

Submission Number: 175.1

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C/o Secretary,
Jim Delahunty

Hon. Tony Windsor, MP
Chairman
House of Representatives Regional Australia Committee

26th April 2011

Dear Sir,

Thank you for listening to us at the Standing Committee on Regional Australia, Swan Hill on 30th March.

At that time you requested further written information regarding what appears to us to be an error in the Draft Murray Darling Basin Plan in regard to the amount of water being returned to the Wimmera River and its' terminal Lakes.

To address the need for environmental water in the Wimmera Avoca Region, the Plan appears to have drawn substantially from the Ecological Associates Report November 2004, which was produced for the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority to investigate the environmental water needs of the Wimmera River's terminal lakes.

Below, I have copied table 12, Section 8 from this report:

Wimmera Lakes Eco Associates 2004 Part-1.pdf - Adobe Reader

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Assessment of Enhanced Flow Scenarios SECTION 8

Table 12. Comparison of Current and Recommended Water Regimes with Enhanced Flow Scenarios

Reach	Event		Recurrence Interval (approx. years)				
	Level / Flow	Duration (months)	Current	Hydrological Objective	60 GL scenario	80 GL scenario	100 GL scenario
Lake Hindmarsh	Lake Full	6	9	5	7	6	6
	Lake Full	24	30	10	20-30	10	7
Outlet Creek	Lake Full	36	>100	20	40	20-30	15
	10 GL/m	3	20	5	10	6	4
Lake Albacutya	57 GL/m	2	30	15	30	20	15
	Lake Full	6	60	8	20-30	18	8
Southern Wyperfeld	Lake Full	24	100	20	60	20	10
	Lake Full	6	<100	10	20	20	10
Northern Wyperfeld	Lake Full	24	>100	20	100	30	20
	Lake Full	36	no data	50	no data	no data	no data

Key:
 Meets or exceeds objective
 Largely meets objective
 Fails to meet objective

This table indicates the benefits of 60 GL, 80 GL and 100 GL being returned to various lakes.

We don't know exactly where the MDBA has targeted to be in this table. It would seem to be either the 80 GL or the 100 GL extra – as at the 80 GL quite a few of the objectives are starting to be achieved.

The MDBA may have assumed that the full 83 GL from WMPP will benefit the Wimmera River, hence this could be thought to be achieving the 80 GL target. But this assumption would be wrong, as only 45 GL is returning to the Wimmera River– the balance is going to other streams.

The table highlights that small extra volumes are important. Each extra 20 GL gets a significant improvement in the attainment of environmental objectives.

Without the 28GI of water from the irrigation entitlements, it would seem that these objectives won't be met at all, i.e. "fails to meet objective" as per the legend at the bottom of the table.

Yours Sincerely,
Jim Delahunty,
Secretary,
Wimmera Irrigators Association.