

Coorong Partnership

Communique No. 12

29 July 2021



The twelfth meeting of the [Coorong Partnership](#) was held on 29 July 2021 via videoconference due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The [Department for Environment and Water](#) (DEW) provided an update on the [Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin](#) (HCHB) program, including the welcomed advice that a decision from the Commonwealth is expected soon on the [On-Ground Works](#) Regional Bird Refugia funding proposal for priority infrastructure upgrades at Lower Lakes wetland sites.

The Partnership received an update on the HCHB [Coorong Infrastructure Investigations Project](#) (CIIP) which is progressing feasibility investigations of concepts to improve the long-term health of the Coorong South Lagoon. The Partnership was presented with a summary of presentations from the recent community meetings held in Goolwa, Meningie, Robe and Salt Creek, which covered preliminary ecological assessment results and introduced the options proceeding to engineering concept design over the coming months. The Partnership provided feedback on the draft assessment criteria proposed to inform the prioritisation of feasible options later in the year.

With respect to further augmentation of South East Flows to the Coorong, the Partnership noted that revised yield modelling for this option has been assessed as having limited ecological benefit to the Coorong South Lagoon (individually or in combination) relative to the other infrastructure options under investigation. Whilst any flows from the South East to the Coorong provide salinity and nutrient benefits, the modelled flows from further augmentation of South East Flows would be not significant enough to halt or reverse the trajectory of system decline, particularly when climate change is considered. On this basis, the Coorong Partnership endorsed the recommendation that further augmentation of South East Flows to the Coorong be discontinued from the Coorong Infrastructure Investigations going forward.

The [Limestone Coast Landscape Board](#) provided an update to the Partnership on the [Our Coorong | Our Coast](#) (OC|OC) program, which is focused on a range of activities to restore the ecological character of the Coorong and Limestone Coast and maintain the project sites as healthy and resilient habitats for threatened species. Recent activities include 10 hectares of revegetation works at Marks Point and Parnka Point, Orange Bellied Parrot (OBP) surveys, and the development of a 'how to' identity guide for *Neophema* species. The program is in discussion with the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation regarding a high priority management action to address threats to Fairy Tern nesting sites at the Murray Mouth. The Partnership noted breath of ongoing revegetation site management work under the OC|OC program over the next two years, including: weed control, tree guard management, monitoring seedling survival, and regular rabbit control at Parnka Point.

The [National Parks & Wildlife Service](#) (NPWS) provided an update to the Partnership on the next phase of the investing program to enhance visitor access and enjoyment in the [Coorong National Park](#). Feedback from community, stakeholders and the Coorong Partnership will continue to inform investment in the assets and facilities considered most important for upgrades, including campgrounds, day visitor sites, trails, roads, carparks and park signage. The Coorong Partnership noted the improvements, some of which it has inspected first hand during site visits, and expressed their strong support for this work continuing.

The Partnership Chair, Dean Brown, thanked all presenters and members for their attendance and ongoing commitment to the Coorong.

The Partnership will next convene on 2 September 2021.

Further Information

If you would like to receive regular updates about [Project Coorong](#) please email: projectcoorong@sa.gov.au

