

Lower Ovens Groundwater Management Area 2012/13 Annual Report



For groundwater users in the Lower Ovens Groundwater Management Area, the 2012/13 irrigation season saw the successful implementation of the Local Management Plan (LMP).

Allocations

In 2012/13 allocations were 100% in both the Murray Zone and the Ovens Plain Zone for groundwater users accessing deep lead groundwater, as groundwater levels were well above the LMP trigger level (Figures 1 and 2).

Based on the 3 year rolling average recovery levels, allocations for the 2013/14 season are also likely to be 100% for all zones.

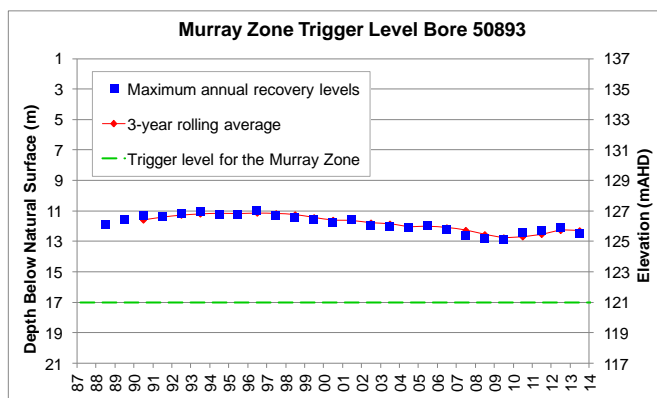


Figure 1 Murray Zone - 3 year rolling average recovery level compared with trigger level

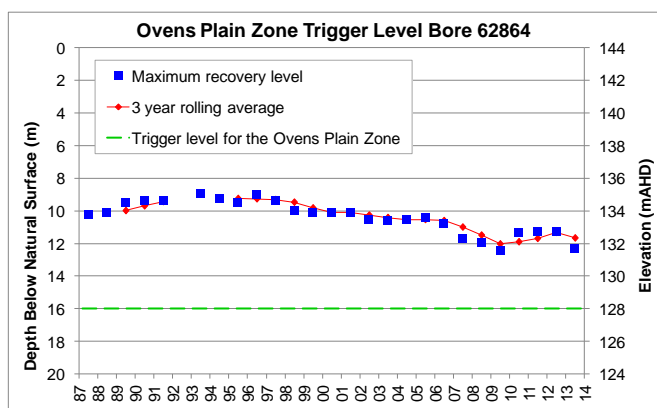


Figure 2 Ovens Plain Zone - 3 year rolling average recovery level compared with trigger level

Metered groundwater use

Metered groundwater use in 2012/13 was above the historical average. This may be attributed to the exceptionally dry summer. The total metered usage across all zones was 5343.4 ML (Table 1). The total metered usage was around 26% of the total licence entitlement in the Lower Ovens GMA (Figure 3).

Management Zone	Metered use (ML)	Total Entitlement (ML)
Ovens Plain	2,103.5	3129
Mid Ovens	2,024.1	11,901.6
Bedrock	156.2	1,372.6
Murray	1,059.6	3,896
Total	5,343.4	20,229.2

Table 1 Groundwater use across Management Zones

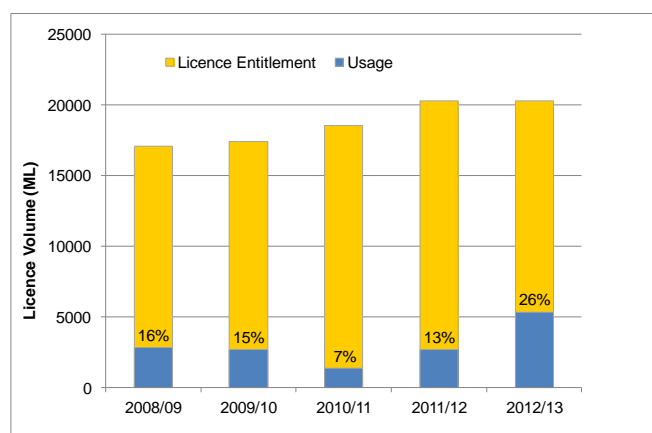


Figure 3 Metered groundwater extractions

Licence transfers

New developments may occur in the Lower Ovens GMA through either permanent or temporary transfer of licence entitlement. The 2012/13 season saw an increase in the volumes of licence entitlement transferred, with 364 ML temporarily transferred and 112.5 ML permanently transferred (Figure 4). The higher volumes of licence transfers are likely due to the dry summer and greater certainty about transfer rules under the new LMP.

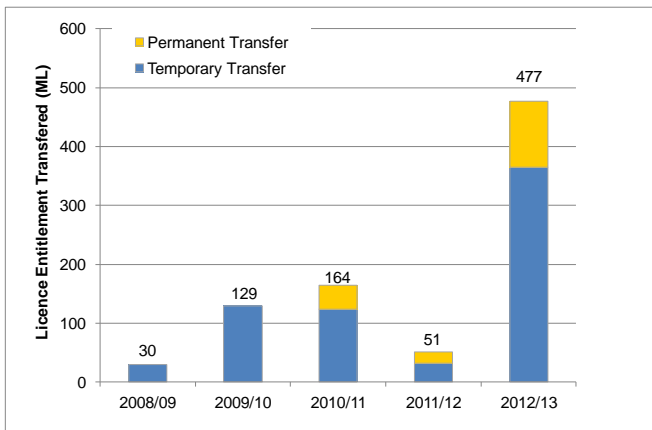


Figure 4 Permanent and Temporary licence transfers in the Lower Ovens GMA

Groundwater Monitoring

Goulburn-Murray Water, in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI), continues to monitor groundwater levels in more than seventy State observation bores in the Lower Ovens GMA.

Groundwater levels remained relatively steady across all groundwater management zones in the Lower Ovens Groundwater Management Area during 2012/13 (Figures 6, 7 and 8).

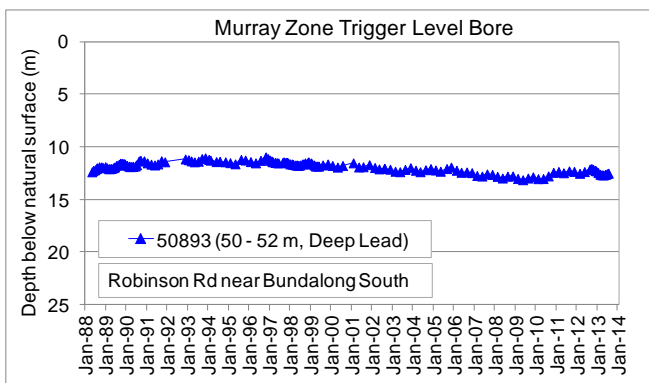


Figure 6 Murray Zone trigger level bore

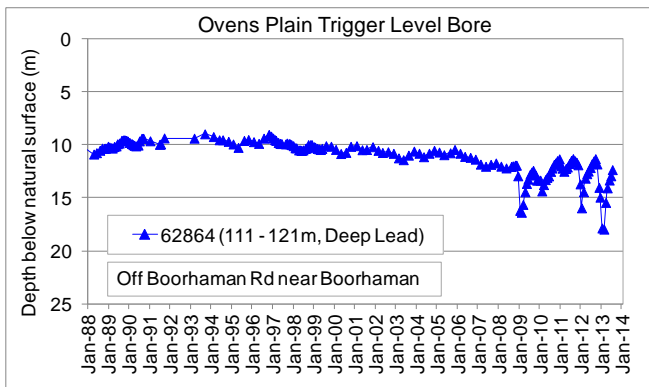


Figure 7 Ovens Plain Zone trigger level bore

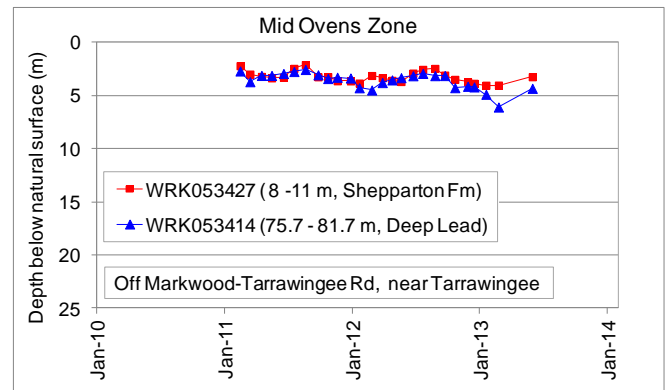


Figure 8 Mid Ovens Zone nested bore site

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

Goulburn-Murray Water held a field workshop to better identify groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs) across north-east Victoria (an example of a GDE is shown in Figure 9). This was part of a broader project to increase our understanding of ecosystems which require groundwater for their function and survival.



Figure 9 Black spring in the Warby Ranges

Future LMP amendments

No changes have been made to the Local Management Plan since it was released in August 2012.

The potential for any amendments to the LMP will be assessed in 2013/14 and will consider, among other issues, the new Murray-Darling Basin Plan and upcoming changes to Victoria's *Water Act 1989*.

Where can I get more information?

You can download a copy of the Lower Ovens Local Management Plan from the Goulburn-Murray Water website www.g-mwater.com.au or call Matthew Pethybridge on 03 5826 3702 for any further information.