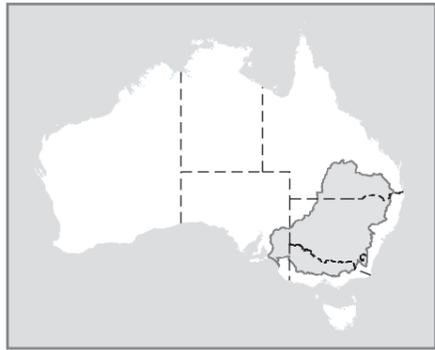


Annual environmental watering priorities 2014-15

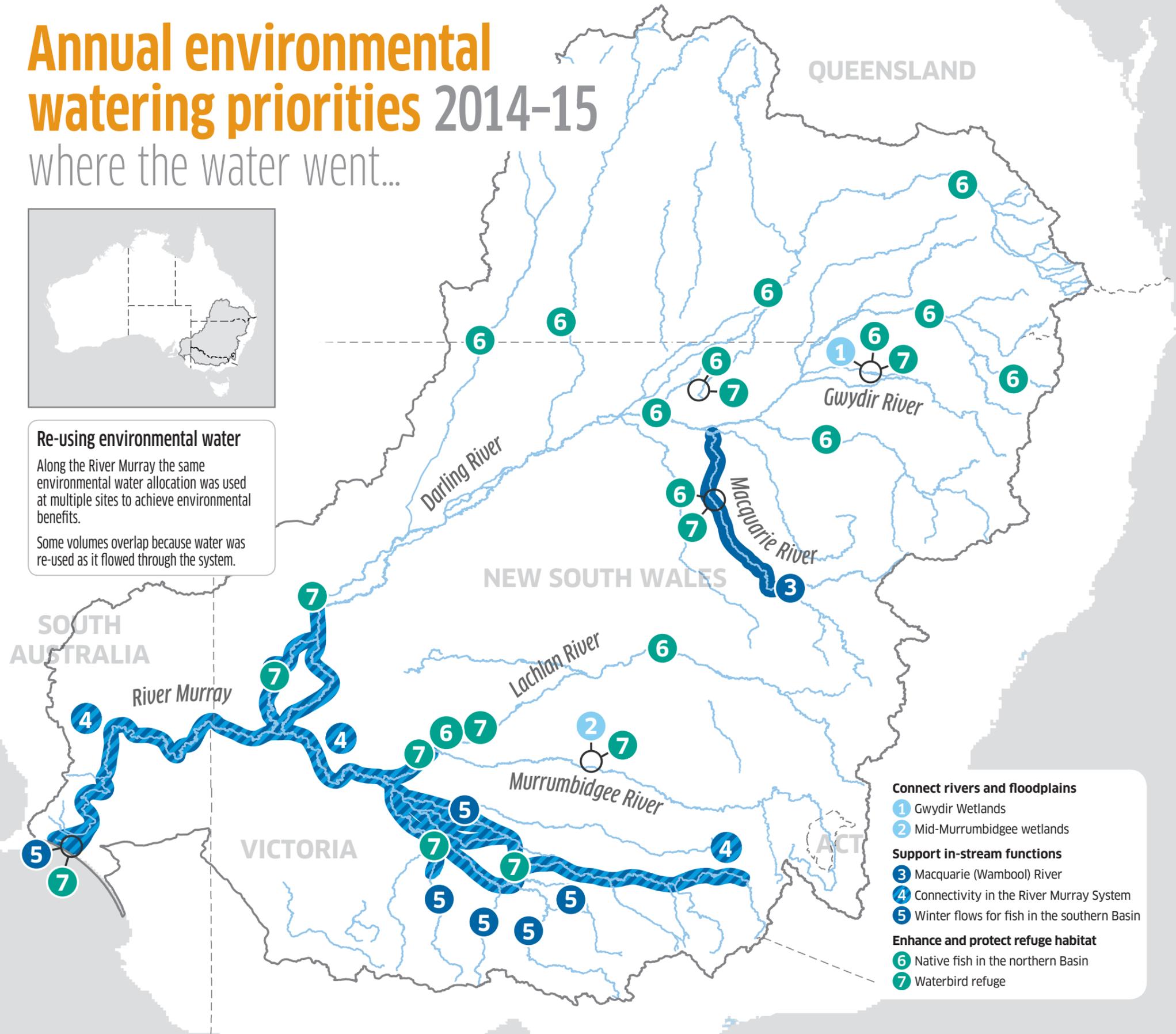
where the water went...



Re-using environmental water

Along the River Murray the same environmental water allocation was used at multiple sites to achieve environmental benefits.

Some volumes overlap because water was re-used as it flowed through the system.



Connect rivers and floodplains

- 1 Gwydir Wetlands
- 2 Mid-Murrumbidgee wetlands

Support in-stream functions

- 3 Macquarie (Wambool) River
- 4 Connectivity in the River Murray System
- 5 Winter flows for fish in the southern Basin

Enhance and protect refuge habitat

- 6 Native fish in the northern Basin
- 7 Waterbird refuge

1 Gwydir wetlands



Around 60 GL delivered to improve low-lying vegetation condition, which is also waterbird habitat (priority 7). This resulted in the widespread inundation of the eastern and central wetland areas. Environmental water was used to connect the Gwydir system to the Barwon-Darling River and to activate the Brewarrina fishway.

2 Mid-Murrumbidgee wetlands



Despite considerable planning and consultation, system conditions were not adequate to support the use of environmental watering to meet the priority – improved wetland health through the provision of water pulses (known as freshes). Only around 1.5 GL of combined flows could be delivered to Yarradda Lagoon and Sandy Creek. Given the continuing decline in condition of the mid-Murrumbidgee wetlands, this Basin priority was listed again for 2015-16.

3 Macquarie (Wambool) River



Around 30 GL used to improve native fish habitat within the Macquarie River below Burrendong Dam by restoring a more natural flow regime and addressing cold water pollution.

4 Connectivity in the River Murray system



Coordinated water delivery supported connectivity in the River Murray system through to the Coorong and Murray Mouth. Through careful re-use, the equivalent of 1,500 GL was delivered for the benefit of aquatic vegetation and native fish. This included delivering environmental water to the Loddon River and fringing wetlands, the lower Goulburn River, Tuppall Creek and the Ovens River.

5 Winter flows for fish in the southern Basin



Around 40 GL used to provide winter flows to tributaries and creeks of the River Murray and through to the Coorong. Previous environmental watering outcomes were used to guide environmental water delivery this year, successfully stimulating golden perch in the Goulburn River to breed.

6 Native fish in the northern Basin



Around 145 GL used to provide a refuge habitat in the northern Basin to enhance the survival of native fish populations during the forecasted dry period.

7 Waterbird refuges



Over 340 GL used to enhance and protect habitat for colonial-nesting waterbirds, wading birds and migratory shorebirds; and to maintain drought refuges, such as the internationally significant Fivebough Swamp in the Murrumbidgee.



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