

MEDIA RELEASE

PS CANALLY RESTORATION FAST-TRACKED IN \$1.34M BOOST TO TOURISM PROJECTS

The restoration of a 113-year-old river boat has been given a significant boost as part of a \$1.34 million funding injection into river tourism projects across the Mid Murray district.

The historic PS Canally – a side wheel paddle steamer based at Morgan being revived by a dedicated band of volunteers – will be sailing the mighty Murray River again sooner than expected thanks to a grant through the Australian Government’s Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program (MDBEDP) Round 2.

Almost \$447,000 from the program, combined with \$40,000 in-kind project management support from the Mid Murray Council, will help prepare the steamer for future commercial use. The funding will cover substantial repair works and the installation of a crane and winch, safety equipment, internal fit-out including kitchen, accessible bathroom and electrical work. New mooring and passenger access facilities will also be built.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the funding would fast-track the restoration project and provide a new attraction for Morgan.

“Our region is already well known for its rich and colourful river history, and our river vessels including the PW Mayflower and the PS Marion at Mannum are a major part of this,” Mayor Burgess says.

“In adding the PS Canally to our heritage fleet, we’ll also open up new tourism opportunities for Morgan and towns along that stretch of the river to become an additional drawcard for visitors seeking a unique cruising experience.

“Our team of volunteers have already dedicated countless hours to rebuilding the PS Canally, and having the funds to fast-track the final stages of its restoration will be a dream come true for them and the residents of Morgan.”

The PS Canally project is one of three that the Mid Murray Council secured grant funding for through the MDBEDP’s second round.

The **Blanchetown Revitalisation Project** will improve the entrance streetscape to the town, with new town entry signage, along with improvements to the Blanchetown Medical Centre and RSL building at the town entrance to improve car parking and landscaping.

The Blanchetown riverfront will also be upgraded under the \$450,000 project, with improved access to the river’s edge and boat ramp, signage, bins and painting of the public toilets. The old oval corner (McPhee Street and South Terrace) will be given a substantial facelift, with outdoor gym stations, a nature playground, and landscaping. Improved water reuse and stormwater management will also improve the town’s public spaces.

An additional \$447,818 will fund the **Mannum Murray River and Heritage Tourism Project** at the Mannum Dock Museum, where an unsafe ferry used as a pontoon will be replaced with a permanent deep-water wharf. This new wharf will ensure the PS Marion maintains tour and cruise operations in times of drought and low river levels. The adjoining museum will have new exhibition buildings installed to house the historic replica of the Shearer steam car, other river heritage displays and long-awaited storage areas. Extra landscaping and fencing will also create an attractive river picnic area for visitors.

Work on all three projects is expected to start in the new year and will be completed by June 2023.

“Each of these projects builds on Mid Murray’s existing tourism attractions – especially its enviable river lifestyle, stunning environment and fascinating history,” Mayor Burgess says.

“As a region that has faced a challenging time recently, this injection of funds to support these three projects provides an exciting step forward for our region and our growing tourism sector. Each will deliver new reasons for visitors to holiday in our area and build on our expanding range of attractions, ensuring we are well placed to capitalise on the rise in domestic tourism.”

The MDBEDP supports communities affected by water recovery activities under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan with grants to undertake economic development projects. These projects aim to diversify and strengthen the local economy, enhance the community’s economic resilience and create employment opportunities.

Find out more about the [Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program](#).

For more information on the PS Canally, and to follow progress on the latest project, visit the [website](#) or follow on [Facebook](#). For details about the Mannum Dock Museum, PS Marion and PW Mayflower visit the [website](#) or follow on [Facebook](#).

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Mid Murray Council Chief Executive Officer Ben Scales
P: (08) 8569 0100 | E: postbox@mid-murray.sa.gov.au