

Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority

Media Release

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MEDIA RELEASE

FINDING OUT WHAT MENINDEE STUDENTS THINK ABOUT THEIR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Finding out what students think about the local environment will be the focus of a one-day forum at Menindee Central School next week (Monday 10 May).

Senior students from Menindee Central School will participate in the day organised by the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority and the Murray Darling Association.

It is anticipated that students from Wilcannia and Ivanhoe will also participate via a video link.

Chair of the Lower Murray Darling CMA, Mr Mark King, said today that the forum will not only identify local environmental issues of concern to young people, but also seek ideas from the students on how to fix up environmental problems in the Lower Murray Darling catchment.

“School students have a great deal to offer in managing our natural resources but are often not asked for their views,” Mr King said.

“The CMA is particularly interested to see how students can be involved in practical ways,” Mr King said.

It is anticipated that outcomes from the day will be presented by the students to the CMA Board, the school and the Central Darling Shire Council.

The forum will include presentations, workshops, problem solving and a bus tour of the Menindee Lakes.

Ms Susan Walla, Education Facilitator at the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority said that the forum was one of a series of catchment-wide student events being run by the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority and the Murray Darling Association in 2010.

“The aim is to engage school students in environment and catchment issues. Similar forums will be run at Broken Hill and Coomealla during the year,” Ms Walla said.

The forum will include a bus tour to allow students to observe, comment and reflect at first hand on a range of issues such as river health, managing the Menindee Lakes, revegetation, farming, and wise use of water.

Forum facilitator, Mr Adrian Wells of the Murray Darling Association, said that while the issues students will be exploring are serious and complex, the day will focus on good learning and having fun.

"This is the first time that students in the Menindee area have participated in these natural resource management student forums," Mr Wells said.

"Similar forums at for Broken Hill and Willyama high schools have been a great success and resulted in Broken Hill students being invited to make a presentation on the findings to the CMA Board in Buronga," Mr Wells said.

A key feature of the 2010 student forums will be to encourage the students to identify, manage and report on a project or projects that will have a positive impact on the areas natural resources.

"This is a new approach and will allow the students to undertake some on-ground activities that have a lasting benefit for both the school and the community," Mr Wells said.

The Lower Murray Darling CMA will fund the ideas but the students will have to manage and report on the projects.

Mr Wells said that school students had a great deal to offer catchment management.

"The insights, optimism and enthusiasm of students needs to be captured and harnessed and used to improve the catchment's natural resources," Mr Wells said.

"Over the last five years, student forums across the Murray-Darling Basin have contributed a great deal to the thinking of catchment management authorities, Local Government and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority," Mr Wells said.

For more information and comment, please contact:

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