

# Media Release



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World Environment Day 2009

## **\$750 000 Riversmart partnership launched to revitalise the Macquarie River**

The not-for-profit organisation Riversmart Australia and the Central West Catchment Management Authority (CMA) have marked World Environment Day 2009 by launching their \$750 000 river restoration partnership on the banks of the Macquarie River today.

The Macquarie RiverSmart initiative aims to help river stakeholders to take local action to ensure the health, productivity and sustainability of the magnificent Macquarie River and world renowned Macquarie Marshes.

The Macquarie will be the first river valley in Australia to commence a program under the Riversmart Australia banner, incorporating projects designed to engage river and bush care groups, Aboriginal groups, school groups, anglers, businesses and individuals in the revitalisation of the river by raising awareness of its value and importance as it passes through their region.

Chairman of the Central West CMA, Mr Tom Gavel, said that the initiative marks a significant investment in people power to overcome some of the issues that have impacted on the Macquarie River and Marshes in the past.

"We are pleased to invest \$750,000 to support the Macquarie RiverSmart initiative, which aims to mobilise river communities to restore their mighty river."

"There are a number of exciting projects designed to engage groups along the river and bring together scientists, government, local businesses and communities to work together to make a real difference," he said.

Dr Bill Phillips, Chief Executive Officer of RiverSmart Australia, said that the projects being funded aim to create win-win outcomes for river users, landholders, the environment and communities along the river.

"This is an exciting initiative that provides opportunities for connecting communities, landholders and businesses to their river and wetlands. If the people of the Macquarie valley get behind the program, it has the potential to make a huge difference to the condition of the river which will in turn have significant flow-on benefits for the region.

It's about pursuing a vision for how river communities want their river and marshes to be; healthy, productive, generating jobs and boosting the local economy," he said.

Among the projects announced today are an ongoing blue bucket campaign to get people thinking about saving water and water quality issues, a regional ecotourism feasibility study, support for local river caretaker groups, the development of resource material for schools and planning for an annual '*get to know your river*' canoe expedition.

This project has been supported through funding received from the Australian and NSW Governments.

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