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MEDIA RELEASE

MURRUMBIDGEE ENVIRONMENTAL WATER STILL MISSING

Conservation groups today expressed outrage at the NSW Government decision to approve new water allocations from the Murrumbidgee Valley while ‘environmental water’ that was taken last year to top up other licences and town water is yet to be repaid.

“It is outrageous that while this debt to the environment remains, new allocations are being made,” said Amy Hankinson, Coordinator of the Inland Rivers Network.

“The Government has just announced that some irrigators will get 60 per cent of their annual allocations this year, but the environment has been left high and dry.

“More than 113 billion litres of water earmarked for the environment was taken away last year.

“The NSW Government must repay its debts to the environment to return long overdue environmental water to the Murrumbidgee Valley before it gives any more water away.”

Ms Hankinson said there was clearly a need for a broad inquiry into whether the needs of the environment are being adequately protected under current arrangements.

NSW law requires the Government to take into account the needs of the environment before approving other allocations of water.

“The wetlands and floodplains in the Murrumbidgee remain highly stressed. As with most areas in inland NSW these areas and their wildlife are literally on the brink. If we lose them it is forever.

“We have a responsibility to protect these amazing wetlands for our children and future generations,” she said.

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