MALLEE CATCHMENT *facts*

Planned construction works at Hattah Lakes

Above: Chalka Creek after environmental flows in 2010. Photo: Mallee CMA.

Left: Ducks on Lake Little Hattah. Photo: Mallee CMA.

Construction works are due to commence in early 2012 to restore the icon site of Hattah Lakes and protect threatened flora and fauna species.

These works are part of The Murray Darling Basin Authority's The Living Murray (TLM) program which aims to ensure environmental water is used efficiently and ecological benefits are maximised.

What is being built?

A pump station will be constructed at Messengers Bend, where Chalka Creek meets the River Murray. It will be powered by mains electricity.

Subject to environmental allocations the pump station will be used to pump water into the system when river flows alone are not able to meet ecological requirements.

The water being pumped into Hattah Lakes will come from environmental water entitlements which are subject to the same rules and limitations as irrigation water.

Four regulators and three stop banks will be constructed to retain environmental water within Hattah Lakes. The regulators will be built from concrete and steel with the banks and beds of the creeks protected from erosion by a layer of rocks.

Stop banks are earthen walls built to prevent water running back to the river until levels exceed the maximum inundation.

At a glance

- A pump station will be constructed at Messengers Bend, where Chalka Creek meets the River Murray;
- Four regulators and three stop banks will be constructed to retain environmental water within the Hattah Lakes area.

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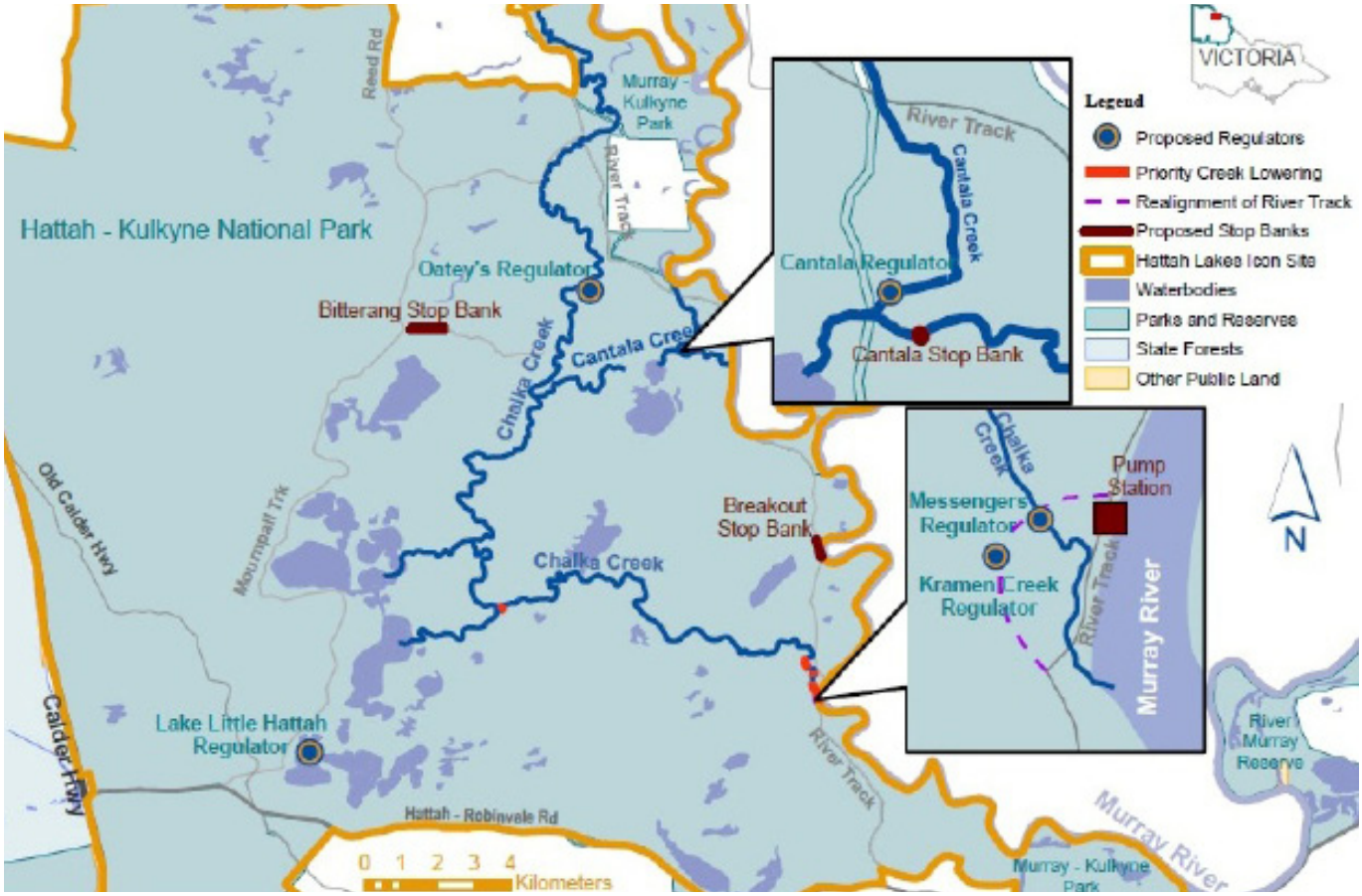

Above: A map of the proposed works to be undertaken at the Hattah Lakes icon site.

Where are works being built?

Stop banks will be built at Bitterang, Cantala and Chalka Creek with regulators at Oatey's, Cantala and Messengers pump station.

The refurbishment of an existing regulator at Lake Hattah will provide flexibility in management of smaller volumes of water.

How will it work?

The regulators will remain open most of the time allowing water to flow freely into the system when floods occur. When the river level drops and inflows stop, the regulator gates will be closed to hold water long enough to meet natural ecological requirements.

When the maximum environmental benefits have been achieved, the regulator gates at either end of Chalka Creek will be opened gradually so remaining water above the retention level in the system can be released back into the Murray River to mimic the recession of a natural flood event.

The structures have been designed to allow unrestricted return flows to the river, complementing fish passage.

The regulators and stop banks will have spill ways built into them allowing water to pass freely on to the flood plain and back to the river should the structures be over-topped by a large natural flood.

It is expected that the lakes will be filled with water once every two to three years, with more extensive flooding approximately once every eight years. This will be subject to water availability and natural conditions.

What to expect during the construction phase.

Access may be limited to some parts of the Hattah Kulkyne National Park during the construction of these works.

For up to date information on access, check the Parks Victoria website at:
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au
or follow the progress on twitter @HattahLakes for regular updates on the construction along with access limitations and road closures or detours.

Further details can be found on the Mallee CMA website at:
www.malleecma.vic.gov.au

Project Partners

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State Government Victoria

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Published September 2011