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**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Mid Murray Council counting costs of ongoing Corella control measures**

Feedback from residents and community groups has shown a second Corella Control Program in the Mid Murray region has been successful in reducing numbers of the native birds, but Council leaders say managing the ongoing problem has become a “financial burden” upon Local Government.

For the second season in a row, Mid Murray Council has had to employ the services of a professional pest controller to disperse and reduce numbers of Little Corellas, following ongoing complaints over large flocks of the birds causing disruption and damage to crops, infrastructure and open space areas.

In conjunction with local landholders, control measures were carried out at Swan Reach, Nildottie/Greenways and Bowhill across the summer months, with residents in some areas reporting bird numbers dropping by an estimated 1,000-2,000 this year.

Mid Murray Council Chief Executive Officer Russell Peate says the control program has become a costly necessity.

“It’s unfortunate that Mid Murray Council, along with other South Australian Councils, has to resort to these measures,” he says.

“But each year, we see huge numbers of these birds return to our region and damage vital infrastructure and crops, not to mention creating a noisy and messy problem for local residents.”

Feedback from residents in affected areas has been largely supportive and many have indicated to Council that they would like to see the program continue, should the birds return.

Council allocated \$10,000 in the 2017/2018 budget for the control program and Mr Peate says local landholders have also assisted Council by reducing accommodation costs for the controller.

Ahead of budget planning for the next financial year, Mr Peate says Council will continue to push for State Government support to manage the problem and to relieve the cost burden upon Councils and private landholders.

“This is a long-term problem that requires long-term measures and Council cannot continue to absorb the significant financial burden incurred from annual control measures,” he says.

“This is an ongoing problem for our region, as it is for many across South Australia and Council will continue to lobby the State Government for funding and a State-wide approach to this ongoing problem.”

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