



# Lachlan Valley Water e-News

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PO Box 819, Forbes 2871

March 2025

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## River Operations Update as at 31 Mar 25

**Wyangala Dam** at 82% full. Releases tracking down to around 700ML/day. Minimal rainfall over the weekend (5mm just below Wyangala).

**Lake Brewster** at 38.3% full. – no releases. 650 ML/day inflows. Lake Brewster weir pool was drawn down to allow inspection of weir. Average of around 300 ML flow below Lake Brewster Weir. Less than 100 ML/day orders Hillston and below and reducing so flows will soon be governed by minimum end of system flow requirements.

**Lake Cargelligo** at 98% full. Inflows 250 ML/day matching outflows of 250 ML/day.



*Lake Cargelligo*

**Merrowie Creek to start running next week.** The environment is running a flow in combination with the stock and domestic replenishment flow in Merrowie Creek. As you can all appreciate, river operations adjustments are far more complex and trickier to adjusting a single tap, so you may notice these adjustments in the Lachlan River up and downstream of Ganowlia Weir, at the upstream storages (e.g. Lake Brewster conduit and intake), and of course, Merrowie Creek over the next week or so. It's a delicate balancing action to release enough water from upstream storages but not too much water to have an arriving passing flow at Ganowlia, build a weir pool, and run the Merrowie Creek as the desired rate.

## Climate and water outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology released its [Climate and water long-range forecast](#) for April to June 2025.

- Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be above average across all of NSW.

- Rainfall is likely to be average for most of NSW for April to June 2025.
- Near median to low streamflow is likely for most sites across NSW.
- Warmer than average ocean temperatures are likely to continue for April to June 2025.

### Proposed Prescribed Wetlands

The draft Water Sharing Plan for the Lachlan Unregulated River included the “identification” of some 291 proposed new wetlands in the Lachlan catchment. Feedback and submissions on the initial proposed wetlands closed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025, however under the flood of so many submissions criticising the process and opposing the wetlands inclusion (across the Murray Darling Basin) the department revised the number of proposed wetlands in each valley and extended the timeline for submissions to 23 Mar 25. The revision saw the proposed prescribed wetlands for the Lachlan reduce to 11, however many of these were not wetlands so we put in another submission to address these. In addition, the NSW Irrigators Council wrote a letter to the NSW Water Minister advising of industry’s desire to have these wetlands removed from the water sharing plans, which I and the EO’s of the associations in the other valleys co-signed.

We are awaiting notification from DCCEEWS (NSW) on how they intend to proceed – WATCH THIS SPACE...

### Flood Plain Management Plan

DCCEEWS NSW are in the process of drafting a Flood Plain Management Plan for the Lachlan with Phase 1 consultation scheduled to start mid-late 2025 and conclude 1 July 2026. It’s important that structures such as embankments and irrigation channels are listed on your works approval, so it would be a good idea to make sure they’re listed before the Flood Plain Management Plan is completed.

If you’re unsure what’s currently listed on your works approval you can contact the WaterNSW Help Desk calling 1300 662 077 or email [enquiries@waterNSW.com.au](mailto:enquiries@waterNSW.com.au).

For general information on water supply works and water use approvals, [Click Here](#).

### Belubula Water Security Project

The project team for the Belubula Water Security Project held information sessions in the region during the last week of the month. It should be called “The Orange Water Security Project” as most of the options being considered benefit Orange and not residents along the Belubula.

The options “being considered” are:

- a new pipeline between Lake Rowlands Dam and Carcoar Dam to transfer up to 2 gigalitres of water per year (making it easier to take water from Carcoar Dam, transfer it to Lake Rowlands, then pump it to Orange...)
- raising the Lake Rowlands Dam wall to increase storage from 4.5 gigalitres to 8 gigalitres (probably the only/best option for us all thing considered)
- building a new dam 2.5 kilometres downstream of Lake Rowlands (estimated to hold around 26 gigalitres)
- connecting the Belubula and Macquarie valleys through an interregional pipeline (ie, piping water from the Carcoar Dam straight to Orange – No Thanks!)

The department is working with WaterNSW and Central Tablelands Water on the project and will be holding an online webinar on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> of April – appropriate date!) – to register for the webinar [Click Here](#).



*Carcoar Dam*

There is also a survey you can complete to give feedback and prioritise your preference of the options being considered. For information on the project and to complete the survey, [Click Here](#)

### **New Chair for NSWIC**

Did Earlier this month Tom Green and I attended the NSW Irrigators Council's general meeting in Sydney. Meetings are held quarterly and attended by other valley organisations. During the meeting it was announced that our very own Tom Green had been voted in as the Chairperson for the Exec Committee for NSWIC. Congratulations Tom, and thanks to Jim Cush, out-going chair, for his passion and hard work for the industry over the last 6 or so years.



*New NSWIC Chair Tom Green with the Hon. Steph Cooke MP at the recent NSWIC general meeting in Sydney.*