

GOULBURN-MURRAY
WATER

Rochester-Campaspe

IRRIGATION AREA

Chairmans message

We have once again arrived at the traditional start to the irrigation season. As has been the case in the previous season we are facing the prospect of low allocations on the Goulburn system and zero allocation on the Campaspe system. These prospects, we must remember, can change during the next three months as we enter what traditionally are our peak inflow months.

Goulburn-Murray Water will be providing customers with various information to assist irrigators with their planning. Please take the time to read through the information provided and contact the Rochester office for points of clarification. For information specific to accessing D&S supplies or allocation carried over please refer to G-MW operations plans on the G-MW website or contact your Planner.

The rapid paced nature of the irrigation industry continues. There are several key projects currently underway including; NVIRP modernisation works, NVIRP consultation between

landowners and irrigation designers, Campaspe Future Operations Survey, Campaspe WSPA Management Plan not to mention traditional season start-up projects. Further detail regarding these projects is provided within this newsletter.

We are all aware of the recent water trade ballot that has occurred and these applications have been processed by G-MW and customers notified of the outcome and/or next steps.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our retiring WSC member Ian Whatley who has successfully represented his fellow irrigators with a high degree of integrity for many years. Congratulations to Eril Rathjen who has joined the committee recently. Eril will provide the committee with new ideas and her knowledge of the water industry will be most welcome and advantageous to the committee meetings.

Once again I encourage irrigators to stay informed on current issues through the various information



Richard Anderson – Chair Rochester/
Campaspe WSC



Daniel Irwin – Operations Manager
Rochester/Campaspe

sources available to ensure you are able to make well informed decisions.

I am sure we will all be watching the forecasts closely and hoping for an improved outlook in the near future.

WSC Elections

Rochester-Campaspe Irrigation Area recently held Eastern Zone WSC elections with Peter Gibson and Mark Hill being re-elected and a new member, Eril Rathjen, also being elected. Our thanks to outgoing member Ian Whatley, for his contribution to the WSC over many years.

The newest member to the WSC, as mentioned above, is Eril Rathjen. Eril, along with her husband, live at Colbinabbin and have developed a vineyard and wine label, grow processing tomatoes, run first cross ewes and a grain cropping enterprise. With their business relying on the viable future of the irrigation industry,

Eril has a strong commitment to both the economic and social sustainability of the Rochester-Campaspe region. Involvement in Victorian water issues over the last 2 years has given Eril invaluable experience, enabling her to provide effective and consultative representation.

We look forward to the contributions of all WSC members in what is going to be a very challenging period for all.



Rochester-Campaspe Irrigation Area

Irrigation News

Carryover changes and delivery

The use of carryover as a method to help manage security during times of low allocation has been well accepted by G-MW customers since its introduction in 2007/08. The maximum volume that can be carried over from one year to the next has increased from 30% to 50% of High and Low Reliability Water Shares. The Northern Sustainable Water Strategy has proposed that this limit be increased to the equivalent of 100% of HRWS and 100% of LRWS in a concept called a spillable water account.

Along with proposed changes to allocation policies these two key concepts should be understood by all irrigators and interested community members. Information is available on the website www.ourwater.vic.gov.au.

Delivery of carryover is dependant on the delivery system operating. Refer to Operations Plans on G-MW's website for more details.

Customer Survey

G-MW seeks the views of customers on the quality of the service it provides and importantly how it can further improve these services in an annual survey.

The survey is undertaken with 20% of its customers representing channel irrigation, river diversion and groundwater users across an area of 68,000 square kilometers, roughly the size of Tasmania.

The information gathered in the survey is extremely valuable for G-MW to gauge its performance and identify areas for change or improvements.

Results from the survey, expected to be complete before September 2009, will be used to guide G-MW business operations and services to its 32,000 customers.

Web Use Increase

The end of the 2008/09 irrigation season marked a 50% increase in ordering over the internet by irrigation customers. As customers become aware of the new features available and how easy it is to use, G-MW anticipates the use of internet ordering will continue to increase.

On average, 350 orders were processed each and every day of the 2008/09 irrigation season, with one third of those orders placed through the internet.

Placing orders via G-MW's traditional WaterLINE phone service continues to be available and used by many customers, but we are seeing a larger proportion of our customers take up internet as their preferred method of ordering water.

Operations Plans

With low water allocations again likely for the 2009/10 season G-MW will continue to provide Operation Plans for each of its Irrigation Areas and regulated systems to provide customers information on how these systems will be operated.

These plans will be updated following each allocation announcement which occur on the 1st and 15th of each month (or the next business day). The Operation Plans specify how customers can access water for essential household needs, domestic and stock, and where delivery of any water in Allocation Bank Accounts might be possible, including allocation carried over from 2008/09.

Operation Plans are especially important when the seasonal allocation is less than 1% of HRWS as any operation of the system must be within the water available for system operating requirements. Operating Plans are available on the G-MW website www.g-mwater.com.au.



G-MW Case Studies

Modernisation of northern Victoria's irrigation network is already delivering dividends for farmers and other water users across Northern Victoria according to five case studies released by the region's system manager Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW).

At this early stage of the 5-10 year modernisation program G-MW wanted to provide the broader community with some tangible examples of how channel automation, channel lining and new meters are improving the operation of the system, improving water efficiency and also enhancing our services to our customers. Losses like spills, seepage, leakage and meter error all delay allocations and also reduce the amount of water that is available for allocation and delivery to farmers, local communities and the environment.

All case studies are available from the G-MW website www.g-mwater.com.au/modernisationcasestudies

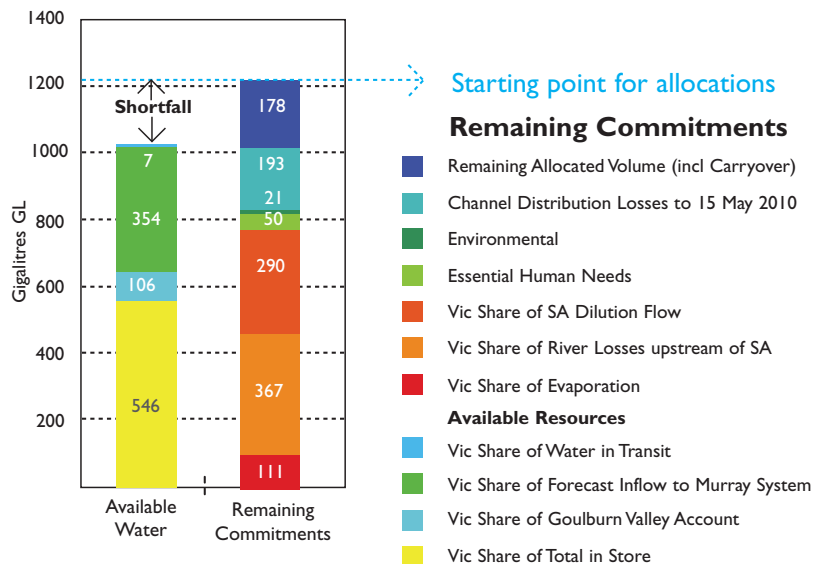
Rochester-Campaspe Irrigation Area

Irrigation News

Water Allocations - Information On Resource Position

G-MW released the first information on allocations and resources on the 1st of July 2009 and will provide updates on the 1st & 15th of each month or next business day. At 1 July 2009 there was insufficient resources to enable allocations on any of G-MW's six regulated systems including the Murray, Goulburn, Broken, Campaspe, Bullarook and Loddon Systems.

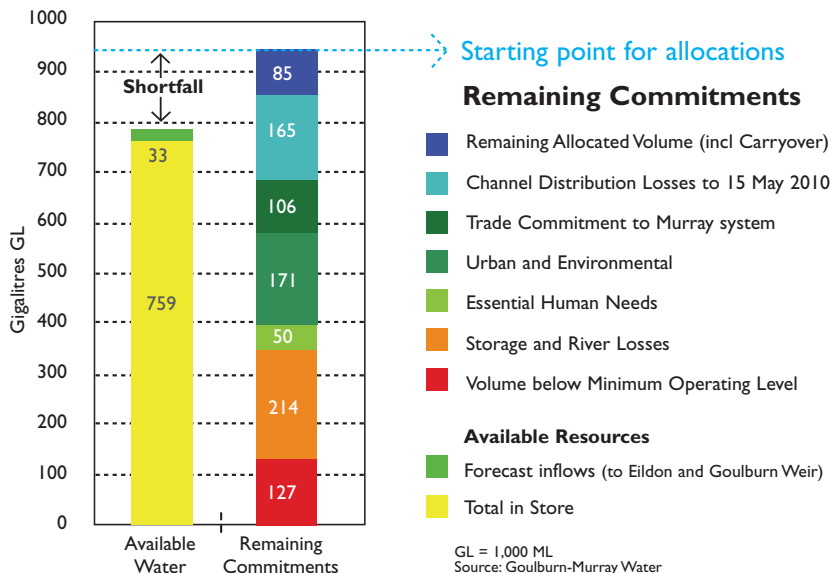
To provide customers access to detailed information on the resource position, in particular what is the shortfall before allocations are made, G-MW has established "Rocket Diagrams" indicating details of the volume of water available and commitments to be met prior to allocations being made. The two diagrams included below indicate the position on the Murray & Goulburn systems as at the 17 August 2009. Current information on these systems is available on G-MW's website www.g-mwater.com.au under the Customers Services/G-MW Drought Response tabs.



GL = 1,000 ML
Source: Goulburn-Murray Water

Breakdown of water in store and commitments
17 August 2009

Murray System



GL = 1,000 ML
Source: Goulburn-Murray Water

Breakdown of water in store and commitments
17 August 2009

Goulburn System

2009 Season Update

Customer meetings - WaterLINE functions

Customers have recently received information relating to the upgrade of G-MW's WaterLINE system. Various improvements have been made to the system which will now make it easier for customers to order and manage their water. For a practical demonstration on how to utilise the improved functions (including Web ordering) customers are invited to attend one of the following public meetings. If you are unable to attend the public meeting please contact the Rochester office and we will arrange a demonstration time for you.

Location	Date	Time
Lockington Recreation Reserve Lockington	Wednesday 2 September	10.00am
Campaspe Golf Club (4r's) Northern Highway Rochester	Wednesday 2 September	1.00pm
Colbinabbin Community Hall Mitchell Street Colbinabbin	Wednesday 2 September	10.00am

Campaspe Operations

At a recent public meeting regarding the study into the Future Operations of the Campaspe Irrigation District (CID) attendees were provided with an update of the current resource position and operating plan. At present there is not enough water in store to ensure delivery of essential D&S needs to CID customers for the entire season. It was explained that inflows in the immediate future are crucial to the operating plans for the Campaspe system. Goulburn-Murray Water have assured customers that there will be an initial D&S fill for customer use in line with Qualified Right guidelines, between 21-24 September 2009. Customers with an immediate requirement for Domestic and Stock water should contact their Planner to discuss their needs. G-MW is currently investigating a range of contingency plans if required. There will be further communications with Campaspe customers to ensure they remain informed on the proposed operating plan for the system and CID.

At the same meeting, consultants presented the outcomes of the survey recently conducted on behalf of NVIRP David Kent (Executive Manager Modernisation, NVIRP) presented the proposed way forward to investigate and cost a range of options for consideration by the Campaspe irrigators.

Capital Works Program

Goulburn-Murray Water has completed a large Capital Works Program this winter.

The majority of works have been completed on the Western Waranga Channel where 8 channel subways have been replaced. This program involved the installation of pipes up to 1500mm in diameter and extensive earthworks. Works will continue into September replacing the headwall structures which can be completed while the channel is operating and delivering water. Several of the subways are located on Channel Rd at Colbinabbin.

The replacement of a road crossing on Lowrie Rd at Kotta has recently been completed and involved the installation of eight 1650mm diameter pipes.

These projects have all been completed by local G-MW staff working with the assistance of local contractors.





Costs of Modernisation “Whole of Life Project”

G-MW has now completed the “Whole of Life” project which looked at the Impacts that modernisation will have on our irrigation network and how this will shape the future price path for customers. The whole of life project involved extensive modelling covering three primary scenarios.

1. A Base Case which looked at G-MW in its current form, including the Shepparton and Central Goulburn 1-4 Modernisation Projects, however assuming no further modernisation, ie without NVIRP.
2. An NVIRP Stage I Scenario, which modelled the system where the backbone is established, automation of the backbone and replacement of all dethridge meter outlets on the backbone with magflow meters undertaken. This scenario also assumed the rationalisation of 28% of channels, not on the backbone and the movement of delivery share associated with these assets to the backbone.
3. This scenario assumed G-MW would only operate the backbone and that all “spur” channels are rationalised, with the associated delivery shares transferred to the backbone. These customers would either be “connected” through 1 to 1 connections or syndicates.

This work identified the key cost drivers in the modernised system. Assets such as magflow meters, automatic regulators, the software and hardware associated with running these assets have been identified as major cost items. The combination of these costs with the reduction in future liability for assets rationalised, and connections established were modelled to demonstrate the impact on future prices.

We will now be working through the results of this project with our Water Service Committees and NVIRP’s Modernisation Committees over the coming weeks.

Copies of G-MW’s Whole of Life cost review Executive Summary are available from www.g-mwater.com.au/wholeoflife. The full report will be available in the near future.

NVIRP Channel Modernisation Works

Over the past three months up to 25 work crews employed by various contractors (many local) have been busily completing the largest upgrade to the Rochester channel network in recent history.

This winter in excess of 380 automated regulating flume gates have been installed across the Rochester district, including the Western Waranga Channel (WWC).

These flume gates will allow Goulburn-Murray Water staff remote access to be able to monitor and if required operate the regulating structures. In addition these sites when fully operational will improve the consistency of supply to customer outlets delivering an increased level of service.

Works crews are now completing minor works (i.e. handrails) and Rubicon staff will soon commence the commissioning process allowing the gates to be fully functional.

Various sites have been deferred from this year’s program to allow sufficient time for irrigators and designers to complete rationalisation investigations.

Compliance

The 2008/09 Irrigation Season saw compliance reporting increase by some 38% on the previous season. This increase in reporting of potential water related offences can be partially attributed to a vigilant community seeking to assist in the protection of what is a very scarce resource during this most difficult of droughts and also to an increased field based surveillance provided by G-MW.

Goulburn-Murray Water actively investigates all reports of alleged water theft and other breaches of the Water Act. Approximately 50% of last season’s 343 reports are being progressed through the Courts.

This coming season will see an increase in proactive detection activities including more waterborne surveillance as well as increased use of new technologies including surveillance cameras and other remote detection means.

Suspected incidents of water act offences can be reported to G-MW 24 hours a day 7 days a week on phone 1800 064 184 and this can be done anonymously.

John Edwards from GVIS on the right with Mr Matt Daniels from Lockington



NVIRP Update

The 2009 winter works for Stage 1 of the \$2 billion irrigation upgrade is now complete with over 1000 more regulator gates installed during the current winter shut-down.

Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project CEO Murray Smith said, although we had a slow start to the works this winter because of rain, we have been able to install another 1000 gates in backbone channels throughout Torrumbarry, Murray Valley, Rochester, Pyramid Boort and Central Goulburn Irrigation Areas.

“We are now two thirds through the replacement of these regulator gates and the replacement of on-farm outlets is continuing.

“NVIRP’s Modernisation Coordinators will continue to work with G-MW customers to make sure that the connections program is assisting them to view their farm operation and to take advantage of the modernised backbone.

“This is a time of great change in the irrigation industry and we encourage all landowners to rethink what will make their enterprise more profitable in the future and discuss these options with our Modernisation Coordinators and Farm Irrigation Designers.

Modernisation Coordinators for all irrigation districts can be contacted by phoning NVIRP on 1300 163 006.

Drainage Review – fixed cost for 2009/10

A review of the way G-MW recovers the cost of providing drainage services has commenced. The tariff review will cover Surface Drainage, Community Surface Drainage and Drainage Diversion Services.

The process has been initiated following requests from Water Service Committees and individual customers for G-MW to review the current Drainage Diversion tariff. Ongoing drought, modernisation and improved farming techniques have resulted in the water available in drains for diversion being dramatically reduced. In these changing times it is timely for a fresh look at the way costs are recovered for drainage services.

Stakeholder Reference Committees that include customers have been established to ensure customers have input into the future tariff options. A significant amount of preliminary work has already been done and several options developed for discussion. Some initial consultation with WSC’s has also occurred.

Prior to more formal and extensive consultation, financial modeling of the different options will be completed to provide information for a selection of practical options. Following consideration by the Reference Committee, options considered practical, will be progressed to formal customer consultation.

Board approval is required for any changes to the existing tariff. It is expected that the process will be completed in time for any proposed changes to be implemented in the 2010/11 year.

Customers wanting to have an input into the process will be able to attend one of the public information sessions which will be advertised once details are confirmed or can contact the local Area office for details of reference committee members.

Rural Support Line 1300 655 969
Lifeline 131 114
Beyondblue 1300 224 636

contacts

To place an order go to Waterline online via G-MW’s website or Waterline on 1300 469 469

Internet

www.g-mwater.com.au

Hint Add the login page to your favourites or phone.

G-MW can be contacted during normal business hours at any of its offices.

Rochester-Campaspe Office

03 5484 0400

Emergencies

Customers may contact G-MW to report emergencies and urgent matters such as reporting of pollution incidents and illegal activities by using the 24 hours emergency line.

24 hours emergency line:

1800 064 184

WSC MEMBERS

Richard Anderson: 03 5483 2214
(Chair)

Bruce Macague: 03 5484 2225
(Deputy Chair)

Ron Brooks 03 5482 1548

John Hewlett 03 5486 5278

Bill McMinn 03 5483 2233

Eril Rathjen 03 5432 9266

Mark Hill 03 5484 6204

Peter Gibson 03 5484 5226

Ken Parker 03 5484 1498