



Newsletter

PRESIDENT—Bob Crawford

The key objective of this Board (17/18) has been to have the flaws of the SDLAM Yanco Regulator proposal recognised. The current proposal includes wording where a wetting and drying regime for the Yanco Colombo System (YCS) could be adopted. There are numerous papers written which discuss the dangers of mobilising dead water pools, after a drying regime, which have been highlighted at every opportunity. Board members have also been in contact with the Federal Minister for Agriculture, State members and officers of the MDBA, Water NSW officers and other members of the NSW Government, as well as the NSWIC to enhance everyone's knowledge of the healthy YCS.

YACTAC members and departmental officers are of one mind, that is to improve the efficiency and environmental assets of the system.

I am now increasingly confident that the YCS will not be left out of the equation (Water Sharing Plan).

YACTAC EFFICIENCY

There are now two face to face WaterNSW Customer Advisory Group meetings per year and two online meetings.

It was stated by WaterNSW at the last meeting that the YCS in the current irrigation year has been ordering 25% over the usage rate. This means orders are placed but water is not taken when ordered. The water not taken is recorded as a loss to the Murrumbidgee System. This makes the YCS look extremely inefficient and gives stakeholders who are pushing for a regulator and wet/dry flow regimes valid arguments in their favour.

Therefore it is extremely important to ensure, as much as possible, orders placed are close to what is used. The point was made that it is not easy to cancel orders, i.e. using iWAS to cancel an order, however if the cancellation is after the water has entered the system then the losses will still occur.

In order to validate the importance of the system it needs to be demonstrated that the YCS can be more efficient than it has been this irrigation season. Part of the responsibility will be on WaterNSW but there is also a role to play by landholders. So please consider this when placing standard long term orders which you may or may not take. The future of the YCS is in your hands to some extent.



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EMAIL OPTION

- Would you prefer to receive this newsletter via email to take advantage of the links to additional information?
- Please contact Tanya on 0408 833 801

**Murrumbidgee
Environmental
Water Allowance
Reference Group -
MEWARG**

Amelia Walcott presented on the outcomes of frog monitoring. Mid Yanco has 6 species and Forest Creek 7 species. The Southern Bell Frog was found at 2 sites in the Mid Yanco.

Annual Watering Priorities for 2017/18:

Very Dry - no watering in Yanco Creek system.

Dry - supplementary only

Wanganella Swamp and Forest Creek system.

Moderate and wet scenarios can be viewed on website.

Indigenous water can be applied for by contacting Riverina LLS - Gregory Packer.

[http://
www.environment.n
sw.gov.au/topics/
water/water-for-the-
environment/
murrumbidgee/
annual-
environmental-
water-priorities](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/water/water-for-the-environment/murrumbidgee/annual-environmental-water-priorities)

EXECUTIVE OFFICER - TANYA THOMPSON

YACTAC was represented at EWAG, SAP, WaterNSW, NSWIC and the Billabong Yanco Project meetings. The only certainty in the water industry is that change is constant.

Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) is a newly formed independent group headed by Craig Knowles (ex Chairman of MDBA), following recommendations from the Matthews Report. The report called for an independent and more effective regulator with total carriage of the compliance and enforcement of water regulation in NSW. Prior to NRAR, these functions were split between the DoI-Water and WaterNSW.

The Productivity Commission's five year review is also underway. A private meeting was secured by the committee to put the views of YACTAC to the delegation.

Currently WaterNSW collect the YCS levy and pass this on to YACTAC without charging any fee. As WaterNSW moves to a 'fee for service' approach this will change. The current fee structure was approved by IPART for the period up to June 2021, however YACTAC must expect the next determination period will see a charge for collecting the levy.

Website

YACTAC now has a website. Currently there is limited information on the site but it will grow over time. Reports about the Yanco System will be uploaded onto the website so the organisation can gain recognition outside of the local area. Check it out at:

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

NSW IRRIGATORS COUNCIL

NSWIC has been a valuable resource to access information on the irrigation sector, given the current political climate. Metering compliance is the topic of the moment, with new minimum standards being set. More information on this will be shared when it becomes available.

NSWIC will not support the 450 upwater in the current form. They are currently working on a submission to the: MDB Royal Commission focusing on the specific Terms of Reference that arose from the 4 Corners report; House of Representatives—Inquiry into the Management and Use of Commonwealth Environment Water; NSW Govt Water Reform Action Plan (WRAP) and the Draft Exposure Bill. Also the Disallowance Motion on the 605GL of SDL Offsets has been a focus.

The NSWIC have a new look website with lots of fact sheets on current topics. Check them out at: www.nswic.org.au.



Road train for creek inspections

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER - JIM PARRETT

A thorough inspection of the creek system is underway.

- Sagitaria and aquatic weeds - Yanco seems clean, however sagitaria has been found in the Colombo, Billabong and Forest Creek. Downstream inspection of Conargo will take place during May.
- Weeds in Riparian areas - since the floods of 2012 and 2016 the spread of horehound, Bathurst burr, heliotrope, scotch thistle has increased.
- Streambank erosion has been sighted in some areas.
- Willows are still presenting issues and have blocked a weir.

Please contact Jim Parrett on 0428 609 835 to discuss your situation.

RIVERINA LOCAL LAND SERVICES - JIM PARRETT

I am also currently involved in the Streambank Erosion and Riparian Restoration Project on Yarrabee Park (Washpan Creek) upstream of Morundah. The fencing component has been completed and ripping/planting will commence as soon as the autumn break hits. There will be a **field day** offered to members and the general public to view the progress.



Stakeholders

Advisory Panel – SAP

There have been a number of staff changes in SAP, as with all other departments dealing with water.

There was to be a state wide SAP meeting but this has been postponed.

The new Water Resource Plans will not have a review date. Which is a change from previous plans. Therefore it is very important to get the best plan possible.

There was a motion put at the last meeting by OEH:

That excess flows above 1400ML for environmental water:

- OEH under take a risk assessment
- Landholder agreement
- Accountability and risk held by OEH.

The Yanco Dealing Limit sets upper limit for trade of entitlements. This rule is to be maintained.

Long Term Watering Plan

It comes into effect mid 2019 and is reviewed every 5 years. The Murrumbidgee is connected to the Lachlan. LTWPs must identify:

- Basin Wide Watering Strategy
- Targets for vegetation, water birds, fish, river flows and connectivity.

There was significant discussion on critical needs during drought. The following are considered:

- Horticulture
- Stock
- Commercial industrial licenses
- Cultural

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

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Sam Armytage	0427 534 622
Russell Ford	0429 425 798
Mark Wettenhall	0427 861 825

Bottom Section Committee:

Bob Crawford	0427 875 955
Sally Dye	0427 875 940
Colin McCrabb	0428 847 558

Implementation Officer

Jim Parrett	0428 609 835
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Executive Officer

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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.



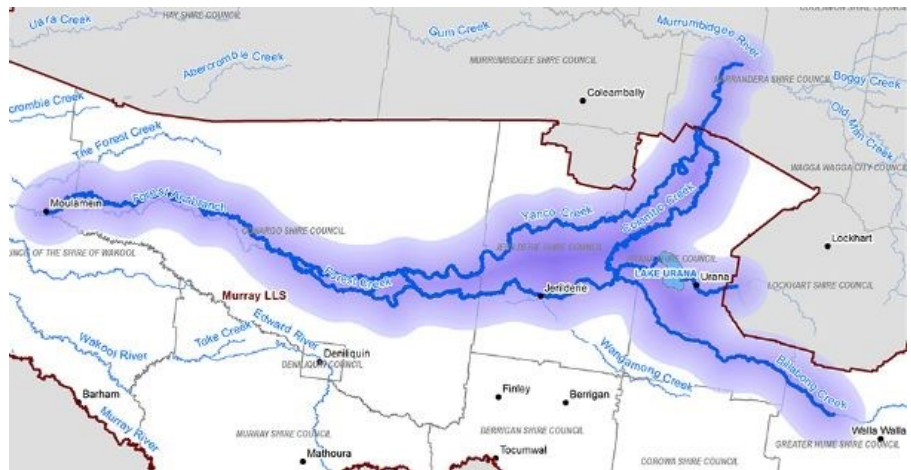
BILLABONG YANCO PROJECT

The Integrated Hydrological Operations Plan for the Billabong, Yanco and Colombo Creeks Report has been finalised and is available, please ask if you would like and electronic copy of this report.

During the final year of this project the focus has been on: water management and wetlands - (developing an integrated plan to improve water management in the system; identifying and monitoring key wetlands, particularly their flora, fauna and carbon storage capacity; and delivering an education program to schools about waterways and wetlands in the region), communities and weed control.

There was a field site visit in April in the Walbundrie area. For more information see: <http://murray.ils.nsw.gov.au/our-region/programs-and-projects/billabong-yanco-creek-system-project>.

This project will be finalised by 30 June 2018. Future funding for projects of this kind are no longer available.



INVESTIGATING TROUT COD SPAWNING & RECRUITMENT IN THE YANCO COLOMBO CREEKS

YACTAC are co-contributors, along with Murray LLS and NSW OEH, to this important project. CPS Enviro Pty Ltd will be working on this project during April and May, with the report due soon after that.