

The Lakes Hub is an initiative of the Milang and District Community Association Inc.

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Lakes Hub contacts

Milang Office
phone 08 8537 0808

info@lakeshub.com
www.lakeshub.com

facebook.com/lakeshub

Fiona Pitcairn
Chief Executive Officer
M. A. D. C. A.

Faith Coleman
Volunteer
Technical Advisor
0419 823 286

Glen McKenzie
Volunteer
Lakes Hub Bulletin Editor

GWLAP
Office 8537 0807
www.gwlap.org.au

[Will Miles](#)

[Regina Durbridge](#)

[Leah Hunter](#)

Coorong-Tatiara LAP

Samantha Blight
Implementation Officer, Meningie 0447
900001

River Murray - Integrity and transparency

Hello!

After a quiet year of mainly behind the scenes work, we are getting the Bulletin up and going again, so that we can help share information about investigations into water management upstream, the River Fellowship, long-nosed fur seals, carp herpes virus (cuprinid herpesvirus) as they relate to the Lakes and Coorong.

The year has been full of behind the scenes action, with Glen and the Milang Hub moving up to the Old Butter Factory and the Lakes Hub at Meningie becoming an art gallery and LakeLander publication space.

The MDBA visited both Meningie and Goolwa, a community Long nosed fur seal working group meeting was held at Meningie (outcomes available on request), the Lakes and Coorong Environmental Trust is being established, DEWNR is investigating the value of putting a sill between the two lagoons of the Coorong and there are several exciting cross-sectoral projects bubbling away to help community groups and industry have meaningful input into a range of issues.

All the best!

Faith Coleman



River Murray Independent investigation into NSW water management and compliance

Ken Matthews AO, media release, 11 September 2017

I am pleased to announce that I have submitted my [interim report](#) for my Independent Investigation into NSW Water Management and Compliance to the Secretary of the NSW Department of Industry.

The Investigation was commissioned following the broadcast on 24 July of an ABC Four Corners program "Pumped: who is benefiting from the billions spent on the Murray-Darling?" The program prompted significant public concern about the effectiveness of current NSW compliance and enforcement arrangements for water. In the light of my initial investigations, I share these concerns.

There are now no less than five separate inquiries or reviews that have been proposed, launched, or widened to address issues raised in the ABC Four Corners program.

I have focused my interim report on whether the Department's policies, procedures and actions were appropriate and have recommended whether further actions should be undertaken. Further testing of the specific allegations about non-compliant or illegal irrigation activities will be carried forward in other investigation processes.

My principal finding is that water-related compliance and enforcement arrangements in NSW have been ineffectual and require significant and urgent improvement.

A 'systemic fix' is required to address what are legacy issues. The major output of my

report is therefore a set of recommended reforms I have called the Water Management Compliance Improvement Package. The key to these reforms is that any future system needs to be:

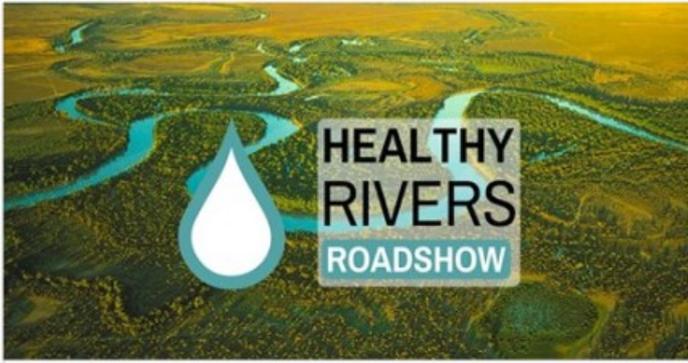
- more transparent;
- more independent; and
- considerably more effective than the current system.

Part of this package includes proposals for how the Murray Darling Basin Authority could contribute. These proposals are subject to independent consideration by other basin states and the Authority itself. However, if they were to be picked up, many of the reforms now proposed for NSW would be carried also into other states—with benefits to the basin as a whole.

Despite the frequent discord about many water management issues, there is one thing that all parties agree on—non-compliant or illegal extraction of water should not be tolerated and should be dealt with firmly.

Some of these reforms may not be welcomed by the current beneficiaries of an inadequate system. However, to rebuild public confidence will require more than incremental change – no change is not an option.





Healthy Rivers Roadshow Meningie

WHEN

September 20, 2017
6:30pm - 8:30pm

WHERE

Meningie Bowling Club
Princes Highway
Meningie, South Australia 5264
Australia
[See Google map »](#)

CONTACT

Beth Koch

Healthy Rivers Roadshow Goolwa

WHEN

September 21, 2017
6:30pm - 9pm

WHERE

Fleurieu Function Centre
92 Barrage Rd
Goolwa, South Australia 5214
Australia
[See Google map »](#)

CONTACT

Beth Koch

Healthy Rivers Roadshow Murray Bridge

WHEN

September 19, 2017
6:30pm - 8:30pm

WHERE

Murray Bridge Community Club
Sturt Reserve Rd
Murray Bridge, South Australia
5253
Australia

CONTACT

Beth Koch

OCT 1 Art in the Park - Tolderol Game Reserve
Public · Hosted by Be Social On The Murray

★ Interested ✓ Going ✉ Invite ⋮

🕒 1 October at 10:00–14:00 UTC+10:30

📍 Tolderol Game Reserve
Dog Lake Rd, Langhorne Creek, South Australia 5255 [Show map](#)

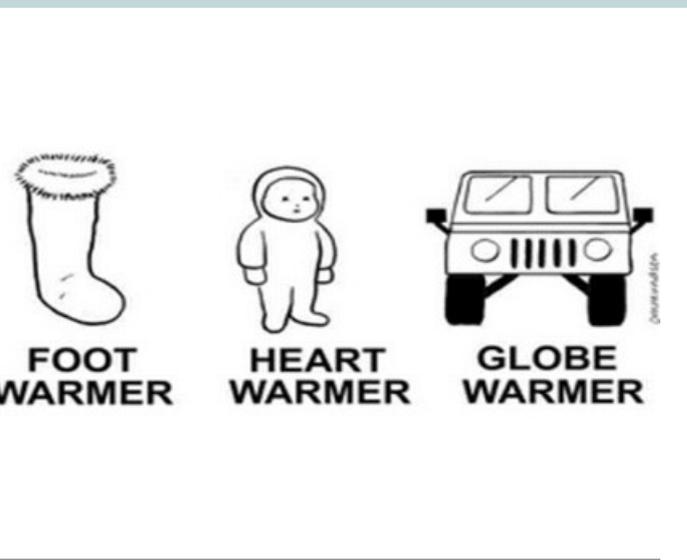
🎫 Ticket information
www.eventbrite.com.au [Find Tickets](#)

The value of wetlands

This video is presented by The Ramsar Senior Advisor for Europe - Tobias Salathé. It was filmed in the Haut-Jura Mountains National Park, which is in France near the border with Switzerland (Click on image for video)



“So often we seek a change in our condition, when what we need is a change in our attitude!”



Bats in your backyard

Bats are an extremely important part of the urban ecosystem. They play a critical ecological role through their ability to act as an environmentally-friendly insect control, with some species eating around half their body weight on an ideal summer's night. These unique and fascinating creatures are the only mammals that can fly.

Bats can also be used as indicators for ecosystem health. Creating and improving habitat for bats will also provide habitat for other wildlife.

Bats in South Australia

It is thought that nearly all bat species that occurred in the Adelaide area prior to European settlement in 1836 still occur here today, although their relative abundance is likely to have declined. Bats are still common animals in South Australia, but because they are active at night and many of their vocalisations aren't heard by humans, they have often been overlooked.

Within metropolitan Adelaide there are nine microbat (small insect-eating bat) species. Found in most habitats, from woodland to urban and wet to arid areas, most South Australian species roost in tree hollows by day but several species have adapted to living in roof cavities. Bats become most active when foraging for food shortly after dusk and just before dawn.

Microbats are insectivorous, using echolocation to navigate and find prey. They do drink, so are also found visiting creeklines and other water bodies like dams.

Adelaide's tenth bat?

The Grey-headed Flying-fox (aka fruit bat) is a relatively new resident of the Adelaide region. It is listed as nationally threatened under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. If you see a Grey-headed Flying-fox please report their location to DEWNRThreatenedWildlife@sa.gov.au or (08) 8130 9063. These megabats have been present

in South Australia since 2010. They roost during the day by hanging from branches in trees and are typically found in large colonies.

Habitat requirements

Being nocturnal, bats need places to roost during the day that provide shelter from the weather. Most microbats roost in tree hollows or under bark, rather than in caves. However, for the more adaptable species, they can also roost in buildings and other structures.

In winter months, these roosts offer protection and a place for microbats to go into torpor (a kind of hibernation). It is important not to disturb bats during torpor as they may become stressed, causing them to lose their fat reserves and possibly resulting in death.

Threats



Lesser Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus geoffroyi*) in flight Photo by Terry Reardon

A number of pressures threaten the conservation of native bat species including: availability of roosting habitat, food and the presence of environmental pollutants.

The primary threat is habitat loss through urban development. A trend toward manicured gardens and cleared spaces has led to a decrease in the availability of roosting sites in mature trees for bats across the Adelaide region. Similarly, the renovation of many older buildings means that roost sites in roof cavities may be lost.

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Chemicals such as pesticides affect the food supply of bats, which includes many insects. Some pesticides can also accumulate in the fat tissues of bats, and can cause sickness or even death.

Bat roosting boxes

Artificial roosting boxes will increase the number of potential roosting sites for microbats to use, and perhaps breed in. Bats are faithful to one roost area and regularly move between roosts in the area.

By providing more than one box in your backyard along with retaining any natural hollows, you will increase your chances of seeing them and aiding bat conservation efforts in Australia.

Roosting boxes made specifically for bats differ from a more generic wildlife nest box in that: bats prefer an easily accessible entrance at the bottom and tight surrounds; they need internal surfaces to be rough so they can grip to it; boxes need to be draught and water proof.

You can also put them on more than one side of a tree at the same height so that bats can move between them according to weather conditions.

(Source - Backyards 4 wildlife - department of Natural Resources)

History Spot

History of Currency Creek

Sources: Internet, various pages- follow links below for more information

Parts of Lake Alexandrina near Currency Creek were initially explored by [Charles Sturt](#) in an open boat in 1830 but he did not see the creek.

In December 1837, while exploring the Lake and Murray Mouth looking for other outlets to the sea, explorers [Thomas Bewes Strang-](#)

[ways](#), [Young Bingham Hutchinson](#) and party discovered the waterway while using a whaleboat borrowed from the Encounter Bay fishery. The whaleboat, which in September 1837 had been sold off the schooner *Currency Lass* at Adelaide, bore the same name as its mother ship, and they named the creek in honor of this boat. They reported on the good grassland in the area and its potential for agriculture.

The township was surveyed in the Currency Creek Special Survey of 1840 but it never really thrived due to the nearness of Goolwa. During the later 1800s the district supported many market gardens along the fertile river flats.



The Currency Creek Cemetery contains many historic gravestones. It is notably large compared to the township for the reason that it has serviced the entire district for well over a century.

Currency Creek lends its name to a wine region that stretches from [Port Elliot](#) in the west, to Lake Alexandrina to the east, and includes [Hindmarsh Island](#). The main grape varieties grown are [Chardonnay](#), [Sauvignon blanc](#), [Cabernet Sauvignon](#) and [Shiraz](#). [Vineyards](#) were first established in the area in 1969, with the region producing its first vintage in 1972.

The [Currency Creek Arboretum](#) is named after the nearby geographical feature and town. It is being developed as a specialist [eucalypt](#) ([Angophora](#), [Eucalyptus](#) and [Corymbia](#)) [arboretum](#) with its main purpose being research into Australia's most dominant natural group of plants, the eucalypts.



A prominent feature of the township of Currency Creek is the 2 storey building known as 'Kingsbrook' on the Goolwa to Strathalbyn road.

Originally known as the Currency Creek Inn it was established in early 1842, but seems that it was only legally licensed from 31st March 1858. In February 1859 it was sold by Charles Wadey for £500 to William Wigley but strangely sold back to Charles Wadey 19 days later for £520. (A very quick profit!)

Back in 1867 David Jones the licensee was charged with keeping open the inn on a Sunday.

In 1877 it became the home of grocer and baker, Thomas Sumner and his family, of Cadell St, Goolwa who lived there until the last of them died in 1916.

It was then purchased by Daniel Kingsland, a Hindmarsh Island grazier, who built a balcony and considerably added to the home they named "Kingsbrook". Daniel Kingsland had made his fortune in South America with the freezing and export of meat.



(The home as it looked in the time of Daniel Kingsland)

Seven years later it was again sold after Daniel Kingsland's death and the new owner, re-named the building "Kingsview."

Over the years it has had numerous owners. When the present owner Chris Norris purchased the property a few years ago, it had no electricity or running water, and the previous owner had lived in only one room, along with the possums and pigeons who had claimed it as their own.

Chris has restored the home that is once again known as "Kingsbrook", in excess of its former glory, adding archways and courtyards with a European influence.

Chris has built a coach house using the bricks from the same quarry as the original inn.

In the grounds a permanent octagonal marquee has been erected with a flagstone base and parquet dance floor.



Notes –

http://www.durrant.id.au/early_colonists/hutchinson_strangways.pdf - link to the report given of their exploration of the Lake and discovery of Currency Creek area.

http://www.dn.com.au/Currency_Creek_Arboretum.html - Currency Creek Arboretum

<http://kingsbrook.com.au/> - webpage for 'Kingsbrook' at Currency Creek.

Photos used in this article are from the above websites

Flashback: Community gets behind swamp protection

(SAMDB, Sept 2016)

Another 510 hectares of weed control has Rolled out over the last 12 months around the Mount Compass & Finnis area's as part of the swamp recovery project.

Natural Resources SAMDB Senior Project Officer Nicola Barnes said the swamp recovery project has involved over 50 landholders over the last four years and resulted in improved condition over 750 hectares of the threatened Fleurieu Swamps community.

"The on going maintenance of native swamps on private land will be much more cost effective for landholders, thanks to the swamp recovery project," Ms Barnes said.

"Fleurieu Swamps are home to a large number of plants and animals that are listed as endangered and are found nowhere else in Australia."

'Most recently, some intensive weed control works have been undertaken on targeted properties to improve the condition of the Mount Lofty Southern Emu-wren habitat near Mt Compass.

"The site near Mt Compass was selected because of the recently confirmed presence of Southern Emu-wrens in this patch, as well as the opportunity to link swamp habitat from the council land at Mt Compass Wetlands through to three of the first four properties downstream," she said.

Ms Barnes thanked all the landholders involved in the project.

"As custodians of an endangered swamp, their willingness to be involved in habitat protection is very much appreciated by the community."



Look out for our local turtles

(NR - SAMDB)

Our local turtles are starting to come out after their winter hibernation and we will soon be seeing them out and about on land.

These little guys are under serious threat due to predation and habitat destruction.

Please help monitor our turtles by logging any sightings on [Turtle SAT](#).

Learn more about turtles and TurtleSAT here <http://www.gwlap.org.au/look-local-turtles/>



The Aussie Backyard Bird Count is back for 2017, bigger and better than ever. Australia's favourite birdwatching event begins on 23 October. We know we have many keen birders in the SA Murray-Darling Basin region, so mark the date in your diary.

To register and for more information visit

aussiebirdcount.org.au



Jason Higham provides us with an overview of work underway in the Coorong and lower Lakes Ramsar site that is trying to keep the Murray–Darling Basin's only estuary connected to the river for some enigmatic fish species.

The Coorong, Lakes Alexandrina and Albert wetland (the site) is a 'Wetland of International Importance' under the Ramsar Convention.

The site is well known for its importance nationally and internationally to waterbirds, but less so for its highly diverse fish population, unique within the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB). Many of the endemic fish are species of national and state conservation significance, and are also important to the Traditional Owners of the site, the Ngarrindjeri.

The international importance of a Ramsar wetland for fish is determined by the diversity of fish species it supports (biodiversity) as well as the range of morphologies and reproductive styles (bio disparity).

In the case of the Coorong and Lakes, the site supports 43 fish species across a range of fresh water, estuarine, marine, and diadromous species not found elsewhere in the MDB.

Crucially, this represents more than 50 per cent of the fish species found within the Basin, highlighting the site's importance Nationally and internationally, but also to the Basin and Australia.

Not only does the site support a high level of species diversity, fish of the region also display a range in size at maturity from 4-100 cm. They possess contrasting body shapes, from benthic (bottom dwelling) flat fishes to pelagic species (fish that swim in the water column and have tapered bodies).

In addition to a high level of biodiversity and biodisparity, the site also provides feeding areas, dispersal and migratory pathways, as well as the spawning sites that are so critical

to its diverse fish population. The site is the only estuarine habitat for the MDB and, as such, is the only access point for diadromous fish species within the Basin.

Diadromous species are those for which migration between freshwater and marine environments is required for the completion of their life cycle. Within the Coorong and Lakes, five species of diadromous fish can

be found, including the Pouched lamprey, Shorthead lamprey, Common galaxias, Southern shortfin eel and Congolli.

The Murray barrages were constructed

between 1935 and 1940 to keep salt water from entering the lower reaches of the River Murray system, as consumptive demand across the Basin increased.

The barrages were not originally designed with fish passage in mind, and have hindered diadromous species from completing their life cycles. Water flowing swiftly through open barrage gates presents a physical barrier to the upstream migration of fish. Similarly, when closed, they create a barrier for fish to move between the MDB and the Coorong or the Southern Ocean.

Passage through the Murray mouth and the barrages is essential for facilitating the recruitment and sustaining populations of diadromous species. This is why environmental flows and fish passage are so critical to maintain the fish community and the site's ecological character.

To address this issue, as part of a broader

program to restore health to the pre-existing biodiversity of the Murray, the Murray–Darling Basin Authority implemented a program to reinstate fish passage along the River Murray from the sea to the Hume Dam. This saw the construction of fishways at 11 weirs along the river, together with fishways at Goolwa and Tauwichee barrages, as well as on the mouth of Hunters Creek on Hindmarsh Island.

Building on the success of the program, six additional fishways are now being installed by the 'Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Recovery' project, funded by the Australian Government and the Government of South Australia, with the help and assistance of SA Water and the MDBA. Three fishways are now completed at Goolwa, Ewe Island barrage and Boundary Creek barrage, with the program to result in the construction of at least one fishway at each barrage by 2017, supporting the diadromous fish communities into the future.

Recent and previous fishway monitoring has shown how important and successful fishways, together with the provision of environmental flows, are in supporting diadromous fish populations.

Monitoring has shown significant improvement in the site's fish communities since the end of the Millennium drought. This year has seen catches of Congolli and Common galaxids at

historical highs, and this can be directly linked to the fishways and continuous flows through the barrages provided through environmental water. The delivery of water ensured connectivity between the Coorong and the Lakes was maintained.

Monitoring of the fishways during winter 2015 found an increase in Pouched lampreys moving through the barrages, with scientists from SARDI Aquatic Sciences tagging 55 fish with microchips to track their movement up the River Murray. Of the 55 tagged, 25 were tracked and recorded at fishways between Locks 1 and 11. One lamprey travelled a distance of 878 kilometres to Lock 11.

Not only are fishways important for maintaining connectivity, the provision of environmental water through the fishways and barrages is vital to support the broader ecology of the region. A recent study by the Goyder Institute in South Australia, highlighted the value of environmental water to estuarine productivity and food for fish predators like larger fish and waterbirds. The fishways not only provide passage, but also the opportunity to deliver modest environmental flows for longer to the Coorong, a result that is critical to maintaining the health of the site's ecology, and which was not previously possible.

Source - *The Australian River Restoration Centre Magazine - RipRap Issue 39 page 44*

DENR Long-nosed Fur Seal Monitoring

(source: DEWNR email)

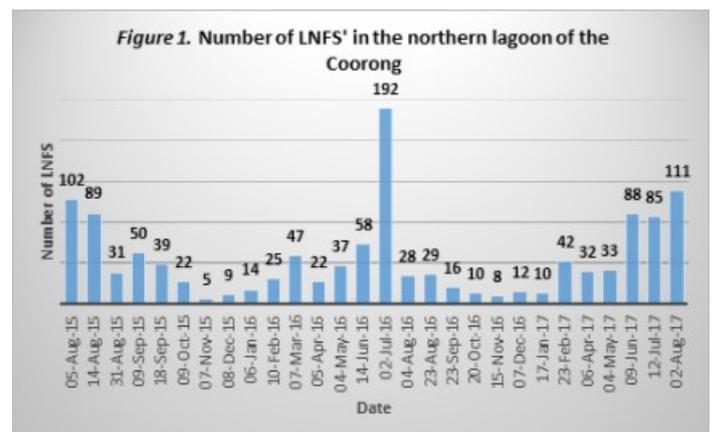
Stuart Hicks, Josh Mulvaney and Renate Velzeboer conducted monitoring the abundance and distribution of Long-nosed fur seals' (LNFS') in the Northern lagoon of the Coorong on the 2nd of August 2017.

They counted 111 LNFS' in that particular area of the Coorong, of which 62 were just inside the Murray Mouth; 23 in Goolwa channel; 23 at Goolwa barrage; and 3 in Coorong channel between Mundoo channel and Tauwichee barrage.

Please note that DEWNR are looking for trends in abundance and distribution of LNFS' in that particular area of the Coorong and throughout the year.

It is not the intent of the DEWNR monitoring to count the entire Coorong and Lower lakes area. We have chosen to monitor part of the northern lagoon because that is where the majority of LNFS' are hauling out.

The trend in LNFS numbers appears to be similar as from last year with highest LNFS numbers observed during winter. See Figure 1 below for LNFS numbers since we started in August 2015.



Salt Creek, by Lucy Treloar

Salt Creek is the story of the Finch family that has fallen on hard times, leaving Adelaide to make a new start in South Australia's beautiful but remote Coorong.

It is told through the eyes of feisty daughter Hester, 15, and opens in 1855, tracing the challenges and heartbreak of life in the inhospitable area over the years with themes of love, disgrace, inequality and consequence.

Hester's Quaker father, Stanton, was someone who dreamt big but his efforts were thwarted by a failed whaling station venture at Encounter Bay and a shipwreck off the coast of Van Diemen's Land that destroyed his fine fat sheep.

So, caught between pride and shame, he took a chance and loaded up the family's goods and dreams, and headed off with his poorly wife, Bridget, and seven children to a pastoral selection near a stock route.

The family left behind their two-storey home with a cellar in Adelaide and arrived at a modest homestead where Bridget drew memories of her English childhood around her to comfort and protect.

The plight of the Ngarrindjeri people, who are dispossessed by Stanton and others, is woven into the story.

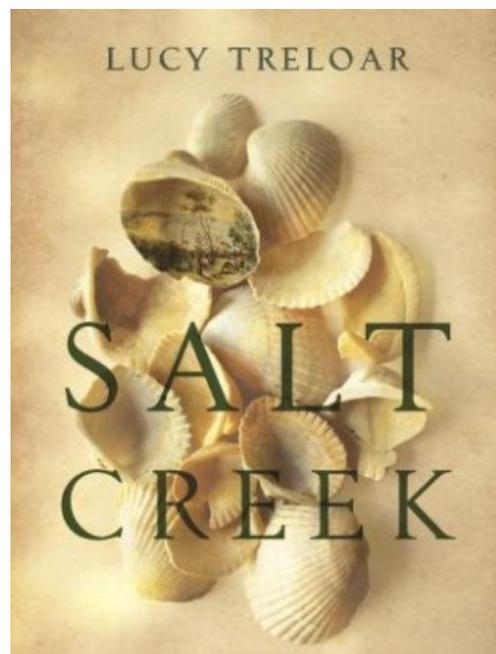
Aboriginal lad Tully, who is adopted into the

Finch family, falls in love with one of the girls, much to her father's chagrin. Hester also meets Charles, an artist but life isn't predictable.

Hester survives family disgrace to build another life for herself and her son, Joss, in England. There, she has a fine home but never forgets the Coorong.

Author Lucy Treloar describes Salt Creek as a lament for the lost world of the Ngarrindjeri people and an expression of shame to their fate.

Salt Creek features beautifully drawn characters that have depth and strength describing the eventful years that unleash a chain of events with devastating consequences.



Source 2 Sea

By Artist Rosa Merlino

You are invited to attend

Opening 6.30pm
Friday 6th October 2017
Meningie Information Hub
49 Princes Highway Meningie
Speakers for the evening are :

Donald (Bluey) Roberts Ngarrindjeri Elder
Sharon Starric, Presiding Member of the Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board,
Representing the Honourable Ian Hunger MLC, Minister for water and the River Murray



One of many Source 2 Sea exhibitions that will take place in support of the Murray Darling Basin Plan to be held around and over water week and beyond show casing many aspects of the Murray Darling Basin. RSVP to studio77art@bigpond.com or 0438370312 by Monday 2nd October.

On the Level

River Murray – Weekly Flow Advice

For weekly flow / level reports on the River Murray and Lakes go to the following website:
www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au

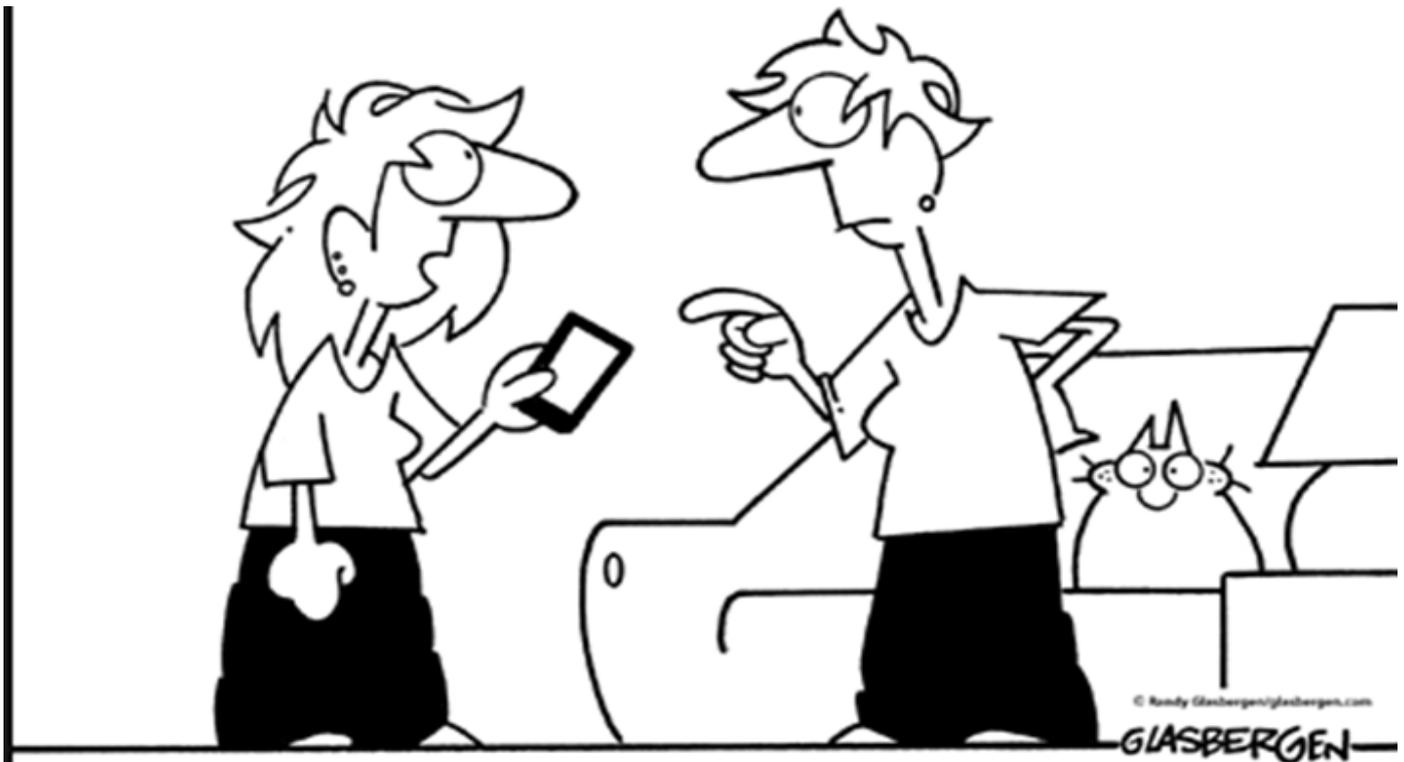
Up-to-date River Murray flow and water level information can be accessed at the Department for Water, SA Water and Murray-Darling Basin Authority websites: [Water Connect](#),

[Daily Flow Report](#), [River Murray Storage Data](#)

Details of river height and rainfall information in the River Murray within Victoria and New South Wales are available at the Bureau of Meteorology website: <http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood>

Information on the discharge of acid drainage water into the Lower River Murray can be accessed online at: www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au

For the latest River Murray Flow Report and Water Resources Update - 16th November 2012 visit:
<http://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au>



“It’s okay if I text behind the wheel. I have an app that drives the car.”

Contributions to the Bulletin

The Bulletin comes out on the fourth Friday of each month. We are always looking for Coorong and Lower Lakes events and articles of interest. Contributions must reach the Lakes Hub Coordinator (info@lakeshub.com) by the start of business, the Tuesday prior to release.