

## Reduced flows leads to frenzy of activity on the Pike Floodplain

A major project aimed at improving water management across the **Pike Floodplain** in South Australia's Riverland has reached a significant milestone.

A reduction in Murray River flows has allowed vital vegetation, cultural heritage, and land surveying to be undertaken, along with deep drilling tests and remediation trials on salt-affected soil.

The results of this work will help progress the Pike Floodplain upgrade project, part of the Riverine Recovery Project which is funded by both the South Australian and Australian Governments.

The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources' Major Projects Branch manager Janice Goodwins says since late 2010, high river flows into SA have significantly replenished floodplain environments throughout the Lower Murray.

"While very welcome ecologically, the inundation has restricted access to many of the sites across the Pike Floodplain that have been targeted for upgrading," she says.

"With the river flows falling in recent times, we have been able to access these sites and begin the important surveying and testing work."

Pike Floodplain project manager Brad Hollis says the Pike project will replace existing structures across the floodplain with more ecologically appropriate infrastructure.

"The existing embankments prevent water exchange, provide no fish passage, can't be manipulated and managed to deliver better ecological outcomes, and don't meet minimum design standards," says Mr Hollis.

"The proposed new structures – at banks B, C, D, E, F, F1, G, H, Snake Creek Stock Crossing, and Coombs Bridge – are designed to cater for native fish movement, and will deliver much more flexible management of water into and out of the Pike floodplain, under a range of flow conditions.

"Our aim is to maximise the ecological benefits associated with the upgraded infrastructure.

"The project is based on robust scientific investigations, modelling, and monitoring, which have continued through the period of high river flows.

"It has also been developed in collaboration with the local community.

"In March, we will also launch a major three-year monitoring program to better understand fish species and habitat diversity and abundance throughout the

### Media contact

**David Heath**

Major Projects Branch

Department of Environment,  
Water and Natural Resources

Phone:

(08) 8463 3918

Mobile:

0457 521 799

Email:

david.heath5@sa.gov.au

[www.environment.sa.gov.au](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au)

floodplain.

“Along with our surveying and testing activities, a local Aboriginal team has been undertaking a range of land management activities to support the Pike Floodplain project, including pest, plant and animal control, revegetation, track rationalisation, and the removal of disused infrastructure and rubbish,” he says.

The \$100 million Riverine Recovery Project is funded through the Australian Government's *Water for the Future* initiative (\$89 million) with the remaining funding provided as part of the South Australian Government's *Murray Futures* program.

