

5.2.3 Central Murray wetlands

Variation to the Seasonal Watering Plan 2018-19

Two variations have been made to the Central Murray wetlands section of the *Seasonal Watering Plan 2018-19*.

The first variation – to Johnson Swamp – was made at the VEWH Commission meeting on 28 February 2019.

The second variation – to Lake Murphy – was made at the VEWH Commission meeting on 20 March 2019.

Please note the amended text in red below.

Table 5.2.7 Potential environmental watering actions and objectives for central Murray wetlands

Potential environmental watering	Environmental objectives
Wetland watering	
Guttrum and Benwell forests (fill Reed Bed Swamp and Little Reed Bed Swamp in winter/spring and autumn/winter, top-ups to support bird breeding) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitate aquatic vegetation, semiaquatic vegetation and river red gum communities in semipermanent wetlands • Provide feeding, breeding and refuge habitat for waterbirds, frogs and turtles • Support colonial waterbird breeding, if it occurs
Johnson Swamp (fill in spring or partial fill in autumn)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feeding and breeding habitats for waterbirds • Minimise the growth of tall marsh vegetation • Autumn watering aims to prime wetland for watering in 2019-20
Lake Cullen (spring fill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support waterbird populations by providing suitable roosting and feeding habitat • Increase the growth and recruitment of aquatic vegetation
Lake Elizabeth (top-ups as required to maintain water-quality targets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain habitat for translocated Murray hardyhead • Support submerged salt-tolerant aquatic plant assemblage and a high diversity of waterbirds
Lake Murphy (spring fill and top-ups in autumn/winter)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the growth of a variety of vegetation communities (including recently planted juvenile river red gums) to support waterbird and frog feeding and breeding habitats
McDonalds Swamp (fill in spring and provide top-ups if required to support bird breeding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the variety of vegetation communities by supporting the survival and growth of juvenile river red gums and reducing the spread of tall marsh • Facilitate early plant germination and provide suitable conditions for winter frog breeding
Round Lake (top-ups as required to maintain water-quality targets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain habitat for Murray hardyhead • Maintain suitable waterbird habitat

Potential environmental watering	Environmental objectives
Wetland watering	
Wirra-Lo wetland complex (top-ups as required to support a mosaic of wet and dry habitat)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitate river red gum and a variety of aquatic vegetation communities, providing suitable habitat for the growling grass frog and a high diversity of waterbirds including brolga • Provide habitat for water-dependent animals
Wetland drying	
Hird Swamp, Richardsons Lagoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to be actively watered in 2018–19 • Seasonal drying helps to maintain the health of existing trees in the bed of the wetlands • The drying phase of Hird Swamp will help to manage tall reed vegetation and promote herbland species

¹ Infrastructure projects for Guttrum and Benwell forests are being assessed as part of the Sustainable Diversion Limit Offset component of the Basin Plan. Until works are approved and completed, only semipermanent wetlands that can receive water pumped from the River Murray will be considered for watering.