



Adam Marshall
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MEDIA RELEASE

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COMBATING HORROR SUMMER OF FISH KILLS

The NSW Government will take bold and unprecedented action to combat the looming threat of more fish kills this summer, with the creation of a modern day 'Noah's Ark' to save the State's native fish species from ecological disaster.

Minister for Agriculture Adam Marshall announced the \$10 million plan today in Narrandera and said that unless there was significant rainfall in the next month, the State would almost certainly be in for a horror summer of fish kills.

"I'm not going to mince words – the situation we are facing this summer is nothing short of a potential fish Armageddon," Mr Marshall said.

"We're in the midst of the worst drought on record, with record low rainfall, record low inflows into our river systems and high temperatures predicted over the coming months.

"We're facing a perfect storm, which could result in wide-scale fish kill events this summer that are even more significant than those we saw in Menindee earlier this year."

In response, Mr Marshall said the NSW Government would immediately embark on the largest-ever fish rescue and restocking program to protect native fish species. This includes:

- An unprecedented breeding program, utilising government and private hatcheries, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the iconic Murray Cod and other native species, such as Trout Cod and Golden Perch;
- Artificial aeration, oxygenation and chemical treatments to support water quality and fish survival across river systems;
- Extra dedicated fish teams to conduct rescue operations during fish kill events;
- A \$4 million expansion of the Department of Primary Industries' flagship Fisheries Hatchery and Research Centre in Narrandera, as well as other facilities, which will house many of the rescued fish; and
- The State's largest restocking program in history of rescued and bred native fish once normal water conditions return.

"This unprecedented response is proportionate to the disaster we're facing. We'll create a virtual 'Noah's Ark' for native fish species through the largest breeding and restocking effort to save native fish species," Mr Marshall said.

"This is a \$10 million package to get on the front foot and do as much as government can possibly do to address this significant threat.

“For the first time ever, we’ll be partnering with recreational fishing clubs and private hatcheries across the State to tackle this looming problem head on.

“There’ll be more severe fish kill events this summer and we know there’s not a lot we can do to prevent it, but this new program – the largest in the State’s history – will see every effort made to save and protect our native fish species and replenish stocks in our rivers and waterways when conditions improve.

“Together, we’ll ensure the survival of our fish species up and down our State’s river systems, no matter how severe this summer is.”

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