

## NAVIGATING CHANGE

Human Ethics Research Approval Number: HEC22203



**‘Navigating Change’** is a project funded under the Murray Darling Basin Authority Water and Environment Research Program. Comprising a research team from La Trobe University the project will run for three years, 2022-24.

The project is led by Dr Heather Downey and the team comprises Heather, Professor Katie Holmes, and Dr Scott McKinnon. It aims to explore the diverse underlying values people attach to their environments, particularly water, and how these diverse values are revealed in periods of environmental and policy change, for example, during drought, and implementation of new policy such as the separation of water entitlements and land ownership and the Murray Darling Basin Plan. We also aim to explore how differences around environmental values have been accommodated and managed by the communities of Loxton, Griffith and Walgett.

It will create new knowledge about individual and community responses to environmental and policy change and the processes and mechanisms that communities have used to navigate diverse environmental values. As part of this project, we would like to talk to people who have lived in one of the communities of Loxton, Griffith or Walgett for more than fifteen years and who have experienced environmental changes in their area over time.

Specifically, we would like to talk to people about their experience of living in their community, their interactions with the natural environment, especially water features such as rivers and lakes, and what these mean to people. Interviews will also focus on the environmental changes people have experienced over time, how they have adapted to them, as well as how differences around environmental values, particularly water values, have been accommodated and managed in their community. It is expected that interviews will take between 90 – 120 minutes.

For more information about the Navigating Change project, please contact Dr Heather Downey, Chief Investigator, email: [H.Downey@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:H.Downey@latrobe.edu.au) PH: 02 60249809, or Dr Scott McKinnon, Research Fellow, email: [s.mckinnon@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:s.mckinnon@latrobe.edu.au)

<b>'Navigating Change'</b>		
The research is being carried out by the following researchers:		
<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Chief Investigator	Dr Heather Downey	La Trobe Rural Health School, La Trobe University
Co-Investigator	Professor Katie Holmes	Centre for Study of the Inland, La Trobe University
Co-Investigator	Dr Scott McKinnon	Centre for the Study of the Inland, La Trobe University
<b>Research funder</b>	This research has received \$307,287 from the Murray Darling Basin Authority.	

### 1. What is the study about?

You are invited to take part in a study called, 'Navigating Change'. The purpose of the study is to find out about how people in different Basin communities value nature, particularly water. We aim to identify the key environmental changes people have lived with and differences in the ways that change has been understood and managed.

Your contribution will help researchers to have a better understanding of environmental changes as seen through your eyes. We will also be asking about how your community has coped with government programs to deal with such changes. Examples are: – drought programs, Basin Plan activities, water licensing and compliance rules.

Importantly, in addition to learning about individual experiences of environmental change, the study will be exploring local conflict about these times, and how you and your community have lived with or resolved these difficulties. We hope that this information will help government programs to include different Basin community values when coping with environmental change.

### 2. Do I have to participate?

You do not have to participate. Being part of this study is voluntary. If you are interested we ask that you read the information below carefully and ask us any questions.

If you decide not to participate this won't affect your relationship with La Trobe University or any other listed organisation.

### 3. Who is being asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because:

You have lived in your community for more than fifteen years and you have experienced environmental change and related government programs in your area over that time. We consider fifteen years to be a minimum time of local experience needed to understand the impacts of environmental change.

### 4. What will I be asked to do?

We ask you to take part in a one-on-one interview with one of our research team members, either in your home or at an agreed location, during the period, October 2022 to June 2024. This will involve answering a series of questions about the environment and related government programs operating in your community, the importance you give the environment, particularly water and how you and people and services in your community have dealt with different views about water, the environment and government responses. It will take approximately 90 -120 minutes of your time to be part of this study.

Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed by a professional, secure, transcription service, Pacific Transcriptions. Our research team will analyse the interview information.

Your interview will be used in a variety of ways: for the information you provide about your experience of environmental change, for discussions about water and the impacts of water scarcity and changing government policy. The project will also produce story maps. A story map is a standard social research product which presents peoples'

stories about the research topic in accessible ways including with related visual content. It will be available online and in a printed format that will be kept by a local institution such as local government, for your local community to use in difficult times. The maps will also be used as data for advice to government.

With your consent we would also like to take photos of any personal items, photos, and memorabilia, that you would like to appear in the story map.

#### 5. What are the benefits?

The benefit of you taking part in this study is your story is recorded and that your experiences and insights will be used to produce better government programs for your community and the Basin as a whole. You will assist your community to know how to cooperate when times are hard and get through them.

Once the story maps are produced you will be sent a link to access your community's map.

If you wish, we will reimburse you for your time with a \$100 food or fuel voucher for use in your local community.

#### 6. What are the risks?

With any study there are (1) risks we know about, (2) risks we don't know about and (3) risks we don't expect. If you experience something that you aren't sure about, please contact us immediately so we can discuss the best way to manage your concerns.

Name/Organisation	Position	Telephone	Email
Dr Heather Downey, La Trobe Rural Health School, La Trobe University	Chief Investigator	02 60249809	H.Downey@latrobe.edu.au

We have listed the risks we know about below. This will help you decide if you want to be part of the study.

- If you choose to be identified, your identity related to your community story map will be known. This may put you at risk if there is local community conflict now or into the future. You must consider this risk when consenting to participate.
- The interview requires thinking about changes in the environment, experiences such a droughts and floods and difficult times for you and your community. This may trigger distress. Please be assured you are not required to answer questions you do not wish to answer. If you become upset or distressed, we encourage you to speak with your doctor or culturally appropriate support person who can provide you with information about where you can access counselling or other appropriate support. Support may also be accessed by contacting these services:
  - Beyond Blue PH: 1300 22 4636
  - Lifeline PH: 13 11 14

#### 7. What will happen to information about me?

If you consent, we will **store** your interview and any personal details you share with us in ways that will reveal who you are. If you choose to not be identified we will deidentify your interview material and any photographs or memorabilia you have shared.

With your consent, and if you choose to be identified, the information we publish will identify you in the story maps and other government and university publications from this study. You will be acknowledged as a contributor, unless you specifically request not to, and your spoken and visual information may inform people of your identity.

With your consent, we will **keep** your information, specifically, your name, address, email and phone contact details, identifiable interview recording, interview transcript, and photos of your memorabilia for an indefinite period in the La Trobe University secure data repository OPAL. This is because your information may be useful in future studies. Your

identity may also become public knowledge in these future studies and their products. We will seek your explicit consent to reuse your information for an indefinite period of time in the consent form.

The storage and transfer will be undertaken in accordance with the [Research Data Management Policy](https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/view.php?id=106/) <https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/view.php?id=106/>.

The personal information you provide will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws, any health information collected will be handled in accordance with the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic). Subject to any exceptions in relevant laws, you have the right to access and correct your personal information by contacting the research team.

**8. Will I hear about the results of the study?**

We will let you know about the results of the study by sending you a link to the story maps, and to the report to government.

**9. What if I change my mind?**

You can choose to no longer be part of the study at any time until four weeks following the collection of your data. You can let us know by:

1. Completing the 'Withdrawal of Consent Form' (provided at the end of this document);
2. Calling us; or
3. Emailing us.

Your decision to withdraw will **not** affect your relationship with La Trobe University or any other organisation listed.

When you withdraw, we will stop asking you for information. Any identifiable information about you will be withdrawn from the research study. However, once the results have been analysed we can only withdraw information, such as your name and contact details. If results haven't been analysed you can choose if we use those results or not.

**10. Who can I contact for questions or want more information?**

If you would like to speak to us, please use the contact details below:

Name/Organisation	Position	Telephone	Email
Dr Heather Downey, La Trobe Rural Health School, La Trobe University	Chief Investigator	02 60249809	H.Downey@latrobe.edu.au

**11. What if I have a complaint?**

If you have a complaint about any part of this study, please contact:

Ethics Reference Number	Position	Telephone	Email
HEC22203	Senior Research Ethics Officer	+61 3 9479 1443	<a href="mailto:humanethics@latrobe.edu.au">humanethics@latrobe.edu.au</a>



**Consent Form – Declaration by Participant**

I (the participant) have read (or, where appropriate, have had read to me) and understood the participant information statement, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the study, I know I can withdraw at any time until [four weeks] following the collection of my data. I agree information provided by me or with my permission during the project may be included in a local story map available to the public, report to government, thesis, presentation and published in journals.

I wish that I be identified/deidentified (delete as appropriate) in any materials that are published from this research.

I wish to be identified/deidentified (delete as appropriate) in the storing of this material for future research.

I agree to have my interview audio and/or video recorded

I agree that my information may be reused by the university for other research for an indefinite period of time

I would like to receive a copy of the results via email or post.

Name	Email (optional)	Postal address (optional)

**Participant Signature**

I have received a signed copy of the Participant Information Statement and Consent Form to keep

Participant's printed name	
Participant's signature	
Date	

**Declaration by Researcher**

I have given a verbal explanation of the study, what it involves, and the risks and I believe the participant has understood;

I am a person qualified to explain the study, the risks and answer questions

Researcher's printed name	
Researcher's signature	
Date	

\* All parties must sign and date their own signature

**Consent Form Story Maps – Declaration by Participant**

I (the participant) have read (or, where appropriate, have had read to me) and understood the participant information statement, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the study, I know I can withdraw at any time until [four weeks] following the collection of my data. I agree information provided by me or with my permission during the project may be included in a local story map available to the public, report to government, thesis, presentation and published in journals.

I wish that I be identified/deidentified (delete as appropriate) in any materials that are published from this research.

I wish to be identified/deidentified (delete as appropriate) in the storing of this material for future research.

I agree to have any personal photos and memorabilia I agree to share, photographed for the purpose of contributing to the story map for my community.

I agree that my information may be reused by the university for other research for an indefinite period of time

I would like to receive a link to the story map via email.

Name	Email (optional)

**Participant Signature**

I have received a signed copy of the Participant Information Statement and Consent Form to keep

Participant's printed name	
Participant's signature	
Date	

**Declaration by Researcher**

- I have given a verbal explanation of the study, what it involves, and the risks and I believe the participant has understood;  
 I am a person qualified to explain the study, the risks and answer questions

Researcher's printed name	
Researcher's signature	
Date	

\* All parties must sign and date their own signature

**Withdrawal of Consent**

I wish to withdraw my consent to participate in this study. I understand withdrawal will not affect my relationship with La Trobe University of any other organisation or professionals listed in the Participant Information Statement. I understand the researchers cannot withdraw my information once it has been analysed.

**I understand my information will be withdrawn as outlined below:**

- ✓ Any identifiable information about me will be withdrawn from the study
- ✓ The researchers will withdraw my contact details so I cannot be contacted by them in the future studies unless I have given separate consent for my details to be kept in a participant registry.
- ✓ The researchers cannot withdraw my information once it has been analysed, and/or collected as part of the interview

I would like my already collected and unanalysed data to be

- Destroyed and not used for any analysis  
 Used for analysis

**Participant Signature**

Participant's printed name	
Participant's signature	
Date	

**Please forward this form to:**

CI Name	Dr Heather Downey
Email	H.Downey@latrobe.edu.au
Phone	02 60249809
Postal Address	PO Box 821, Wodonga 3690