



MINUTES

LAKE WYANGAN & CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON THURSDAY, 17 JULY 2025 COMMENCING AT 5:00 PM

PRESENT

Councillor Doug Curran (Chair), Mark Dal Bon (Councillor - Alternate), Frank Battistel (Community Representative) (ZOOM), Jade Salvestro (Community Representative), John Tagliapietra (Community Representative), Kelvin Williams (Community Representative), Matthew Woodward (Community Representative), Reginald Brown (Community Representative), Brian Roberts (Member for Murray Representative) (ZOOM)

Quorum = 3

GUEST

Lindsay Golsby-Smith (Murrumbidgee Irrigation)

STAFF

General Manager, Brett Stonestreet, Director Sustainable Development, Joe Rizzo, Environment & Public Health Coordinator, Vanessa Johns and Minute Secretary, Leanne Austin

1 APOLOGIES

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Jade Salvestro and Kelvin Williams that apologies be received from Councillor Tony O'Grady, Councillor Laurie Testoni, Ema Munro, Saroja Nagaraj Gurazada, Lisa Parker (Community Representative) and Scott Collis (Community Representative).

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Jade Salvestro and Reg Brown that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 June 2025, having first been circulated amongst all members, be confirmed.

3 BUSINESS ARISING

Nil.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pecuniary Interests

There were no pecuniary interests declared.

Significant Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no significant non-pecuniary interests declared.

Less Than Significant Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no less than significant non-pecuniary interests declared.

5 ITEMS OF BUSINESS

CL01 CROWN LAND TRUSTEESHIP & ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS SURROUNDING LAKE WYANGAN.

Mrs Johns provided an overview of the maps provided in the report identifying Crown Land and areas that currently have Aboriginal Land Claims.

Councillor Dal Bon entered the meeting the time being 5:06 pm.

Mr Stonestreet advised the proposed location for the Sediment and Nutrient Discharge Treatment into North Lake Wyangan project does not encroach on any Aboriginal Land Claims, however, Council would be required to undertake a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and obtain an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP).

Mr Rizzo advised the information presented was based on current data and staff will maintain an up to date record of information based on notifications received regarding any future Aboriginal Land Claims.

Councillor Curran advised that Council is not permitted to undertake any works on land with an Aboriginal Land Claim.

CL02 ITEMS/ACTIONS SUBMITTED FOR AGENDA BY COMMITTEE

Lindsay Golsby-Smith from Murrumbidgee Irrigation provided a response to the following questions raised:

1. Can Murrumbidgee Irrigation provide data on the inflows and outflows that they manage which impact the lake?

Ms Golsby-Smith advised that MI does not monitor drainage inflows. Due to privacy and confidentiality concerns, MI is unable to provide the Committee with data relating to MI customers. Ms Golsby-Smith advised the Committee that the process in place for providing customers with water from the Lake is that any water provided is metered, whatever the customer takes out, MI replaces on a monthly basis.

Councillor Dal Bon enquired how does Council know how many megs of Council water have been put into the Lake? Ms Golsby-Smith responded that this is also metered.

Mrs Johns advised that Council's surveyors monitor lake levels each week and data is sent to the Committee on a monthly basis.

2. Are there plans to address sediment and pollution/nutrient levels entering from the North West drain.

Ms Golsby-Smith advised that MI do not monitor sediment or nutrient levels. They are only required to monitor water quality leaving the system.

3. Can MI share historic water quality data for the South Lake including EC and pH levels? The Committee would like to assess the viability of dropping the EC through increased water turnover.

Ms Golsby-Smith advised MI is willing to share data however Council should request this formally by letter.

4. Are there any options that MI know of or could assist us with sourcing water to 'dilute' the lake and if we can achieve EC below 800us, would there then be opportunities to pump through the lake back into supply channel.

Ms Golsby-Smith advised there are a number of ways to source water including applications for cultural and environmental water however these do have strict criteria. MI would not accept water from the lake at its current water quality due to the high salinity levels. The water would have to be at around 150 – 200 EC. MI is willing to work with Council to investigate options.

Mr Stonestreet raised the question of access to supplementary flows for example in periods of high rainfall and flooding. Ms Golsby-Smith stated that MI can hold over water for customers and an application can be made to general security surplus however Council would need to own a supplementary entitlement. Council and MI are to discuss this further.

Mr Brown suggested that a larger pump would be required in future to avoid the risk of future flooding.

Councillor Curran advised Council needs to be mindful of the salt levels of any water being pumped out of the system as this will need to be managed to reduce the salt level.

Paul Tagliapietra entered the meeting the time being 5:42 pm.

Mr Battistel asked if any water left over at the end of the season could be utilised by selling or transferring it to Council to put into the Lake? Ms Golsby-Smith advised Council could encourage users to offer their unused water entitlement to Council to replenish the Lake. MI could facilitate this transaction.

Mr Battistel enquired what happens to the unused water now? Ms Golsby-Smith advised she would take this on notice.

Mr Williams raised the issue of some properties having drainage licences/right to drain and variations in the size of drainage pipes. Ms Golsby-Smith advised that MI has drainage rules in place depending on numerous variables and that the area in question has been audited and all drains approved.

Ms Golsby-Smith advised the Committee that Council and MI may review the number of inflows into the Lake.

Matthew Woodward entered the meeting the time being 5:46 pm.

Councillor Curran thanked Ms Golsby-Smith for attending the meeting, extending an invitation to attend future meetings as any solutions to improve water quality would need to be in partnership with Council and MI.

Mr Tagliapietra and Mr Salvestro proposed an option for consideration using the South Lake as a wetlands and storage area where water diverted from the MI drain could be pumped into the South Lake, left to settle and then pumped back into the North Lake. This would

require a larger pipe and pump system.

Mr Rizzo advised that consultants are currently preparing a revised Lake Wyangan Flood Study and Plan which will take into consideration future housing impacts and operating levels. It would be imperative to wait for the results of the Flood Study and Plan before considering this option.

The Committee considered the following questions submitted by members of the Committee:

1. In line with the 2016 Lake Wyangan Catchment management plan the Committee recommends Council explore all options to deliver fresh water, equivalent to $\frac{1}{2}$ the volume of the lake, annually. The current endorsed plan recommends a $\frac{1}{4}$ fill in Spring and $\frac{1}{4}$ fill in Autumn. At minimum the volume delivered to the lake should replace evaporation losses and water pumped to Barren Box (other than flood mitigation release) maintaining at fill level of 106m. With other significant bird areas in close proximity to the lake successfully sourcing Environmental water, we recommend exploring access to Environmental water to keep the water quality high and maintain healthy stands of phragmites reeds around the water's edge which provide shelter for threatened species like the Australasian Bittern.

Mr Woodward advised that Lake Wyangan, being a man-made lake would most likely not meet the criteria for Environmental water. Councillor Curran advised that Council had previously applied for Environmental water however was unsuccessful.

2. Set target operating level for the lake of 106 (105.5-106m) that is based on maintaining recreational functionality and aquatic health, whilst managing capacity for holding significant rainfall events – see chart of water height v monthly rainfall data for Griffith Airport. Noting fish deaths occurred at low fill height in early 2020. Likely due to higher water temperature, depleted oxygen and low resilience due to salt concentration, algae and pH issues. Flooding occurred in 2022 after consecutive wetter than average months. Although it is not clear if there were other inflows into the lake which increased the October 22 flood height.

Mr Rizzo advised that the operating level would be considered as part of the Lake Wyangan Flood Study and Plan.

Mr Tagliapietra enquired about the supply inlet at the corner of Ziliotto Road and West Road. Ms Golsby-Smith advised this would be an old drainage channel that is no longer used to deliver water. The MI supply inlet is at Jones Road – 25 megs.

Mr Tagliapietra enquired how much water Council would put into the lake each year and if this could be increased. Councillor Curran advised it was a budget allocation issue and that income from water Council has traded goes directly into the General Fund.

CC01 DRAFT EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - ENGINEERING DESIGN CONCEPT OF SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT DISCHARGE TREATMENT INTO NORTH LAKE WYANGAN

Mr Rizzo advised Council has prepared a scope for design of sediment and nutrient discharge treatment for North Lake Wyangan and would seek expressions of interest.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Matt Woodward and John Tagliapietra that the draft Expressions of Interest – Engineering Design Concept of Sediment and Nutrient Discharge Treatment into North Lake Wyangan document be approved and Council formerly call for Expressions of Interest for the project.

6 OUTSTANDING ACTION REPORT

The report was noted.

7 GENERAL BUSINESS

7.1 Water Quality Drainage Channel

Mr Williams raised the issue of the condition of the drainage channel at Lee Lane where there is little water running and the water has become stagnant. Councillor Curran advised this requires wetlands to filter.

Councillor Curran suggested that it is hoped that a filtering system will assist in rectifying this.

Councillor Dal Bon enquired if it was possible to create a wetland in this area? Councillor Curran advised it would be flushed out in a large rain event.

7.2 Costing for larger pump

Mr Salvestro enquired if Council would investigate the cost of a larger pump? Councillor Curran advised this could be done on the back of the Flood Study.

7.3 Thank You General Manager

Councillor Curran thanked Mr Stonestreet for his contribution to Council and particularly to the Lake Wyangan and Catchment Management Committee.

8 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Lake Wyangan & Catchment Management Committee is to be held on Thursday, 18 September 2025 at 5:00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 6:17 pm.