



Media release

The Hon Peter Walsh MP

Minister for Agriculture and Food Security
Minister for Water

Wednesday 28 September 2011

Coalition to change Lake Eildon houseboat licences

Water Minister Peter Walsh announced today that additional licences for houseboats on Lake Eildon will be issued and upgraded so that bigger houseboats can be built to boost the area's recreational tourism.

Visiting Eildon with Member for Benalla Bill Sykes, Mr Walsh said proposed changes to houseboat licences would allow for increased size limits for new houseboats up to 20 metres by 8 metres (65 feet by 26 feet).

"The Victorian Coalition Government understands how important tourism is for communities around Lake Eildon," Mr Walsh said.

"There are about 28 commercial licences not being used and we want to encourage larger, modern, luxurious houseboats to be built to be used on the lake."

Conditions on the additional licences would include the installation of grey water treatment systems, construction by a registered houseboat builder and a plan for when new houseboats can be released onto the lake.

Mr Walsh said he supported a proposal that Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW), as the manager of Lake Eildon's water storage and houseboat operations, increased the number of houseboat licences over time.

"Goulburn-Murray Water is working on a land and on-water management plan for Lake Eildon and will be talking to the local community throughout October to get people's views on proposed changes to houseboat operations, as well as other recreational, environmental, cultural and water quality management issues," Mr Walsh said.

Dr Sykes said the local community and houseboat industry were keen to make the most of economic opportunities offered by Lake Eildon's remarkable recovery.

"There is a thriving local houseboat building industry and recreation and tourism adds significant benefits to Lake Eildon and its community," Dr Sykes said.

"It is amazing to see the lake – which dropped to just six per cent capacity in 2007 – now more than 96 per cent full after many low level drought years."

Lake Eildon is the only inland waterway in Victoria where houseboats can operate. Currently about 700 private houseboats are licensed to operate on the lake.

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