

Wilcannia Weir Replacement Project

Fact sheet



Australian Government



The largest investment in water infrastructure along the Darling-Baaka River in decades, the NSW Government is designing and constructing a new weir and fishway for Wilcannia to replace the existing failed weir.

Integrated approach to improving water security

The NSW Government is taking an integrated, system-wide approach to improving water security and quality for the Wilcannia community. This approach will include both new water infrastructure as well as works to improve the supply of potable/ drinking water and management of water and wastewater infrastructure.

The Water Group in the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water will lead this approach by:

- constructing a new weir and fishway to replace the failed existing weir
- supporting Central Darling Shire Council to build a new water treatment plant for the town
- investigating a potential new groundwater bore with a reticulation network to supplement the town's existing water infrastructure
- improving the town's existing water network to reduce leakage and losses
- protecting the town's stormwater system to reduce public health risks.

This will ensure better water security and quality outcomes are delivered for the community.

New weir and fishway design

The design of the new weir and fishway has changed following comprehensive assessments of the weir's previous design and stakeholder and community feedback.

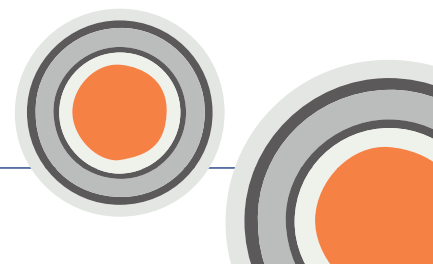
The Water Group will now progress with a \$76 million sheet-pile weir at the same height as the existing failed weir. The new weir will be a fixed crest type and will be approximately 5m high.¹ It will provide an additional 400ML of water security for the town.

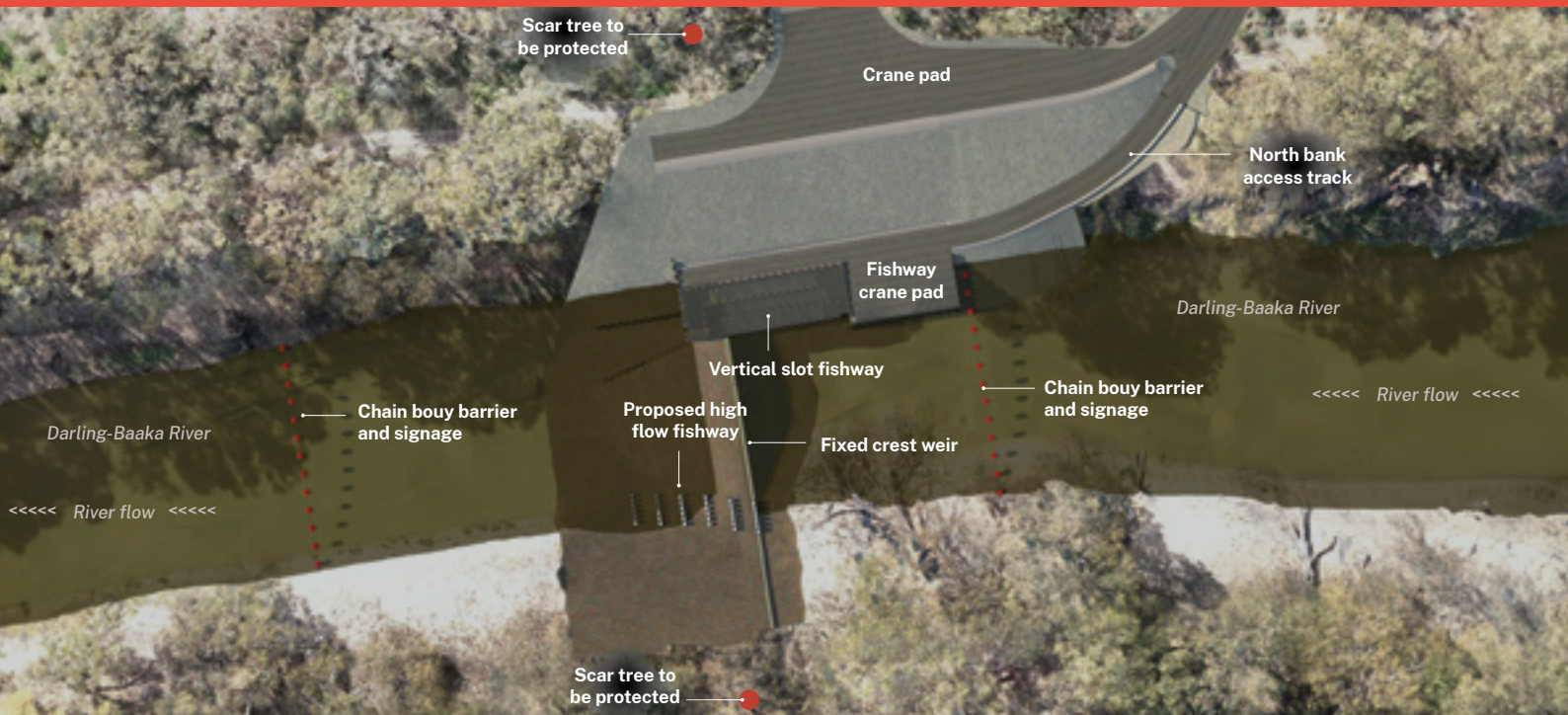
Unlike the old weir, the new design includes a fishway allowing fish to migrate upstream past the weir. It will be a vertical-slot type fishway and will be constructed next to the northern bank of the river.

The decision to move to a new design was shaped by the responses to the Environmental Impact Statement public exhibition in 2022, and extensive stakeholder consultation and feedback since scoping studies for the new weir began in 2016.

The new design improves water security for Wilcannia while also being safer and more affordable, with less impact on the environment and culturally significant sites.

¹ We use 'approximately 5m' as an overall figure as the weir is not built to a single height across the total expanse of the weir. For example, the structure of the weir may be as high as 5.5m with the crest of the weir around 4.2m.





Weir and fishway detailed concept design (aerial view)

While the design of the weir has changed, other key components of the project remain the same and are complete or well underway.

These include:

- conducting geosurvey activities to inform the final design of the weir
- upgrading components of Wilcannia's sewerage system to prevent sewage from getting into the stormwater drains and ending up in the Darling-Baaka River
- developing a Community River Place for recreational use in collaboration with community representatives.

Project benefits

The project, combined with the new integrated approach, will deliver a range of benefits including:

- improved water security and quality for Wilcannia
- additional sources of potable water in times of drought
- enhanced cultural connection to the river
- improved water management of the weir pool
- increased tourism and investment opportunities

- better recreational amenity to walk, swim, picnic and fish
- improved native fish migration.

Stakeholder consultation

The Water Group understands the importance of the river to the community and wants to design and construct a weir meeting community needs and expectations and maintaining the strong connection people have to the river.

Engagement on the project is ongoing and we will continue to provide opportunities for local communities and stakeholders, including Traditional Owners and First Nations communities, to have their say on the project as it progresses.

More information

For more information about the project:

- visit dpie.nsw.gov.au/wilcannia-weir
- email wilcanniaweir@dpie.nsw.gov.au
- phone: 1300 081 047

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