

MEDIA RELEASE

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The River Murray - Forests

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

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SA must push for additional 500 gl

A further 500 gigalitres of floodwaters should be directed to South Australia to assist the state's irrigators and environment say SA Liberal MPs Adrian Pederick and Mitch Williams.

River Murray and Water Security spokesmen respectively, they say that much of the recent huge flooding in southern Queensland will find its way down the NSW northern rivers and into the Darling.

'Decisions must be made now in anticipation of that flow reaching the Menindee Lakes in western NSW,' Mr Pederick said.

'Two of Menindee's four lakes are already full, guaranteeing Broken Hill's water supply. The other two are empty and there is a temptation for the NSW government to allow approaching floodwaters into them.

'The problem is those two lakes have a substantial 'dead water' content. If they were to put 500 gl into them, about one third of it would be lost to seepage and evaporation.

'That would leave about 350 gl of useful storage.

'We believe this is unacceptable, given the difficulties faced by SA irrigators who are on far lower allocations than their counterparts upstream, and the desperate state of the world-famous Lower Lakes.

'We call on the state government to immediately press for a minimum of 500 gl to give SA irrigators and the environment a fairer share of the water we've all been praying for.'