

MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP

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Agriculture, Food & Fisheries and Forests

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Spend the money!

The water and money are available to save the Lower Lakes – the only thing which is lacking is the will of the Rann Government.

Speaking ahead of a rally for a Fairer deal for the Lower Murray to be held in Murray Bridge this afternoon, Shadow River Murray Minister Adrian Pederick said while the Rann Government was standing by and letting the Lakes die a slow death, \$200 million earmarked for the Lakes was sitting in a bank account.

“Given that in 2003 Premier Rann himself loudly proclaimed the dire situation in the Lower Lakes and foresaw the looming disaster now upon us, it is truly unforgivable that what little action has been taken by his government has been left until the last minute – or as far as the lakes are concerned, until it’s too late,” Mr Pederick said.

“At this moment, there is between 200-400 gigalitres of water available in the southern Murray-Darling Basin that could be purchased. The state government has already spent money acquiring water for other emergency purposes but fails to give the environment and all in this region the same priority.

“A very modest amount of what’s available would buy the lakes another winter/spring rainfall season and double their chances of survival.

“We now face critical ecological dilemmas in several smaller areas including the Goolwa channel and the tributaries such as the Finnis and Currency Creek. In order to preserve and maintain the environmental integrity of these places, it appears we now have to rob Peter to pay Paul.

“Each one of these options leaves whole communities on the wrong side of a barrier and further accelerates the demise of the Lower Lakes.

Mr Pederick urged residents around the river and lakes to attend a rally in Murray Bridge tomorrow to demand a fairer deal for the Lower Murray.

“It is vital that governments get the message that South Australians are far from satisfied with their token efforts to save the river and lakes,” he said.

The rally takes place at 4pm today in the centre of Murray Bridge at Edward Square.