THE LIVING MURRAY INDIGENOUS

news

Big year in 2010

Construction to begin on TLM works



Above: The above illustration shows an environmental regulator planned for Mulcra Island. Image: Mallee CMA.

Under The Living Murray initiative, construction of environmental works and measures will begin at Icon Sites in the Mallee CMA region during 2010. These works will help deliver environmental water into wetlands, lakes and floodplains.

After extensive consultation, work is set to begin at Mulcra Island on a \$6.2million package of works during March, 2010.

Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) have been completed for work sites at Mulcra Island and Indigenous stakeholders will be involved in continued protection works once construction begins.

Meanwhile, plans for environmental works at Hattah Lakes are well advanced, with the CHMP due to be submitted in early 2010. Works are also planned for Lindsay Island and a CHMP is in its early stages.

These projects have been able to progress to this point due the commitment of Indigenous stakeholders, who have developed strong working partnerships, while improving their own and others knowledge. As CHMPs are new to everybody, Indigenous knowledge and expertise were a vital component of these projects and will contribute heavily to the success of the works.

3 CHMP update



Indigenous engagement



Environmental water delivers benefits





Fact file: Bush Tucker Common Sneezeweed

General Appearance: An erect perennial herb to 30cm tall with small, toothed leaves which are pungently aromatic (hence the common name). Flowers are small, yellow, button-like flower heads borne in upper leaf axis.

Leaves: 8-20 x 2-5mm, glabrous, except for sparse, cottony hairs near young leaf bases; margins toothed. Upper surface dull green; lower surface paler green, minutely dotted with aromatic, resinous pits.

Flowers: In globular to hemispherical heads, 4-8mm in diameter. Bracts surrounding head in two or three rows, oblong, 1.5-2mm long. Florets all tubular, numerous, outer series green and inconspicuous, inner series larger and yellow. Flowers January, February, March, November and December).

Fruit: Slender, club-shaped achenes, 1.5-2mm long, pale brown, ribbed, short and hairy. Pappus absent.

Aboriginal use: Leaves were boiled down into a tonic to treat ailments such as colds and chest complaints. The mixture was rubbed on to treat skin problems.

Other names: Also known as Myriogyne cunninghamii. Other commonly associated trees are *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, *Eucalyptus largiflorens*, *Eucalyptus melliodora*, *Eucalyptus microcarpa*.

Where it grows: NSW, NT, QLD, SA, WA, TAS, VIC and ACT.





Ken Stewart
The Living Murray
Indigenous Facilitator (Mildura)
Phone: (03) 5051 4376
Mobile: 0428 147 153
ken.stewart@dpi.vic.gov.au

What he does

Ken ensures Indigenous stakeholders are engaged and up to date with developments in the implementation of The Living Murray program at Hattah Lakes and at Lindsay, Mulcra and Wallpolla islands.

He ensures Indigenous stakeholders and the Mallee Catchment Management Authority work together in partnership to manage both Icon Sites.

Why he does it

The Living Murray program aims to show respect for Indigenous stakeholders and their culture by working with them to protect these Icon Sites and restore them to better health.

Progress on local TLM projects

An overview of project progress at local Icon Sites





Above: Aerial view of Hattah Lakes. Left: Mulcra Island. Photos: Mallee CMA.

Mulcra Island

A total of \$6.2 million dollars has been approved to fund the installation of five environmental regulators that will help return water to Mulcra Island's main creek system – the Potterwalkagee Creek.

The planning application to build the structures at Mulcra Island was advertised by Mildura Rural City Council on November 28, 2009 and was approved in late January, 2010. The Minister for Environment has approved the removal of minor amounts of vegetation and SA Water has called for tenders to construct the works. Construction is expected to begin in March 2010.

Community briefings on the Mulcra project started during February 2010. Information will also be available via the Mallee CMA's website and through the local media.

Lindsay Island

Review of the investment proposal and concept designs of the works planned for Lindsay Island has commenced.

Three environmental regulators are proposed to regulate flows through the Lindsay River and Mullaroo Creek, which are among the most important Murray Cod breeding grounds in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Regulators are proposed for the north and south entrances of the Lindsay River. Investigations are also underway to install a regulator to manage flows down the Mullaroo Creek, which will provide optimal habitat and breeding conditions for Murray Cod.

A fish advisory group has been established to ensure adequate flows and fish passage are built into the design of structures on the Mullaroo and Upper Lindsay River effluents.

A hydraulic study of the of the Lindsay Island waterways under various Murray River flows has been completed to inform the development of this project.

Hattah Lakes

The \$28 million package of works and measures planned for Hattah Lakes include the installation of a permanent pumping station, sill lowering at Chalka Creek, and the construction of three new regulators and three stop banks.

The concept design work for this project was completed during December and the investment proposal has now been submitted to the MDBA for approval.

Construction is expected to start late in 2010 or early 2011.

Cultural heritage training

Improving skills and knowledge



Mallee CMA facilitated an intensive five-day cultural heritage training session during October, 2009, which was attended by a number of staff from the Mallee CMA, DPI and Neds Corner.

The session was run over a period of two weeks, under the watchful eyes of trainer Jo Bell, from Heritage Services; Mallee CMA Living Murray Indigenous Facilitator Ken Stewart; and Mallee CMA Indigenous Facilitator Marlon Parsons.

Participants learnt about current legislative frameworks; geological land formations and their link to cultural heritage; how to identify and interpret cultural heritage materials; and how to manage the discovery of human skeletal remains. The identification of skeletal remains component of the training was conducted by Jeanette Hope from River Junction Research.

The course involved hands-on practical work, as well as classroom discussions



and activities. Part of the training was held at Neds Corner Station, as well as at Lindsay and Mulcra Islands and the DPI Complex, Irymple.

Since the staff training was completed, DSE, DPI and Mallee CMA staff have

become more knowledgeable about and more sensitive toward the protection of cultural heritage. This has resulted in an increased number of cultural heritage sites being identified and recorded, including a number on private properties.

Meanwhile, efforts are underway to offer more cultural heritage training. Training will be offered in 2010 to ensure local Indigenous stakeholders have the necessary skills and expertise to be part of upcoming works planned under The Living Murray initiative.

The training will include scar tree identification; stone artefacts; geological land formations and their link to cultural heritage; identification and interpretation of cultural heritage materials; and the Victorian Cultural Heritage Act 2006.

Top left: Training underway at Lindsay Island.

Above left: A workshop on skeletal remains was part of the training. Photos: Mallee CMA.

Cultural Heritage Management Plans

Update on Hattah, Mulcra Island and Lindsay Island CHMPs

Hattah Lakes

The CHMP for the Hattah Lakes works and measures project was submitted in December 2009 and withdrawn prior to the end of the year to enable AAV to improve its understanding of the area before approving the plan.

Representatives from AAV will took part in a tour of Hattah Lakes in February 2010.

It is intended the CHMP will be resubmitted to AAV in February 2010.

Meanwhile, another 11 GL of environmental water will be delivered to Hattah Lakes this year. A total of 5GL of environmental water has been provided by The Living Murray initiative and 6GL will come from the Commonwealth Water Holder. Pumping is expected to begin during April-May 2010.

What's next? Indigenous stakeholders involved in the development of the Hattah Lakes CHMP will be notified of AAV's decision. This could take two to three months. Construction will not begin until all approvals have been granted (possibly late 2010).

Mulcra Island

The works planned for Mulcra Island under The Living Murray program are scheduled to begin on-site during March 2010.

This follows the approval of the Mulcra Island CHMP and the Mulcra Island Floodrunner Deepening CHMP, which were both submitted to AAV during 2009.

Tenders are expected to be awarded early in 2010 to complete the \$6.2 million project.



Above: The yellow line shows the survey area for the Lindsay Island CHMP.

What's next? Indigenous stakeholder groups will be involved in implementing the recommendations and protection works (as stated in the CHMPs) prior to the commencement of works.

Representatives of each Indigenous stakeholder group have been notified of upcoming works and the roles they will play during construction.

Lindsay Island

Works on the CHMP for the Northern and Southern Lindsay Island effluents are due to start during February 2010.

Jo Bell Heritage Services has been appointed as the consultant to manage the development of the CHMP for these sites, in partnership with the Mallee CMA, which is sponsoring the work.

What's next? Indigenous stakeholder groups who will be involved in the CHMP development have been informed.

CHMP work will involve an initial survey of the area, covering 69 hectares. This will be followed by a complex assessment, which includes sub-surface testing and excavation works.

The map above outlines the areas at Lindsay Island where the works are expected to take place.

The Murray Darling Basin Authority

Indigenous engagement



The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) is the single agency responsible for planning integrated management of the water resources of the Murray–Darling Basin.

In 2008, the Stakeholder Engagement branch of the MDBA was formed.
Stakeholder engagement is a major focus for the MDBA, in both the development of the Basin Plan and in future activities in the Basin. The Engagement Branch, headed by General Manager Katrina Maguire, is made up of three groups:

- Indigenous, directed by Neil Ward;
- Community and Environment, directed by Lynda Pollock;
- Government and Approvals, directed by Di Mead.

Indigenous Engagement has teams in Albury and Canberra, who help with The Living Murray Indigenous Partnership Program, and are developing a strategy to improve engagement with Indigenous communities throughout the entire Basin. At the moment, the Canberra team includes Charmaine McDonald and Liz McNiven.

The Living Murray - Indigenous Icon Site Facilitators

There are five Indigenous Icon Site
Facilitators who facilitate the relationship
between Traditional Owners at each of The
Living Murray Icon Sites and the relevant
natural resource managers. These people
are vital in distributing information and for
implementing the process of including
Indigenous knowledge into icon site plans,
using informed consent and Indigenous
governance arrangements. For more
information on their work, please contact
them via the details listed below:

Hattah Lakes and Lindsay-Wallpolla Islands:

Ken Stewart ken.stewart@dpi.vic.gov.au or 0428 147 153

Barmah-Millewa:

Lee Joachim
Lee.joachim@dse.vic.gov.au or
0448 907 675

Gunbower/Koondrook/Perricoota:

Damian Morgan-Bulled damian.morganbulled@dse.vic.gov.au or 0448 542 782

Chowilla Floodplain:

Gladys Sumner Gladys.sumner@samdbnrm.sa.gov.au or 0427 181 639

• Murray Mouth:

Grant Rigney
Rigney.grant@saugov.sa.gov.au or
0429 728 607

Above: CHMP field work at the Hattah Lakes Icon Site, facilitated by the Mallee CMA's Living Murray Indigenous Facilitator Ken Stewart. Photo: Mallee CMA.

Environmental water delivers benefits

Sites respond well to water



Some of the region's most important natural assets are reaping the benefits of the latest environmental watering program.

During 2009, sites including the internationally-renowned Hattah Lakes, Lindsay Island and Mulcra Island received a much needed drink, thanks to environmental water made available by various sources, including the Australian Government, Victorian Government, the inter-governmental Living Murray initiative and a generous private donor.

Late in 2009, water was also returned to Margooya Lagoon, near Robinvale, following the restoration of a natural wetting and drying cycle at the wetland.

At all of the sites, waterbirds have returned in large numbers and red gum trees have responded well with increased canopies and healthier looking trunks and leaves.



Waterbird and vegetation monitoring will continue at all the sites that have received environmental water in order to measure the value of the water delivery.

Meanwhile, planning is underway for the 2010 environmental watering program. The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder announced in January 2010 that 6 GL of environmental water would be delivered Hattah Lakes, and 12 GL to Lake Wallawalla.

Above (main photo): Environmental water at Lake Mournpall. Above: Parrott at Hattah Lakes. Photo: Mallee CMA.



At a glance

Land Use and Occupancy Mapping

It is hoped work on a Land Use and Occupancy mapping project will begin with local communities in the Robinvale-Euston area in mid-2010.

Author Terry Tobias' second book, Chief Kerry Moose Two, includes an Australian component on cultural mapping. This book is currently being printed and is due to be released early in 2010.

Kings Billabong

Marlon Parsons, Indigenous Facilitator for the Mallee CMA, is currently working with Indigenous stakeholders on the development of a CHMP for works planned for Kings Billabong.

Field work has been conducted and the CHMP is currently in draft form. It is expected to be submitted for approval to AAV in late January 2010.

Merger

The Mallee and Wimmera Catchment Management Authorities will merge under a new land and biodiversity plan released by the Victorian Government.

The merger is not expected to result in job losses and natural resource management projects in the Mallee are anticipated to continue as usual until the amalgamation comes into effect on July 1, 2011.

Upcoming events

February

2 World Wetlands Day19-21 MLDRIN Full Meeting

(Bendigo)

March

7 Clean Up Australia Day

7-13 Groundwater Awareness Week

8 Labour Day

22 World Water Day

April

22 Earth Day

May

14-16 MLDRIN Full Meeting (Mildura)

Project Partners









Know what's happening on your country Make sure your name is on the list

A number of Indigenous stakeholders have already been involved in various consultation activities with the Mallee CMA, but to ensure that all interested people are involved, fill in the contact form below and sent it back to the Mallee CMA. Your contact details will then be added to our database to make sure you receive future editions of this newsletter and other information.

Please fill in your details below and send this form back to Ken Stewart, Mallee CMA, PO Box 5017, Mildura VIC 3502; or via email to ken.stewart@dpi.vic.gov.au

Name:				
Address:				
Phone:				
Email:				
Clan group:				
Area of interest:	Please circle: Hattah Lakes	Lindsay Island	Mulcra Island	d Wallpolla Island
Age bracket:	Please circle: 18-25	25-40	40+	Elder