

Mallee Seasonal Watering Proposal 2025/26



What is a Seasonal Watering Proposal?

Each year, the Mallee CMA develops four Seasonal Watering Proposals (SWPs) that outlines which sites need water for the environment, or a drying phase in the year ahead.

Each SWP draws on ecological and hydrological objectives, scientific research, Environmental Water Management Plans (EWMPs), Traditional Owner and community input. Each SWP is submitted to the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH), an independent statutory body responsible for managing Victoria’s environmental water entitlements. VEWH use SWPs to create an annual Seasonal Watering Plan, a legislative document that enables environmental allocation delivery across Victoria.

This plan is published by June 30 each year.

The Mallee CMA prepares annual Seasonal Watering Proposals for:

- Murray Wetlands
- Hattah Lakes
- Lindsay-Mulcra-Wallpolla Islands
- Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline Wetlands

Which wetlands on the Murray River floodplain are planned to receive water in 2025-26?

Subject to approval under the Seasonal Watering Plan, the following sites are proposed to receive water in 2025-26:

***Note – sites proposed are subject to water and funding availability and seasonal conditions.*

Site	Volume	Timing
Wetland 33 (Lindsay Island)	150 ML	Spring 25
Lindsay Mullaroo Connector (Lindsay Island)	300 ML	Autumn 26
Stockyards (Lindsay Island)	800 ML	Spring 25
Mulcra Horseshoe (Mulcra Island)	1,200 ML	Spring 25
Sandy Creek and Lilyponds (Wallpolla Island)	2,000 ML	Spring 25
Finnigans Creek (Wallpolla Island)	1,000 ML	Spring 25
Wallpolla Horseshoe (Wallpolla Island)	800 ML	Spring 25
Brickworks Billabong	250 ML	Spring 25/ Autumn 26
Catfish Billabong	900 ML	Spring 25
Lake Hawthorn	1,500 ML	Spring 25/ Autumn 26
Lake Koorlong	150 ML	Spring 25/ Autumn 26
Musk Duck	50 ML	Winter 25
Outlet Creek	850 ML	Spring 25
Bottle Bend	350 ML	Spring 25
J1 Creek	450 ML	Spring 25
Burra Creek North	320 ML	Spring 25
Burra Creek South	1,000 ML	Spring 25
Burra Creek South Proper	75 ML	Spring 25



Is watering just as important as drying?

Yes. Wetlands need both wet and dry times to remain healthy and support the plants and animals that rely on them.

Drawing down/drying a wetland is important for a number of reasons, including:

- Exposed bank from reduced water levels allows mudflat plant species to grow
- Surrounding River Red Gum and Black Box trees prefer not to have their roots permanently submerged
- Emerging wetland plants contribute to soil nutrients
- Reducing water levels helps mitigate the impacts of carp.



Which wetlands may start to dry?

Hattah Lakes will begin a drying phase in 2025-26, after receiving water over the past few years. The lakes are one of several local wetlands planned to begin a drying phase in the coming year, which will help release nutrients from the soil, reduce carp numbers, and let important native plants grow.

The drying phases are mapped out in the Seasonal Watering Proposals developed by the Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA), which identify potential sites that require a drawdown (or drying) phase in the year ahead or may need to receive water for the environment.

Hattah Lakes and a number of other wetlands in the Mallee CMA region will not receive water for the environment during 2025-26 (please refer to the Seasonal Watering Proposals on our website for more information). These wetlands will continue to drawdown,

and some are likely to enter a dry phase. In contrast with planned watering sites, drying of these waterbodies will create a mosaic of habitat types across the broader landscape which provides favourable conditions and supports a wider range of species across the landscape. Drying wetlands helps eradicate pest fish species (carp) and re-sets sites in preparation for future water deliveries and flourishing vegetation.

Which of the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline wetlands are proposed to receive water?

This year, all the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline wetlands within the Mallee CMA region will be included in the Seasonal Watering Proposal to give them the best chance of being included in the Seasonal Watering Plan. Site-by-site ecological assessments will then help inform and prioritise which sites receive water.

Staying up to date

To stay up to date with planned watering activities, follow Mallee CMA on social media and visit the website at www.malleecma.com.au/waterways

If you would like more detailed information on any of the planned watering events, check out our website for Environmental Water Management Plans and the Seasonal Watering Proposals, which are key documents that inform water planning.

To find out more, send our team an email at info@malleecma.com.au, or phone the Mallee CMA during business hours on **03 5001 8600** and ask to speak to a member of our environmental watering team.

