

For Public Notice via Internet

**REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*
(REFERRAL NUMBERS 2020-R02 and 2020-R13)**

Title of Proposals: Hattah Lakes North Floodplain Restoration Project
Belsar-Yungera Floodplain Restoration Project

Proponent: Lower Murray Water

Description of project:

The projects proposed to return a more natural flood regime to 1,130 hectares of the Hattah Lakes Floodplains Complex, within Hattah-Kulkyne National Park and Murray-Kulkyne Park, and to 2,375 hectares of the Belsar-Yungera Floodplain Complex within the Narcooyia Creek, Bonyaricall Creek and Yungera Creek anabranches of the Murray River. The works proposed will construct channels, large and small regulators, containment structures, temporary cofferdams, spillways, new access track and realignments/upgrades to existing access tracks. The projects will establish borrow pit sites to supply fill material to support construction.

Decision:

The Minister for Planning has decided that a single environment effects statement is required for both projects, specifically the works described within the Hattah Lakes North Floodplain Restoration Project referral accepted on 18 March 2020 and the works described in the Belsar-Yungera Floodplain Restoration Project referral accepted on 3 July 2020.

Reasons for decision:

1. There are potentially significant complex effects and uncertainties associated with biodiversity, Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage, surface water, groundwater and private land use values that require integrated assessment to support statutory decisions.
2. In particular the projects have potential for significant effects on:
 - the floodplain ecosystem;
 - threatened species and ecological communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*; and
 - Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
3. Assessment is necessary to examine the extent and acceptability of potentially significant effects, including the scope for further avoidance and minimisation of effects via design, siting and operational alternatives and their effectiveness in achieving acceptable balance of environmental outcomes. The assessment will provide a better understanding of the intended long-term environmental benefits of the projects.
4. An environment effects statement will ensure the community and stakeholders are engaged and consulted in the assessment of the projects' potential environmental effects.

Date of decision: 06 / 12 / 2020