

# Media Release



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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **FINDING OUT WHAT COOMEALLA STUDENTS THINK ABOUT MANAGING LAND AND WATER RESOURCES**

Finding out what students think about the local environment will be the focus for a one-day forum at Coomealla High School next week (Tuesday 31 March 2009).

About 30 Year 10 students from Coomealla High School will participate in the day organised by the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority and the Murray Darling Association.

Chairman of the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority, 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 young people 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 Catchment Management Authority and the Wentworth Shire Council.

The forum will include presentations, workshops, fun activities, problem solving and a bus tour.

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 to engage school students in environment and catchment issues. Similar forums are being run at Broken Hill and Menindee during the year.

“These forums across the catchment aim to seek the views of students in ways that are of interest and fun for students,” 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 water storage, wetlands, native fish, Aboriginal issues, catchment management, and the use of Murray and Darling River water.

Forum facilitator, Mr Adrian Wells of the Murray Darling Association, said that while the issues that the students would be exploring were serious and complex, the day would focus on good learning and having fun. "This is the second time that students in the Coomealla area have participated in student forums," Mr Wells said.

"A forum two years ago at Coomealla was a great success and resulted in participating students being invited to make a presentation on the findings to the CMA Board in Buronga" he said.

Mr Wells said that young people had a great deal to offer catchment management.

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

"Over the last three 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.

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