

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 6, 23 July 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, Anthony Conallin), Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council (Tanya Thompson, Dale McNeil), NSW Department of Primary Industries - Fisheries (David Hohnberg, Nathan Reynoldson, Matthew Gordos), Murray–Darling Basin Authority (Leah Ross, Stuart McEwen), Commonwealth Environmental Water Office (Luke Taylor, Michele Groat, Madeline Gorham), National Parks and Wildlife Service (Tim O'Kelly), Coleambally Irrigation (Steve Oosthusyen), WaterNSW (Adrian Langdon) and other staff from the department (Rachel Blakers, Rod Hardwick, Matt Barden).

Meeting summary

- The group welcomed four first time attendees from WaterNSW, MDBA, Commonwealth Environmental Water Office and the department.
- The group noted an update report from the department.
 - NSW and the Australian Government have signed a variation to the funding schedule.
 - The department has revised the Yanco SDLAM Program schedule to focus on the requirement to lodge the Infrastructure NSW Gate 1 (Strategic Options) report by 30 October 2021.
 - This will identify which options are proposed to progress to detailed business case development.
 - The engagement of 3Rivers (a joint venture between Jacobs and GHD) as the NSW SDLAM Design Engineer does not prevent local communities providing feedback on options. There is no commitment to progress any of the current 62 identified options.
 - Meetings with owners of key privately owned assets (e.g. weirs) and landholders within the Forest Creek System are planned for mid-August to mid-September.
 - Community information sessions to describe the outcomes of draft preliminary shortlisting and to check if local communities feel if anything significant has been missed are planned for early to mid-November.
- The group discussed a proposal from the department to:
 - Establish Yanco SDLAM Program objectives for environmental equivalence using less water in two key assessment areas. This includes both the Yanco Creek System and Main Stem Murrumbidgee Valley (Murrumbidgee Valley excluding the Yanco Creek System).
 - Use Environmental Watering Requirements (EWRs) such as those detailed in the draft Murrumbidgee Long Term Environmental Water Plan as key indicators to assist inform environmental equivalence assessments.