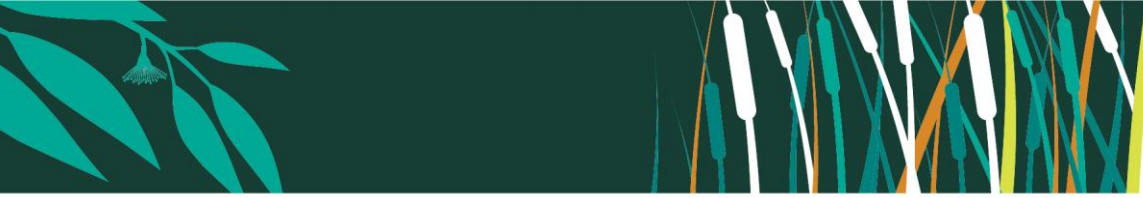
A significant watering event has commenced in October, at the Ramsar listed Hattah-Kulkyne National Park, building on the autumn delivery earlier this year. This provides great outcomes for the environment and the community through both recreational and ecological benefits. All of the 18 lakes at Hattah will receive water during spring, allowing full inundation of the wetlands, creeks and floodplains.

The lakes support many threatened and rare native species and ensuring they receive water means the area remains a place the whole community can enjoy. Kayakers, campers, bird watchers, anglers and walkers are all reaping the benefits, along with the lakes and floodplains in the National Park at Hattah.

Another site to receive water is Lake Hawthorn, a shallow lake near Mildura that provides critical habitat and food for migratory birds. The Lake provides the ideal environment for growing plankton, one of the key food sources for migratory birds, as thousands of birds visit this wetland each year from as far away as Siberia.

At the iconic Lindsay-Mulcra Wallpolla islands increased flows are being provided for fish, and low-level floodplain inundation to improve plant condition and provide bird feeding and breeding habitat. In addition to providing water for environmental benefit, delivery of water to the wetlands also supports cultural, social and economic value.

The wetlands and tributaries receiving environmental water in spring, within the Lindsay-Mulcra-Wallpolla Icon Site, have been prioritised based on their environmental condition, recommended frequency of watering, ecological, cultural and social values and feedback received from stakeholders and the local community.



Lake Wallawalla will continue to receive flows through spring, the site is significant for its Black box and Red Gum communities on the fringe of the lake. Located within the beautiful Murray-Sunset National Park approximately 100 kilometres from Mildura, Lake Wallawalla is an internationally important wetland. When inundated, this highly productive site supports a number of vegetation species listed as rare or threatened and provides a haven for a large range of water birds by providing a mosaic of feeding habitats and supporting breeding events.

The flows are authorised by the Victorian Environmental Water Holder in line with its Seasonal Watering Plan 2021-22, which is available for download from <http://vewh.vic.gov.au/watering-program/seasonal-watering-plan>. For a full list of sites, interactive map and further information about the environmental water delivery visit our website www.malleecma.com.au

During the watering, access to National Parks may be affected, to learn more about impacted tracks visit, Parks Victoria, for updated information prior to visiting the area. www.parks.vic.gov.au

Keep up to date with the latest information about the delivery of water for the environment and other important programs follow our social media.

Quotes attributable to Mallee CMA CEO Jenny Collins:

The delivery of water for the environment is important for the whole community, we must ensure a balance so our community and environment can prosper through its delivery. The rivers, wetlands and the natural landscapes within the Mallee provide many benefits for our region through recreation, eco-tourism, economic and cultural benefits.

Water is being delivered to important wetlands and floodplains around the region – places that represent the uniqueness of the Mallee and that support the threatened plants and animals that can be found there.

By working with our community and stakeholders to inform Mallee CMA's planning and delivery we can ensure water for the environment is delivered with a wide range of benefits for our community.

Ends

Download link – Photos related to release

<https://we.tl/t-7hLPR4jHtB>

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Background information:

The Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is a statutory authority established to ensure that natural resources in the region are managed in an integrated and ecologically sustainable way. Its work is based on science and delivered through meaningful partnerships with local organisations such as Landcare, community groups, and government agencies in the Victorian Mallee.

For more information visit www.malleecma.com.au