



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 30 January 2012

LOWER MURRAY-DARLING WATER SHARING PLAN COMMENCES

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, today announced the commencement of the water sharing plan covering the Lower Murray-Darling catchment.

“This plan, the *Lower Murray-Darling Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2011*, outlines how water will be shared between users and the environment over the next ten years,” said Ms Hodgkinson.

“The water sharing plan covers all the unregulated rivers and creeks in the NSW catchments of the Lower Darling River and the Murray River downstream of the Murrumbidgee Junction as well as the alluvial aquifers alongside the Lower Darling River.”

“It includes the towns of Wilcannia, Broken Hill, Euston and Wentworth and also covers the Lower Darling alluvium.”

“The plan will provide a secure and sustainable water supply for all users and improve the health of our riverine and groundwater dependent ecosystems by addressing current needs, future requirements and setting aside environmental water.”

“It is only by taking care of the environment that we can guarantee clean healthy water supplies for a range of needs and users, particularly for future generations.”

Ms Hodgkinson said the development of the plan involved extensive consultation and recommendations from a wide range of water users and community interests.

“This plan has aimed to address the issues raised by individuals and groups during the exhibition of the draft plan.”

“This water sharing plan is essential for the sustainable management of our rivers and groundwater, and providing the community, environment, towns, agriculture and industry with security and certainty of access.”

The plan also provides for domestic and stock use, as well as native title rights.

“The plan aims to protect the water sources, through the establishment of environmental water rules, limits on extractions, enhancement of trading and ensuring basic landholder rights to access water.”

“All water licence holders affected by these plans will shortly receive information on what the plan means to their respective activities for accessing water,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

Copies of the water sharing plan can be obtained from the NSW Office of Water website – www.water.nsw.gov.au