



Media Release

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Wetlands and rivers protected

NVIRP will carry out specific environmental management to ensure that high conservation value wetlands and rivers continue to be watered once channels are automated and outfalls reduced.

NVIRP has met the planning conditions to uphold the Victorian Government's commitment that 'no net loss' of water will occur as a result of modernisation works.

Wetlands and rivers of high conservation value that derived an environmental benefit from the channel system will continue to receive water through environmental watering plans approved by the Minister for Water, Tim Holding, last week.

The environment will also benefit by sharing in water savings achieved by modernising northern Victoria's irrigation system.

Stage 1 of the irrigation modernisation works will deliver 75 gigalitres (GL) per year on average of water savings for the environment with another 100 GL a year expected from Stage 2 works.

The environment's 175 GL share of the savings, is in addition to water required to ensure no net loss of environmental water due to the modernisation works.

NVIRP CEO Murray Smith said protecting the environment was a vital part of the modernisation project.

"For example, Lake Elizabeth, west of Kerang, is home to a diverse range of native flora and fauna species," he said. "The lake supports a high number of waterbirds and NVIRP will protect this and other high value wetlands and natural waterways with well planned environmental management."

"Environmental watering plans will ensure that any at-risk sites continue to receive water once the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District has been modernised."

Early this year, the Minister for Planning Justin Madden determined that although an Environmental Effects Statement was not required for Stages 1 and 2, six conditions would need to be progressively met in accordance with the *Environmental Effects Act (1978)*.

NVIRP is a state-owned entity designed to deliver the \$2 billion Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project that will modernise the irrigation system in the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District.

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