

Time to finish the job

With Murray River water levels dropping, the time is right for the continuation of the Gunbower Forest environmental flow.

Key sections of the floodplain received a priming flow of about 10GL of water for environment from late June to early July.

Then Mother Nature took over for about five weeks, with tens of gigalitres of unregulated water a day flowing over Torrumbarry Weir and onto the floodplain.

Now the water level has dropped, the environmental flow can continue until about October, achieving what was originally planned.

The 2022 floods saw a significant waterbird breeding event across the region, and the good news is they are breeding in the forest yet again.

So, completing the job we began in June will give their chicks, and last year's brood, the food and habitat they need to survive.

Without this flow, and with dry conditions on the way, it's more important than ever to finish the job.

Historically, the floodplain received water, on average, in seven out of 10 years, so a follow-up flow after a large flood is nothing new for the plants and animals of the forest.

Without regulation, a lot more water would have flowed into the floodplain since June.

Extending water on the floodplain through to spring gives the aquatic vegetation and iconic river red gums the best chance possible to make the most of the conditions.

It also means tracks will be open for the Christmas break.

And by working alongside natural flows, we can save about 36GL of water.



Koondrook fishway going swimmingly

Native fish are loving the award-winning Koondrook Weir Fishway.

The most recent Arthur Rylah Institute monitoring of fish movement included trapping, tagging, and fish surveys, and the results are in.

Large numbers of silver perch are using the fishway and 26 of the 65 fish tagged went through the fishway at least once over the monitoring period.

As spring approaches, the fishway will provide a key link between the Murray River and the high-quality feeding and breeding grounds of Gunbower Creek.

