

This project is delivered under the Murray–Darling Basin Plan by the NSW Government, through funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

Meeting 4, 25 March 2020, Video Conference

The Yanco Technical Advisory Group discussed planning for three Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) projects associated with the Yanco Creek System which aim to deliver equivalent environmental outcomes using less water.

- Improved Flow Management Works at the Murrumbidgee River – Yanco Creek Offtake
- Modernising Supply Systems for Effluent Creeks – Murrumbidgee River
- Computer Aided River Management (CARM) System for the Murrumbidgee River

The group acknowledged the land at Deniliquin where the meeting was chaired as the Traditional Homelands of the Wamba Wamba people.

David Clarke from NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the department) chaired the meeting. In attendance: The department's Environment, Energy and Science Division (James Maguire), Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council (Tanya Thompson, Dale McNeil), NSW Department of Primary Industries - Fisheries (David Hohnberg, Nathan Reynoldson), Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (Oliver Clark), Murray–Darling Basin Authority (Leah Ross, Digby Jacobs), Commonwealth Environmental Water Office (Luke Taylor, Michele Groat), National Parks and Wildlife Service (Tim O'Kelly) and other staff from the department (Rachel Blakers, Mark Rowe, David Leslie, Rod Hardwick).

Meeting summary

- A presentation on the second draft of the SDLAM Options Evaluation Framework (OEF) User Guide was provided.
 - This will be a key decision support tool to assess various SDLAM options associated with the Yanco Creek System.
 - The draft includes 14 criteria (three project objectives, two social, four environmental, two economic and three cultural).
- Key discussion points on how the OEF should be used included:
 - Consensus could not be reached regarding the adoption of equal weightings for the social, environment, economic and cultural categories as a starting point for options assessment.
 - Some members felt the environment should be given a significantly higher weighting.
 - The group will give this issue further consideration before the next meeting.
 - It was agreed:
 - not to add any project specific criteria;
 - to establish a sub-working group to develop recommendations regarding environmental criteria weightings;
 - to seek advice from the Yanco Community Advisory Group about weightings for the social and economic criteria; and
 - to seek advice from the Yanco Aboriginal Advisory Group (not yet formed) or some other appropriate Aboriginal representation regarding weightings for the cultural criteria.
- In response to COVID-19 the group noted that all formal advisory group meetings associated with the Yanco Creek System have been put on hold until group gatherings are permitted by NSW Health.
 - The group also does not want to progress too far ahead of the other advisory groups.

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