

What is a floodplain management plan?

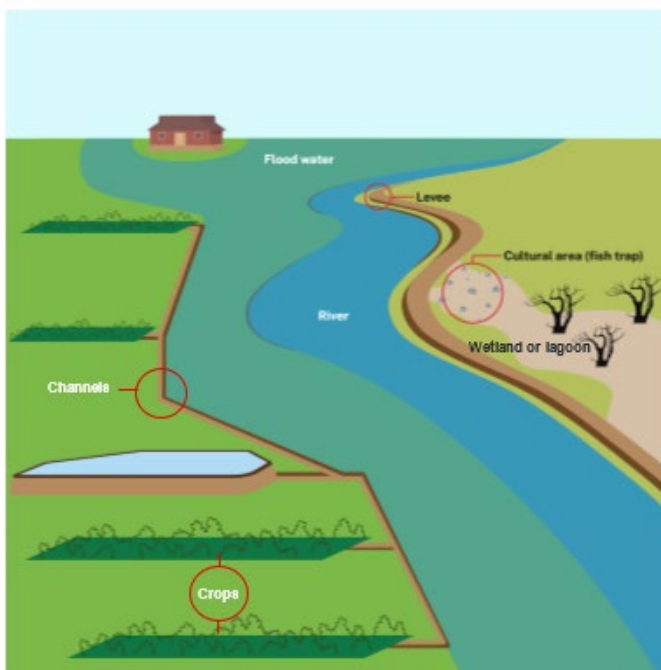
Floodplain management plans set the rules for flood works on floodplains.

The rules include what type of flood works can be constructed and where. A floodplain management plan will also:

- make sure flood waters get to the wetlands, lagoons and other values that rely on flooding to survive (Figure 1)
- allow some minor flood works to protect life and property.

Flood works are roads, channels, dams or levee banks that change the flow water to or from a river or change the way floodwater moves during a flood (Figure 2).

Figure 1. A diagram of a flooded river with examples of channels, crops and a levee bank cutting off water flows to a cultural area and wetland or lagoon



Floodplain management plans identify management zones within a floodplain and have rules for flood works in each zone. WaterNSW uses these rules to assess applications for flood work approvals. Flood works need a flood work approval unless an exemption applies. The Natural Resources Access Regulator enforces the rules in floodplain management plans and investigates unapproved flood works.

The WaterNSW flood works exemption fact sheet provides more information:

https://www.waternsw.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/128963/Understanding-exemption-approvals.pdf.

Figure 2. Images of flood works including a road crossing through a wetland in flood, a levee bank and dirt road alongside a flooded creek line, a water supply channel through a crop of trees



How are cultural areas protected?

The rules in a floodplain management plan protect Aboriginal cultural areas and values by:

- preventing direct damage that may be caused during construction of flood works
- preventing any increase in erosion from changes to flood flows
Example: protecting burial grounds or midden sites from the impacts of flood works
- maintaining the flow of floodwater to cultural values that need this water to survive
Example: making sure floodwater reaches lagoons, wetlands or significant scarred trees.

Floodplain management plans protect areas that have important cultural or environmental value (or both). All applications for flood works must go through a strict assessment process that must prevent any impacts on areas of cultural or ecological significance.

Floodplain management plans cover six valleys in the northern Murray–Darling Basin and work is starting on the southern valleys including the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Lachlan.

How can First Nations people be involved in floodplain management?

First Nations people can be involved by engaging in the process of developing, reviewing or replacing floodplain management plans. This includes the identification or confirmation of Aboriginal cultural values that depend on flooding or may be impacted by changes to flood flows. First Nations people can also contribute to floodplain management by recording known cultural sites in the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS).

Further information

Find maps and other documents to help you understand floodplain management plans on the department's website at www.water.dpie.nsw.gov.au > Plans and programs > Floodplain management > Floodplain management plans, or contact us at floodplain.planning@dpie.nsw.gov.au.