



14 May 2012

## Invitation to comment on proposed arrangements for shepherding environmental water in NSW

NSW Water Commissioner, David Harriss, today invited comment on the proposed water shepherding arrangements for the Barwon-Darling river system and its tributaries.

“Following the NSW and Commonwealth governments Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on shepherding water for the environment, the NSW Government is investigating and seeking to agree on an approach for the introduction of water shepherding in NSW,” said Mr Harriss.

“The proposed arrangements look at the feasibility of shepherding Commonwealth environmental water from the Barwon-Darling system and its tributaries, including those commencing in Queensland, through the Menindee Lakes to the River Murray system.”

Mr Harriss said the objective is to optimise the use of water entitlements purchased by the Commonwealth for the environment, and to provide the capacity to deliver water to high priority environmental assets downstream, without reducing the reliability of supply to existing water users.

“After considering various options an ‘end-of-system’ accounting and dealing framework for water shepherding is proposed. These proposed arrangements ensure a ‘transparent rules’ based approach, utilising existing frameworks.”

“Consistent with the MoU, one of the guiding principles in the development of the methodology is that there are no adverse impacts on third parties, such as irrigators.”

“We now invite all interested parties to review and comment on the draft proposed water shepherding arrangements during the consultation period. Submissions close on **2 July 2012.**”

“During this period, direct consultation with peak stakeholder representative groups will be conducted to ensure the approach to shepherding and the eventual operational procedures are informed by the views of interested people.”

“The NSW Government is committed to continuing to restore the health of rivers and wetlands in the Murray-Darling Basin – water shepherding is another important aspect in achieving this goal, whilst maintaining the productive use of water for communities that depend on the resource,” Mr Harriss said.

All responses will be considered and it is anticipated that a detailed water shepherding implementation plan will be completed by mid-2012.

Detailed information, including the *Proposed arrangements for Shepherding Environmental Water in NSW - draft for consultation, Shepherding Water for the Environment – Progress of the NSW Water Shepherding Project 2011* document, the MoU and a submission form is available on the NSW Office of Water website - [www.water.nsw.gov.au](http://www.water.nsw.gov.au)

**ENDS**

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