



Mildura Rural City Council

URGENT AGENDA

Ordinary Meeting of Council

5:30pm Wednesday 24 April 2024

VENUE:

**Committee & Council Room
76 Deakin Ave, Mildura**

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

5:30pm Thursday 23 May 2024

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INDEX

16	URGENT BUSINESS	3
16.1	NOTICE OF MOTION - EMBARGO TO PROTECT FLOW	3

MARTIN HAWSON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

16 URGENT BUSINESS

16.1 NOTICE OF MOTION - EMBARGO TO PROTECT FLOW

Councillor: Jason Modica
File No: 02/01/06

1. Summary

Rational

Noting the Wentworth Shire Council's Mayoral Minutes was as follows:

"In light of recent rainfall events in the upper catchment of the Darling River and given the poor water quality currently being experienced in the Lakes and Lower Darling, WSC write to the NSW and Federal Water Ministers to request an immediate section 324 Embargo to protect the flow; to enable it to improve the quality of water in the lower darling, by providing a 'flush' event. This needs to occur by circumventing the Menindee lake system and in conjunction with a temporary lowering of the Wentworth Weir at the appropriate time to provide a draw into the Murray system. It is imperative that the water is protected to the end of system."

Further information can be found in the NSW DPI's Native Fish Recovery Strategy as provided in the following link.

[Native Fish Recovery Strategy \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/native-fish-recovery-strategy)

Flow history

The compounding impacts of drought, water storage/extraction and climate change in the Northern MDB (Northern NSW and Queensland) over the last 20 – 30 years has resulted in a gradual suppression of flows reaching the Menindee Lakes, which in turn contributes to higher risk of conditions that can lead to fish deaths during droughts (Vertessy 2019). Figure 2 shows recorded flow in the Darling-Baaka River at Wilcannia and highlights a reduction in inflows to the Menindee lakes resulting from an increased frequency and duration of very low or cease to flow (< 20 ML/day) periods in the last 20 to 30 years (Vertessy 2019, Thoms and Sheldon 2000). The modification of the Menindee Lakes System (MLS) in the 1960s to capture and store inflows in the lakes resulted in a suppression of flow variability in the LDBR (i.e. releases from the MLS) (Figure 3). The reduction of inflows to the MLS from the Northern MDB in recent decades has resulted in further reductions of flow releases from the MLS to the LDBR, with low or cease to flow events increasing in frequency and duration.

2. Motion

That Mildura Rural City Council recognise its role in the Murray Darling Association and follow Wentworth Shire Council’s lead in acknowledging the ongoing need for connectivity and first flush flows to bring a higher water quality and health to water in Menindee Lakes and the Lower Darling, connecting with the confluence of the Darling Barka and Murray Rivers by writing to the NSW and Federal Water Ministers requesting an immediate section 324 Embargo to protect the flow; thus enabling it to improve the quality of water in the lower darling, by providing a ‘flush’ event.

Yours sincerely



Moved
Cr Jason Modica



Seconded
Cr Jodi Reynolds

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.