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MEDIA RELEASE

MID MURRAY LOBBIES FOR MURRAY DARLING ROYAL COMMISSION HEARING

Mid Murray Council leaders will push for a hearing of the upcoming Murray Darling Basin Royal Commission to be held in Mannum, stating the South Australian riverside town is the perfect example of a community reliant on the River Murray's future.

Late last year, SA Premier Jay Weatherill announced a State Royal Commission into breaches of the Murray Darling Basin agreement, following allegations of widespread water theft and mismanagement on ABC's 4Corners program.

Mid Murray Council Chief Executive Officer Russell Peate says with submissions closing at the end of April, Council would not only send in its own submission on the matter, but also formally request a Commission hearing be held in Mannum.

"Ensuring responsible management of the River and securing the region's water entitlements now, and into the future, is one of our highest priorities," Mr Peate says.

"Given its reliance on the River Murray, Council believes Mannum is an ideal location for a hearing and for Commission attendees to see for themselves the social, economic and environmental effects of the Plan on regional communities."

Council is responsible for managing around 220 kilometres of River Murray reserves and townships, extending from Morgan/Cadell in the Riverland, all the way down to Caloote in the Murraylands.

Five years after the announcement of the Plan, Mr Peate says Council continues to lobby for its full implementation and the water security and environmental benefits promised to South Australians.

"The health and sustainability of our River Murray system is a matter impacting every aspect of life in our communities," he says.

"Environmental water is crucial towards restoring the River's long-term health. Higher flows flush salt from the system, keep the Murray Mouth open and also provide environmental flows to River Murray wetlands and floodplains, which need varied flows to thrive."

Mr Peate also reiterated that water allocations are necessary for the continuing success of River Murray restoration projects, including the [Riverine Recovery Project](#) and [The Living Murray Program](#), one of the largest river restoration projects in Australia.

"Should the Murray Darling Basin Plan fail to be delivered in its entirety, the whole region's future is at risk," he says.

"Our location at the end of the Murray Darling system leaves our State most vulnerable to the effects of an unmanaged system.

"Council is standing up for its district's water rights and will continue to lobby on behalf of local people, to ensure the Mid Murray is heard on this important issue."

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