



Newsletter

President - Trevor Clark

I usually start with a comment on the Yanco SDLAM Project but as our AGM is only a few weeks away and Matt Barden (Project Manager SDLAM Yanco Modernisation) is providing an update at the meeting, I strongly encourage all members to attend so you can hear directly from the SDLAM team.

Dealing with bureaucrats is not easy or rewarding at times. I tried to pin down the department responsible for invasive fish species in NSW rivers recently. I contacted CEWO, WaterNSW, Fisheries, MDBA before finally being directed to Dept Primary Industries, who I believe responsible for ‘management’ of invasive species. I will be following up with them soon.

After nearly 3 years of high flows we are seeing carp in plague proportions and the water quality is as ordinary as I have ever seen it. Turbidity levels at the moment are 500+NTU, a clear water reading is at 50NTU. Prior to the introduction of European carp, our creek system ran clear water. If we are facing lower flows due to El Nino, the underlying issues need to be addressed or we will be facing fish kills similar to other rivers (Darling springs to mind). As carp continue to plough the bed of the river system there is a loss of aquatic plants and grasses which then increases nitrogen and phosphorus levels allowing algal outbreaks and low dissolved oxygen levels leading to fish kills, it also has a huge impact on native fish breeding with carp destroying fish nests. With 95% of our large fish population now carp, it is now time for a national approach to address these pests.

IPART approved an increase of 7% in WaterNSW bulk water charges and now are working on a price determination for 2025-2030. The determination will include: cost structure (what irrigators should pay for), % of recovery (up to full cost recovery), % of fixed charges (currently 40% fixed, WaterNSW to increase fixed ratio to 90%+), never good news for irrigators with variable allocations.

The MDBP will not be completed by June 2024, so the uncertainty continues. Now that Buybacks are back on the table, the Yanco Creek System could be significantly affected. Every time water is removed from the system you have to rely on NSW or Commonwealth environmental water to maintain healthy flows.

I wish I could provide a more positive report but irrigators are facing a uncertain future with buybacks, climate change and other factors affecting their businesses.

I am sure Tanya and Andrea will have much better news. Cheers Trevor

YACTAC AGM and Board Election

Conargo Hall - 21 September from 1pm - light refreshments - all welcome.

Guest Speakers: WaterNSW, DPIE - SDLAM, CSU Monitoring, LLS Refreshing Rivers.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President’s messages	1
YACTAC AGM + Election	2
Project Officer’s update.....	2
E-Water	2
WaterNSW.....	2
Project Officer’s update cont.	3
Upcoming Events.....	3
YACTAC general mtg.....	3
CEWO - MER.....	3
NSWIC	3
Executive Officer’s message ..	4
Refreshing Rivers.....	4

EMAIL OPTION

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

E-Water Deliveries

- Wanganella 13GL PEW
- Riverine health, reduce bank erosion etc
- 29GL (19GL HEW, 10 Supplementary)

WaterNSW

- IVT closing balance 89GL
- Visited Warriston weir, Junction weir, Wanganella Swamp regulator, Estuary Creek regulator, Hartwood weir, Forest Creek Offtake regulator
- New Water Planning and Delivery Structure: North, South, Metro, Water Quality, Modelling+ Env+ Cultural water.
- South manage: Murray, Lower Darling, Murrumbidgee, Lachlan & Bega Valley.
- WaterNSW Strategy:
 - * Simplify and align accountabilities
 - * Seed decisions and approvals
 - * Facilitate automation and data transparency
 - * Streamline targets and priorities
 - * Optimize resource allocation
- Customer Pricing 2025-2030
- * Online sessions until early 2024
- * Trevor and Tanya attending

Facebook

Follow the 'Yanco Creek System' page on Facebook.

Project Officer - Andrea Mitchell

There is a fair bit going on in the Yanco Creek system, so to find out more about YACTAC and the Refreshing Rivers program I have a few suggestions:

- The [YACTAC website](#) has all of the past newsletters, projects and reports.
- The [Refreshing Rivers Program](#) website has heaps of information and how to be involved.
- Check out Facebook on [Yanco Creek System](#) for regular photos and stories.
- The [Regional Roundup magazine](#) was published celebrating agriculture and Landcare across the Murray region with YACTAC featured on pages 50 and 51.
- Email env@yactac.org.au or eo@yactac.org.au or call one of the staff or board members!

And now for a few of the events and projects...

Grant Funding

I have been working on sourcing funding to compliment the YCS Levy funds for works on the Yanco Creek System. Some of the funding recently received is listed below:

- Murrumbidgee Council Community Grants \$1,100
- DPI - Fisheries \$2 for \$1 native fish stocking program \$12,000
- Murray LLS - Rolling Out All Resources \$33,650
- Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) \$40,100

Rolling Out All Resources (ROAR) Project

In two days (September 6 & 7) almost 500 kgs of carp were electro-fished from a 5 km stretch of the Billabong Creek in Conargo! Electrofishing, fish surveying, wetland planting and golden perch fingerling release form part of YACTAC's ROAR project funded through the Refreshing Rivers Program to enhance waterways. The aim of fish surveying, pre and post electrofishing, is to quantify native fish response, survival and growth to carp removal. Fish ecologist, Dr John Conallin, was out on the weekend surveying fish and will continue to do so in the coming months. To boost native fish numbers funding through NSW DPI's Fish stocking program grant has ensured



27,000 golden perch fingerlings will be released at Conargo in February 2024.

Conargo Primary School wrote that students, teachers and adults from the school attended and learnt the difference between native species and carp. Both male and female carp were caught and this allowed participants to see the difference in size between the two genders. The fish are only stunned by the electro technique and native fish swim away, whilst the carp are scooped up in nets and removed.



Dr John Conallin and helper.

Project Officer - Andrea Mitchell

Rolling Out All Resources (ROAR) Project - continued

In addition to the carp removal, activities also took place on the banks of the Billabong Creek at the Conargo TSR. Three hundred tubestock plants, of various species, were planted by Deniliquin and Conargo students with the help of Deniliquin Kolety Lagoons Landcare Group, YACTAC through the Refreshing Rivers Program and Murray Local Land Services. Morning tea was held on the banks of the Billabong Creek and a great day was had by all.



Deniliquin and Conargo school students were involved in the project.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Platypus Citizen Science Afternoon - Morundah

Have you ever spotted a platypus in the wild?

This September 27th, you can help YACTAC, through the Refreshing Rivers Program and Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc better understand and protect platypuses locally by looking in our waterways.

Sign up to take part in the Platypus Citizen Science Afternoon at Morundah: [Platy-project booking](#)

With platypus populations sadly declining, we can play a crucial role filling gaps in our knowledge about where this much-loved (but very elusive) animal lives and the protections they need to thrive.

Carbon, Emissions and Natural Capital 101" roadshow - Wanganella

Agricultural consultant Cam Nicholson will be guest speaker at the Carbon, Emissions and Natural Capital 101 Roadshow at the Wanganella Hall on Thursday October 26th. Cam will provide a practical overview of where carbon requirements are heading, the development of emission reduction technologies, and explore options for farmers and graziers into the future.

Kids Fishing Day - Jerilderie

Jerilderie Fishing Club have organised a Kids Fishing Day on Saturday November 5th, of which YACTAC will have a stall.

FRRR - Chicks in the Sticks – Jerilderie and Moulamein 2024

YACTAC secured funds through the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal's (FRRR) Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought grant to host two events, "Chicks in the Sticks", in Jerilderie and Moulamein in 2024. The aim of the grant is to increase skills, knowledge and understanding of the risks posed by drought and climate change through two field day events that focus on enabling women living in a geographically vast region to network, as well as building depth of social connection, a shared sense of purpose and longer-term community belonging.

About FRRR: It is the only national foundation focused on ensuring the social and economic strength of remote, rural and regional communities.

YACTAC

GENERAL MEETING

- Geoff Ham has been our Treasurer and Public Officer for many years and is retiring.
- At least one board position will be vacant at our AGM.
- Board members executive positions will be spilled and filled at the general meeting after the AGM.

CEWO funded MER

- CSU retained contract to provide monitoring and reporting
- Yanco Creek System now incorporated in the Murrumbidgee footprint

NSWIC

- Threats for irrigation:
 - * Proposed amendments to the Water Act
 - * MDBA date change
 - * Buybacks across the MDB
 - * Cost shifting onto impactor
 - * 2025-30 Pricing review
 - * Regional Water Strategies
 - * Water Resource Plans
 - * Reduced reliability

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

e: eo@yactac.org.au

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.



Executive Officer - Tanya Thompson

Challenges

I returned to work after some much needed leave to find so many challenges facing our members. Minister Plibersek's recent announcement about moving the water recovery deadline and more buybacks has sent shockwaves through the southern basin. Her Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Bill 2023 clearly states that buybacks will be part of the mix and the 'cap' will no longer apply, which could lead to large amounts of water being taken out of circulation. All SDLAM projects are tied up in the Bill, so the outcome will have a direct link to Yanco.

WaterNSW has been allowed to increase 2023-2024 water charges by 7%. The next pricing determination covers 2025-2030 and it is expected that the cost to irrigators will be increased significantly. WaterNSW held their first Engagement session on pricing and only 14 people attended for the Murrumbidgee and Murray Valleys. IPART directed WaterNSW to engage more broadly to determine where WaterNSW places their focus and spending. I urge you to get involved. Contact Fiona Court (fiona.court@secnewgate.com.au) to register your interest.

The NSW Regional Water Strategy was commenced in 2021, with 14 strategies being developed across the state to provide a long term list to deliver 5 objectives. A review of the Stock and Domestic license category is currently under way. There is a survey open (until 21 Nov) which I urge every one of you to complete. Questions covering level of regulation and access, permitted uses, Basic Landholder Rights are just some of the topics. You need to engage to have your say and it only takes 10 minutes.

Click [Survey!](#)

Finally the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** is next week! **Thursday 21 September from 1pm**. We have a great line up of guest speakers: WaterNSW, SDLAM, LLS Refreshing Rivers, CSU—Environment monitoring. The YACTAC team look forward to seeing you there.