

## Shepparton Irrigation Region Groundwater Management Area

### Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) seeks your feedback on a proposed change to groundwater salinity monitoring in the Shepparton Irrigation Region Groundwater Management Area.

A recent review of the annual salinity mailout found the program has not met its objectives:

- The timing of results has not been practical for groundwater use decision-making.
- There is little continuity in results as very few samples are being returned each year.
- There is little confidence in the data being collected due to the lack of quality control.
- Costs have increased significantly – only 10-20 per cent of bores are being sampled, but all customers are paying for the service.

GMW proposes replacing the mailout with an opt-in service and utilising observation bores to monitor changes in salinity over time.

GMW asks for your feedback on this proposed change by **Wednesday 22 November 2017**.

Please direct your comments to GMW by email to [karina.joy@gmwater.com.au](mailto:karina.joy@gmwater.com.au) or by mail to:

Attn: Karina Joy  
Goulburn-Murray Water  
PO Box 165 TATURA VIC 3616

The Shepparton Irrigation Region Groundwater Management Area (SIR GMA) covers an area of approximately 500,000 hectares and incorporates the Shepparton, Central Goulburn, Rochester and Murray Valley irrigation districts.

It extends from Yarrawonga to Echuca, along the River Murray, and south to Murchison and Colbinabbin.

Groundwater resources from the surface to a depth of 25 metres are managed through the SIR GMA Local Management Plan.

### Groundwater licensed volume and estimated use

The total licensed volume in the SIR GMA is currently 191,131 megalitres (ML) per year (Figure 1).

Groundwater use in the SIR GMA is estimated at the end of each season using a method which considers:

- annual use by a subset of SIR GMA licensed groundwater bores that are metered,
- the volume of metered groundwater use in the Katunga Water Supply Protection Area, and
- spring rainfall.

This method is accepted as a conservative and cost-effective approach to understanding annual use in the SIR GMA.

In the 2016/17 season the estimated use was 54,220 ML (Figure 1). This is almost a third less than the estimated use in 2015/16.

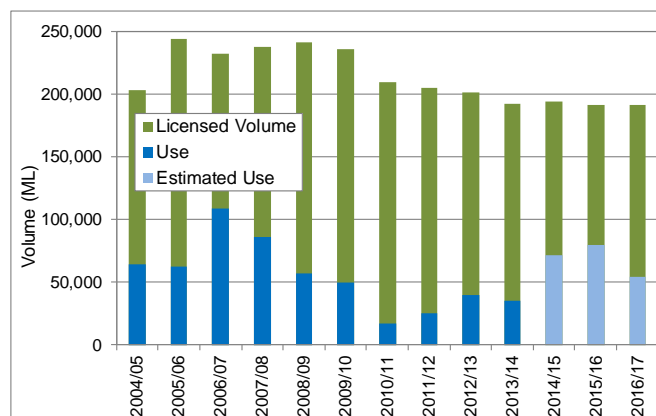


Figure 1 - Annual use as a proportion of licensed volume in the SIR GMA

### Monitoring shallow groundwater levels

Groundwater levels in the SIR GMA fluctuate in response to infiltration of rainfall and irrigation. When levels are close to the surface, land salinisation and waterlogging of soils can threaten social, economic and environmental values.

Groundwater levels are monitored in approximately 1,000 observation bores in the SIR GMA. An annual watertable map is produced enabling watertable changes and trends to be understood. The four most recent water table maps are provided overleaf.

### Want to know more about shallow groundwater?

<https://salinitywatch.gbcma.vic.gov.au>

This newly developed Shepparton Irrigation Region Shallow Groundwater website provides easily accessible information on the benefits and risks associated with shallow groundwater in the region.

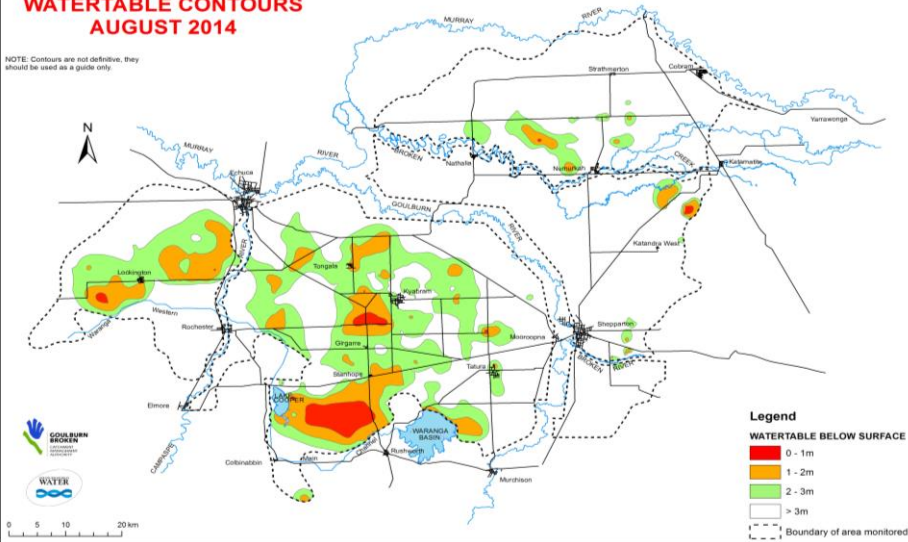
Key features of the website include easy-to-find shallow groundwater levels by observation bore location and regional salinity risk mapping.

### Where can I get more information?

You can download a copy of the SIR GMA Local Management Plan from GMW's website at [www.gmwater.com.au](http://www.gmwater.com.au) or call 1800 013 357.

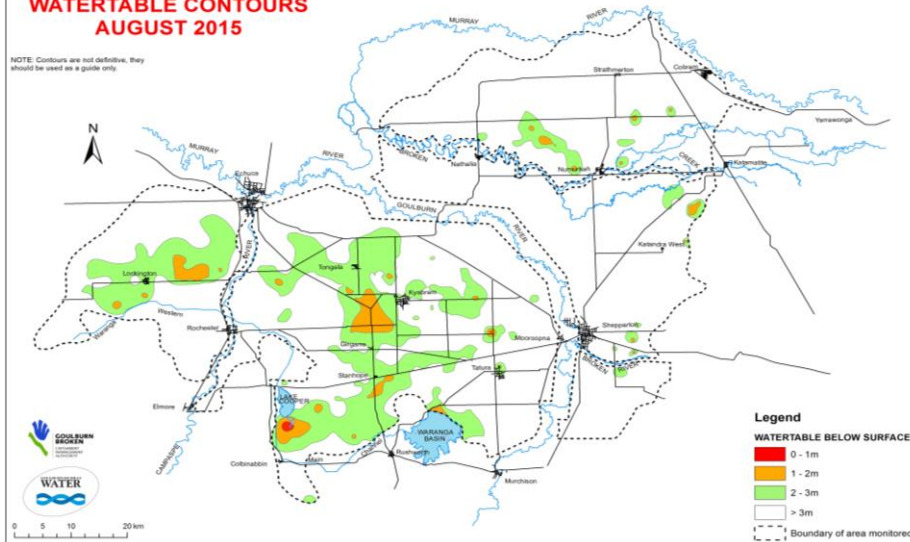
**SHEPPARTON IRRIGATION REGION  
WATERTABLE CONTOURS  
AUGUST 2014**

NOTE: Contours are not definitive, they should be used as a guide only.



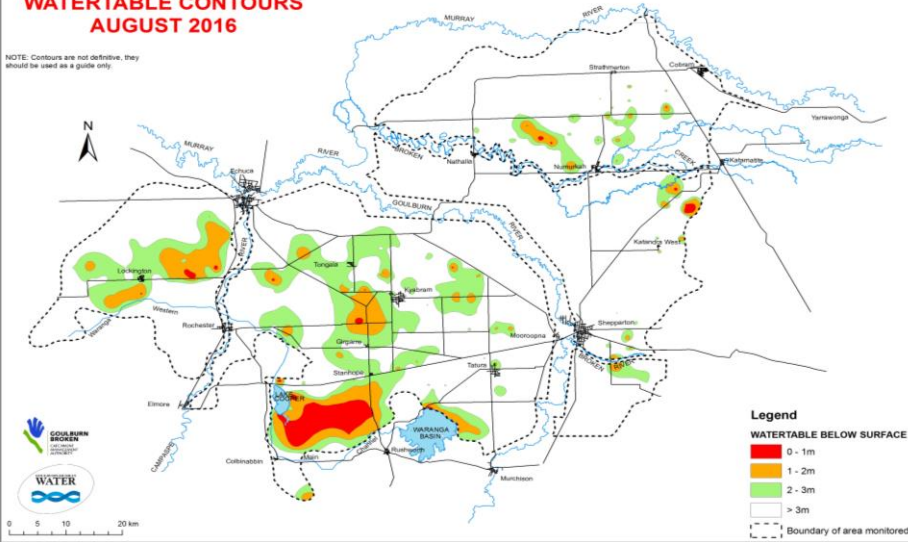
**SHEPPARTON IRRIGATION REGION  
WATERTABLE CONTOURS  
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**SHEPPARTON IRRIGATION REGION  
WATERTABLE CONTOURS  
AUGUST 2016**

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**SHEPPARTON IRRIGATION REGION  
WATERTABLE CONTOURS  
AUGUST 2017**

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