

Communiqué – Meeting 10

The Living Murray Community Reference Group (CRG)

This communiqué provides an overview of the CRG's meeting on 14–15 February 2008 in Canberra.

Items discussed at the meeting included:

- **River Murray Channel activities**

The CRG received an update from River Murray Channel Coordinator about projects currently occurring throughout the River Murray Channel icon site. The CRG was also asked for initial input into an update of the River Murray Channel Icon Site Management Plan. A draft Plan will be provided at the CRG's next meeting, for further discussion and consultation.

- **Icon Site Community Reference Groups**

An update was provided on the status of The Living Murray Icon Site Community Reference Groups. CRG members expressed an interest in providing support for their local Icon Site Community Reference Groups, and strengthening links between these groups and the CRG.

- **Murray-Darling Basin and River Murray Water updates**

Briefings were provided on both Murray-Darling Basin governance arrangements and water availability within the River Murray system.

- **The Living Murray Socio-Economic Reference Panel (SERP)**

The SERP was established in late 2007 and is expected to have a close link with the CRG throughout the next 12 months. The Panel met with the CRG to learn about the Group's role and hear of local issues that may be relevant to its work with The Living Murray.

- **Water recovery progress**

An update was provided on the progress towards The Living Murray's 500 GL water recovery goal. Feedback was sought on the Pilot Environmental Water Purchase Project to inform future programs. The CRG also provided feedback on the scope of a broad socio-economic assessment on the impacts of water recovery to be guided by the SERP.

- **Environmental watering**

At its September 2007 meeting, the CRG expressed unanimous support for the Environmental Watering Group to use the very limited environmental water allocation to protect critical drought refuges in the River Murray icon sites. Further to this advice, an update was provided on the use of the 12.8 GL of environmental watering available to The Living Murray program in 2007–08.

- **Blueprints and trade-offs at icon sites**

An overview of The Living Murray icon site blueprints (water and works proposals), modelling and trade-off assessments was given. This technical information provides the basis for the icon sites environmental management plans. The consultation processes at the local and broader levels, and the ongoing involvement of the CRG in this work was discussed.

- **Environmental monitoring**

The CRG was given an overview of current and forthcoming environmental monitoring activities undertaken through The Living Murray. It is expected that the group will receive regular updates on the environmental monitoring program, and provide community input where possible.

- **Barmah Choke study**

This study has recently commenced, and the CRG was informed of its scope and opportunities for community input. Members with a particular interest in the study were asked to nominate to have a more specific involvement throughout the 12 month project.

The CRG's next meeting will be held in Goolwa on 29–30 April 2008.

The Living Murray program is a commitment by the Australian, New South Wales, Victorian, South Australian and ACT governments to improve the health of the River Murray through significant investments in regional communities.

The Living Murray Community Reference Group (CRG) was established to provide advice to the Murray–Darling Basin Community Advisory Committee on all aspects of The Living Murray's implementation. It includes representatives from the Indigenous community, irrigation sector, environmental groups, industry, local government and the business community. The Community Advisory Committee considers the CRG's advice and communicates it to The Living Murray Committee, the Commission and the Murray–Darling Basin Ministerial Council.

CRG Members

Lee O'Brien (Chair)
Laurie Arthur
Gordon Ball
Kelvin Baxter
Robert Black
Merril Boyd
Arlene Buchan
Tricia Caswell
John Grabbe
Henry Jones
Howard Jones
Judi Lawler
Phyllis Miller
Sarah Moles
Kevin McKinnon

Henty, NSW
Moulamein, NSW
Deniliquin, NSW
Berrigan, NSW
Coleambally, NSW
Berrigan, NSW
Melbourne, Vic
Melbourne, Vic
Dirranbandi, Qld
Clayton, SA
Dareton, NSW
Moama, NSW
Forbes, NSW
Goomburra, Qld
Tocumwal, NSW

Anne McCamish
Doug McWilliam
Kerri Muller
Sarah Nicholas
Paul Martin
Barrie MacMillan
Jack Papageorgiou
Jeff Parish
Russell Pell
Matt Rigney
Paul Sinclair
Nola Taylor
Col Thomson
Dick Thompson
David Wotton

Shepparton, Vic
Griffith, NSW
Strathalbyn, SA
Wandiligong, Vic
Renmark, SA
Mildura, Vic
Cooltong, SA
Barmera, SA
Kyabram, Vic
Meningie, SA
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For further information about The Living Murray, visit www.mdbc.gov.au

Murray-Darling Basin Commission

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