



# Newsletter

## President - Trevor Clark

Well the floods continue, not only for the upper landholders (who have been inundated for months) but the entire system is now flooding. As Bob Crawford reminded me, this is a Riverine flood with not only high flows from upper catchments but also large flows from the plains, with many unknown creeks running large amounts of water. In fact, there was one report of a 40,000ML a day flow in the upper Billabong (thanks goodness only for one day). Many landholders have suffered damage, whether that be crops which have been rain affected/inundated or pastoral country flooded with stock stranded on islands needing helicopters to either feed or remove. As water levels start to recede more damage will come to light including roads, fences, infrastructure etc. I am sure in years to come we will talk about the 2022 floods in the same light as the 1974 or 1956 floods.

YACTAC sincerely thanks emergency services, WaterNSW, other agencies and volunteers for their support to our landholders and residents during this time.

On the national scene many would have heard of the possibility of 'strategic buy-backs' to fill the MDBP Bridging the Gap (50 GLs), but at this stage not needing water from the Murrumbidgee Valley. At some stage there may be open tendered buybacks which is never good news for the YCS, as every megalitre sold off has an impact on how our system is run.

As usual Tanya strongly advocates at every meeting concerning the YCS, ensuring your interests are front and centre.

Andrea continues with her projects unfortunately extended high flows have made it difficult to complete some projects.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and merry Christmas from the YACTAC team.



Cheers Trevor Clark

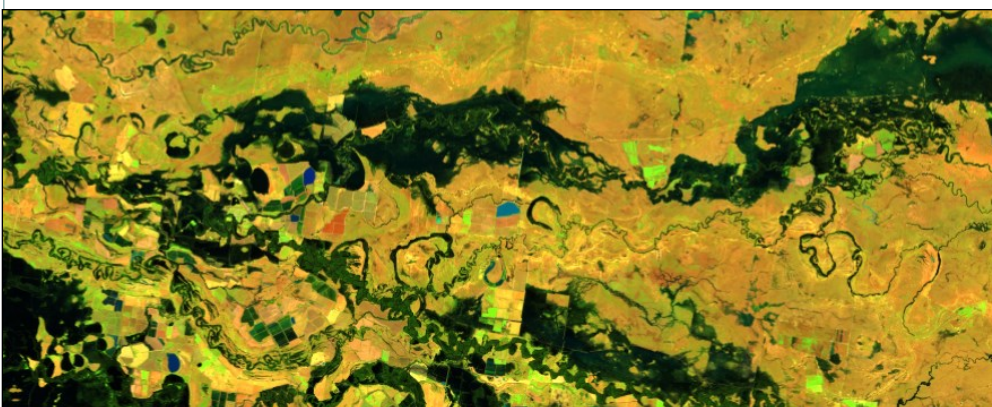


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### EMAIL OPTION

- Take advantage of the links to additional information.
- Please contact Tanya on **0408 833 801**



*Lower section of the Billabong Creek showing extensive flooding - 1 Dec 2022*

## NSWIC

- Federal Government holding onto delivering the MDBP.
- Strategic buy-backs.
- MinCo to meet in February.
- NSWIC updated policy position.
- Claire Miller available to discuss any concerns.

## Monitoring Work

- September: Bundure, Broome, Hartwood, Wanganella wetland.
- Broome: catfish
- Hartwood: Murray cod
- Wanganella: Sudell's frogs
- January 2023 on the Yanco and Billabong creeks along with Wanganella wetland.

## WaterNSW

- Slowing moving from unrestricted flows to flow management.
- Now working within bank flow targets.
- Very limited irrigation orders within the Murrumbidgee Valley.
- New staff located regionally: Albury, Mildura.
- WaterNSW has been under an internal restructure since May.

## Facebook

Follow the 'Yanco Creek System' page on Facebook.

## Executive Officer - Tanya Thompson

Our association with the Reconnecting River Country has drawn to a close, as that project is in hibernation. Members have been represented at NSW Irrigation Council and Trevor Clark has nominated for a casual vacancy on the NSWIC board.

During the recent flooding I was able to distribute valuable information about flow heights and rates to our members, which was well received. It is a time of high anxiety and key information is essential in any decision making process. Our thoughts are with those that are still in the midst of this extended flood. Thankfully our towns didn't experience extensive flooding like Rochester and Echuca.

We have met our governance obligations for the 2021-22 financial year and will start reviewing the constitution in the next six months due to changes in the minimum standard requirements.

Membership payments are now emailed through Xero and this transition appears to be running smoothly.

We have new email accounts under the domain name of yactac.org.au. We are hoping to iron out a few bugs that are stopping the link from the Landcare host to the new website. This is a large transition that will make yactac have a more professional online presence.

## Better Bidgee - Yanco Weir

In 2015 there were two projects proposed for the Yanco Creek System: *Improved flow management works at the Murrumbidgee Rivers Yanco Offtake* (locally known as the Regulator) and *Modernising supply systems for effluent creeks Murrumbidgee River*. The *Improved flow* was put aside to focus on the *Modernisation project* and it has progressed. The 'Regulator' was more contentious and didn't have any community support in it's original form.

Since then the Better Bidgee program has been formed with suite of suggestions, including works on the existing Yanco Weir in the Murrumbidgee River. A presentation was made last month which provided a clear update on where this idea concept is at - ground zero! There are people working on modelling and a skeleton staff, however the state government is waiting for the federal government to release funding before any business case can be developed. Essentially the idea concept is at pre 2015 stage. Nothing to see here. Obviously, if things change we will keep you updated.



Blended meetings are being held on a regular basis. Albury meeting shown.



## SDLAM - Modernisation

Matt Barden is now the Principal Project Manager, on a contract basis. YACTAC thanked Matt Kendall for his efforts and warmly welcomed back Matt Barden. We feel that a contractor will be able to push this project with more vigour and we are eager to see progress.

Landholders and community have been represented at the Yanco Stakeholder Advisory Group, the Yanco Technical Advisory Group, the Design Focus Group and several other sub-group meetings. It has been over whelming at times. Trevor and I feel like we are going around in circles rather than progressing in a straight line.

The Technical meeting last week covered:

**\*Concept Designs** - it appears the following works will not proceed: weir removals at Old Wanganella homestead and 4 Mile; Colombo Creek low level rock weir; Rhyola and Lower Forest Creek downstream of Zara.

**\*Hydrometric flow measurement stations** at 4 new sites and 1 upgraded site: Yanco Creek @ Moonyanco and downstream of Spillers Regulator, Billabong Creek @ Old Coree and @ 10 Mile reserve (16km from Moulamein) and replace the Cocketdegong station on the un-reg section of the Billabong Creek. YACTAC is advocating for water quality to be included in the new stations.

**\*Wilson's Anabranch** is in the final concept design phase with works to improve fish passage and the ability to meter environmental water flows into the system. No works are proposed for Muntoora anabranch.

**\*An Operations Plan** has been developed to provide rules around the movement of water within the entire Yanco Creek System. It is up to about it's sixth draft. However WaterNSW is yet to agree to such a document.

**\*Hydrologic and hydraulic modelling** was presented but only at a high level. The modelling states there is only a 3% reduction in flows at Darlot, with similar inflows at the Offtake. There will be a workshop in February to drill into the detail. We are yet to be convinced of savings within the system if flows at Darlot are only reduced by 3%.

More information on this link: [Yanco Creek Modernisation Project Drop-in sessions presentation – September 2022 \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)



*We are now at the stage of looking at structure designs - Wanganella Weir.*

### Yanco Environment Community Report

- CEWO environmental water delivery - 37,387ML 2021-22 (highest ever)
- Most of this water was used to improve low DO readings last summer.

### Species found

- 9 native fish species
- 6 frog species
- 37 water bird species
- 3 turtle species
- 9 bat species

### Significant species

- Freshwater catfish
- Silver perch
- Southern bell frog
- Southern myotis

### Species diversity

- Rakali
- Platypus

The results highlight the value of in-channel habitat for species diversity, especially maintaining water quality in smaller anabranches and tributaries.

### YACTAC Website

Google: landcare YACTAC

<https://landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/yanco-creek-and-tributaries-advisory-council>

**YANCO CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES  
ADVISORY COUNCIL INC.**

**PO Box 53  
HOWLONG NSW 2643**

**Upper Section Committee:**

Tom Holt	0417	422	630
Lawrence Simpson	0448	189	001
Glen Baxter	0428	852	623

**Mid Section Committee:**

Sam Armytage	0427	534	622
Katie Gordon	0408	612	467
Geoff Ham	0427	942	336

**Lower Section Committee:**

Bob Crawford	0427	875	955
Trevor Clark	0429	691	010
Colin McCrabb	0428	847	558

**Executive Officer**

Tanya Thompson 0408 833 801

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**Project Officer**

Andrea Mitchell 0419 841 834

**e: env@yactac.org.au**

Please contact us to discuss any matter regarding the creek system, riparian areas or concerns you may have.

If you know of any change of ownership of property please send details to the Executive Officer, so our records can be kept up to date.



## Project Officer - Andrea Mitchell

### Draft Waterway Management Plan up for comment

The waterway management plan for the Central Billabong has been written and is up for public comment. JC NRM Consulting have sourced and collated all available information, consulted widely and brought together ideas and direction from the community. The question now is do they have it right? The plan will guide the next nine years of funding. Follow the link to add any final comments:

<https://prodsurvey.rcs.griffith.edu.au/prodls200/index.php/423549?lang=en>



## Environment Monitoring and Evaluation

YACTAC has been working closely with wetland scientists at every opportunity since 2014. In the last 18 months there has been increased activity in the Yanco Creek System and data is now being gathered like never before. We are thrilled and extremely grateful that the system is being recognised for its unique environmental assets. This outcome has been many years in the making and we feel evidenced based data will ensure our creek system will continue to thrive for generations to come.

A nine page report was presented at the last EWAG meeting listing all the findings of the past year. It showcases our creeks and many wetland areas in addition to the proactive farming community that encourages monitoring to take place on mostly private property. The full report will be emailed to all members.



Wetland and creek monitoring sites - 2021-22