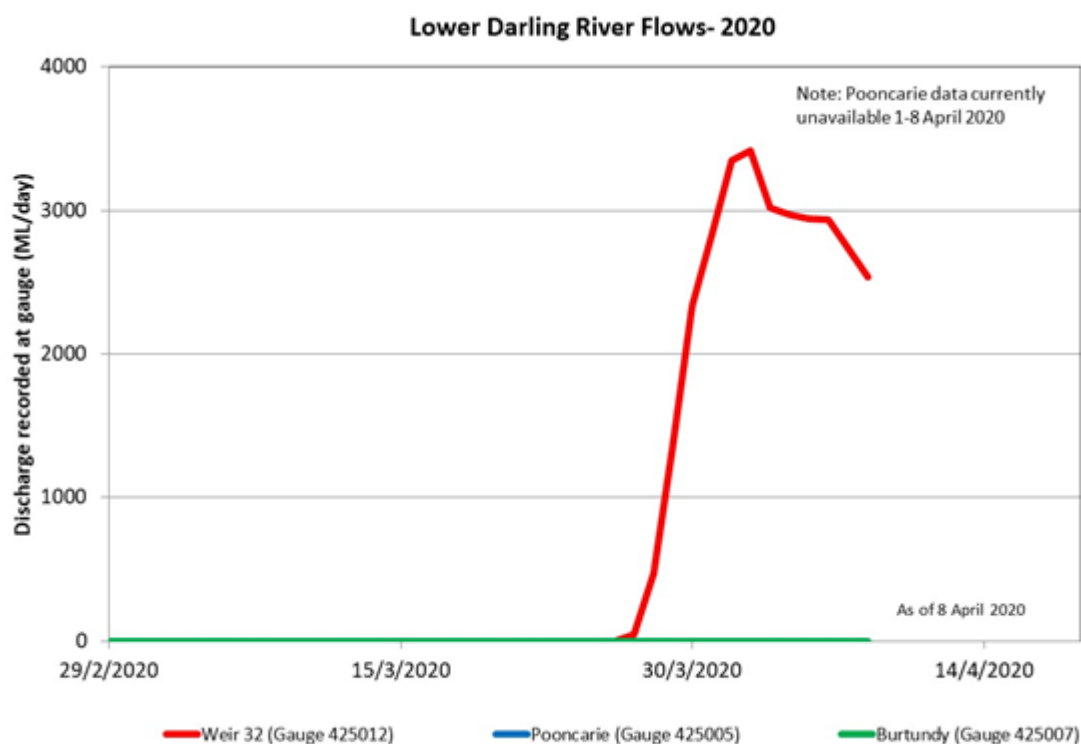


Releases

Menindee Lakes is now forecast to receive around 400 gigalitres (GL) in total of inflows. As at 8 April the Lakes were holding 243 GL spread across three lakes with 93 GL in Lake Wetherell, 77 GL in Lake Pamamaroo, 71 GL in Lake Tandure and also 2 GL in Copi Hollow.

Since 29 March, flow at Weir 32 and into the Lower Darling has been around 3,000 ML per day, with releases steadily decreasing from around 6 April to a continuous base flow providing connectivity to the River Murray.



By 7 April, the river front had reached Pooncarie, some 280 river kilometres downstream and by 9 April was a further 50 kilometres downstream. These flows are bringing significant, long-awaited, benefits to communities and landholders. Pooncarie's new weir is now full, where the township had been relying on water carting and water from bores for the last few years.

No major water quality issues associated with the releases have been reported. The head of the flow is moving quickly and mixing well with existing water in the river. The dissolved oxygen levels have remained at acceptable levels for fish health and the salinity is being diluted quickly. Although turbidity is high as the water being released from Lake Wetherell is turbid.

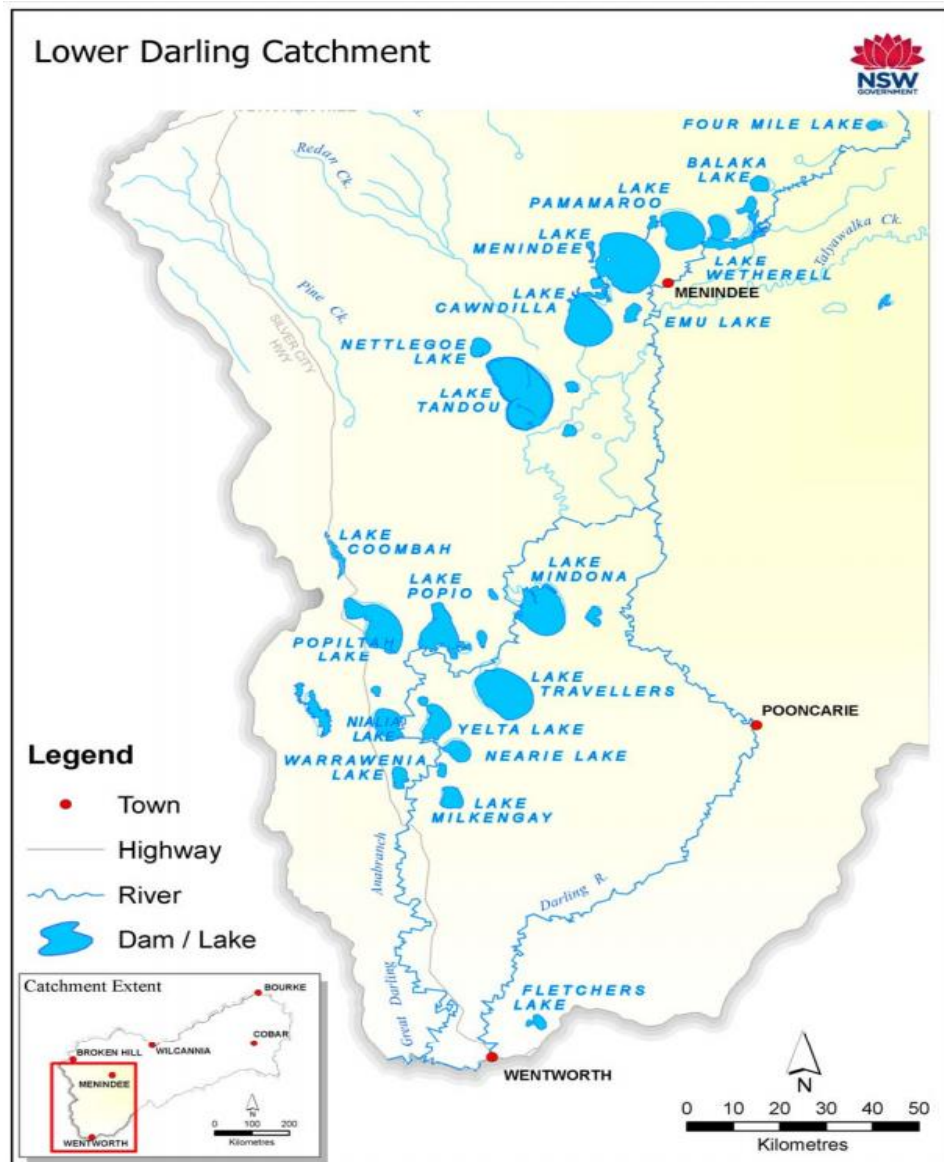
The key reasons for the better water quality in this restart event, as to that of 2016, is because of:

- the larger volume of inflows into Lake Wetherell
- the better starting salinity levels in the Lakes before the resumption of flow commenced
- the large initial pulse release.

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No major fish deaths as a result of the releases have occurred. However, there was a small fish death event further downstream of the releases as result of local rainfall and runoff. The releases will improve the quality in this area as they arrive.



Allocations

Full (100%) allocations for town, domestic and stock, and high security licence holders are now available for the rest of this water year, plus remaining water in general security accounts. Some 15GL of previously restricted water is available for use.

Despite significant flows into the Lakes, new allocations for general security water users are not yet possible. With the lakes holding 243 GL – this is only some 15% of full capacity, the priority is on

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restarting the Lower Darling and running it for as long as possible to deliver high priority water for 12-18 months. Not all the inflow is accessible and up to 400 GL a year can be lost.

For further information on Water Allocations go to - www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/statements

For further information on water quality of the water as it travels along the Lower Darling go to our water quality updates at -www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/drought-update/drought-recovery/menindee-lakes-lower-darling-river

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