



*Australian Government Minister for Climate
Change and Water*
Senator the Hon Penny Wong



*New South Wales Minister for
Climate Change and the Environment*
John Robertson MLC

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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COMMONWEALTH PROVIDES 10.8 BILLION LITRES OF WATER FOR NEW SOUTH WALES RIVERS AND WETLANDS

The Commonwealth has allocated 10.8 billion litres of water to 13 environmental sites in New South Wales (NSW), including wetlands in the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Macquarie valleys.

The water is part of the Commonwealth's environmental water holdings, purchased through the Government's water buyback program for the Murray-Darling Basin. This allocation brings the total Commonwealth water allocated to date to the environment to 26.7 billion litres.

"In this era of extended drought and climate change, we face monumental challenges in the Murray-Darling Basin," Federal Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, said.

"The Rudd Government is taking action to meet these challenges. We have taken over Basin-wide planning and will put a new, lower, scientifically-based limit on water use in the Basin for the first time ever.

"We have committed more than \$4 billion so far to upgrade and modernise water and irrigation infrastructure in the Basin to help our farmers and regional communities and to protect food security.

"And we are buying back water to help restore health to our rivers, securing the purchase of 638 billion litres worth \$996 million as at 31 October this year."

Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, said the water was being delivered from this month in cooperation with the NSW Government.

NSW Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, John Robertson, said the water would complement the almost 50 billion litres of environmental water provided to Murray, Murrumbidgee and Macquarie Marshes wetlands in recent months by the NSW Government.

"The environmental water is helping to support River Red Gums and other important wetland vegetation which provides critical habitat for wildlife, including water bird and frog breeding during spring," Mr Robertson said.

Sites selected for watering include Toupna Creek in Millewa State Forest, which provides habitat for the Southern Pygmy Perch, and Wera State Forest. Both areas are in the Ramsar-listed Central Murray wetlands near Deniliquin in southern NSW. Other sites to benefit include the Macquarie Marshes in central NSW and wetlands within Yanga National Park on the Lowbidgee Floodplain.

The sites were selected by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder after receiving advice from the Environmental Water Scientific Advisory Committee. Details of the individual sites to be watered and general information about the Australian Government's environmental watering program can be found at: www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/cewh/