

Central Victorian Mineral Springs GMA

Groundwater management

The Central Victorian Mineral Springs Groundwater Management Area (the GMA) extends from Daylesford and Woodend on the Great Dividing Range in the south to Cairn Curran Reservoir and Lake Eppalock in the north.

Groundwater in the area is highly valued. It is shared between the environment, domestic and stock users, irrigated agriculture, commercial users and growing urban communities.

The region is unique because of naturally occurring carbonated mineral water springs that have long been valued for health benefits, commercial bottling and tourism.

Groundwater resources in the area are managed under the *Central Victorian Mineral Springs GMA Local Management Plan* (the Plan), which was endorsed by Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) in July 2013.

Groundwater licensed volume and use

The total groundwater licensed entitlement volume (licensed volume) in the GMA in 2019/20 was 5,082.3 ML/yr (Table 1).

Three licences (totalling 31.8 ML/yr) were surrendered during 2019/20 and 77.5 ML/yr of new entitlement was issued (across three separate licences). This resulted in the total licensed volume increasing by 45.7 ML/yr, compared to 2018/19.

Table 1. Licensed volumes and zone limits

Management zone	2019/20 licensed volume (ML/yr)	Zone cap/PCV (ML/yr)
Campaspe (1120)	1,149.8	1,150.0
Coliban (1121)	1,194.5	2,144.0
Loddon (1122)	2,738.0	2,730.0
Total	5,082.3	6,024.0

Recorded use in the GMA was 1,153.5 ML in 2019/20, or 23 per cent of the total licence volume. This is 63.5 ML more than the volume used in 2018/19 (Figure 1).

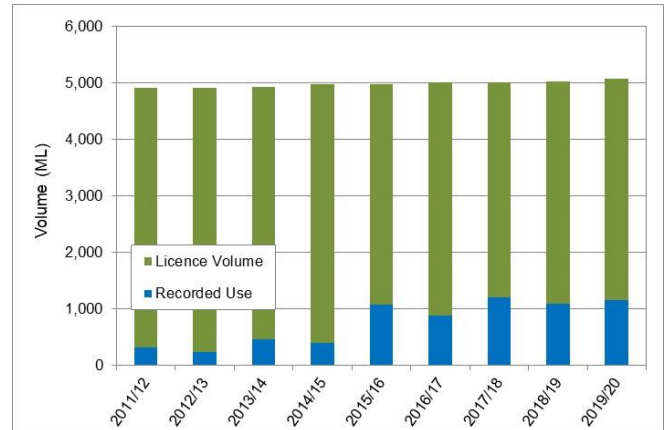


Figure 1. Recorded groundwater extractions

Trading

The Plan allows groundwater licence holders to temporarily or permanently transfer licence volume. Transferring (or trading) enables the development of new opportunities and provides licence holders with greater flexibility to manage production in response to seasonal demands or climatic conditions.

Seven permanent trades occurred in the 2019/20 water year (Figure 2).

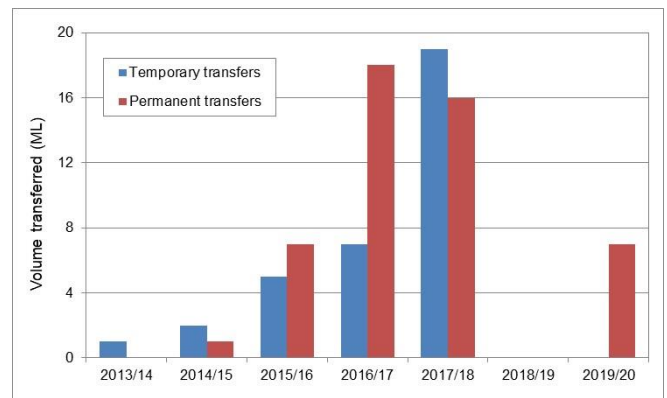


Figure 2. Groundwater trading activity

Licence holders are reminded not to extract more than their licence volume without written approval from GMW.

Licence holders seeking to trade groundwater licence volume are encouraged to visit *Watermatch* (www.watermatch.com.au); an online trading forum where people can advertise their interest to buy or sell water.

Groundwater salinity

Upon request, GMW can supply groundwater users with a groundwater sampling kit (including sample bottle, instructions and reply-paid envelope) so that groundwater salinity can be measured and recorded. There were no requests for sample kits in 2019/20.

Groundwater levels

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), in partnership with GMW, monitored 27 state observation bores located across the GMA.

Hydrographs, which illustrate the change in groundwater level over time, are presented here for key bores in each management zone – refer Figures 3, 4 and 5.

Groundwater monitoring indicates that levels are responsive to climate; i.e. declining during dry periods and recovering during periods of higher rainfall. Groundwater levels in 2019/20 were generally within observed historic ranges.

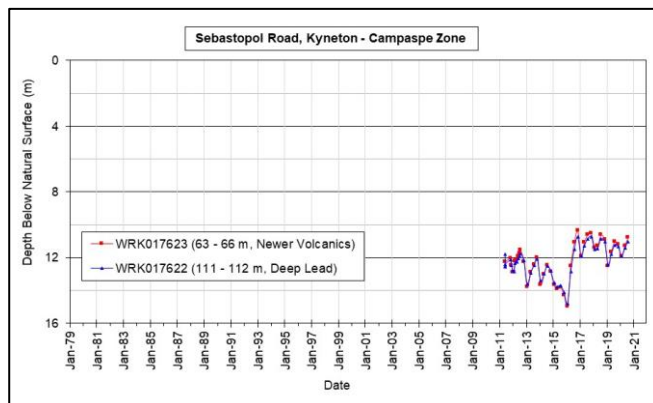


Figure 5. Groundwater levels in the Campaspe Zone at Kyneton

GMW will continue groundwater level monitoring in key State Observation Bores to assist with future resource management decisions.

Plan review

Each year, GMW considers the need for any amendments to the Plan.

Any suggestions for how the Plan might be improved can be submitted to GMW at any time. No amendments were considered necessary in 2019/20.

Mineral springs

Mineral springs reserves, such as at Hepburn (Figure 6), are maintained by local land managers (e.g. Hepburn Shire Council), not GMW. For more information about the mineral springs refer to the *Victorian Mineral Springs Master Plan 2015-2024*.



Figure 6. Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve

Where can I get more information?

You can download a copy of the *Central Victorian Mineral Springs GMA Local Management Plan* and previous newsletters from the GMW website, www.gmwater.com.au or phone 1800 013 357.

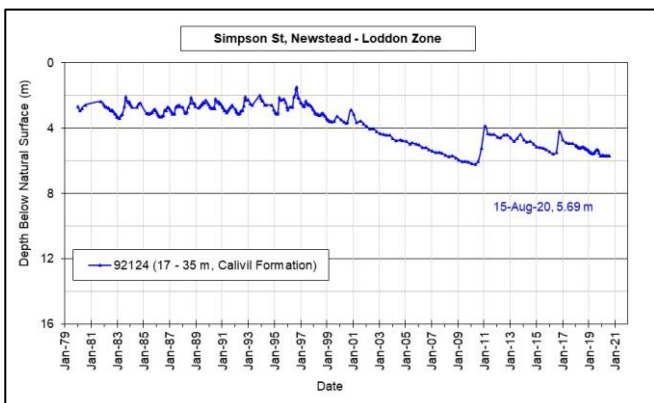


Figure 3. Groundwater levels in the Loddon Zone at Newstead

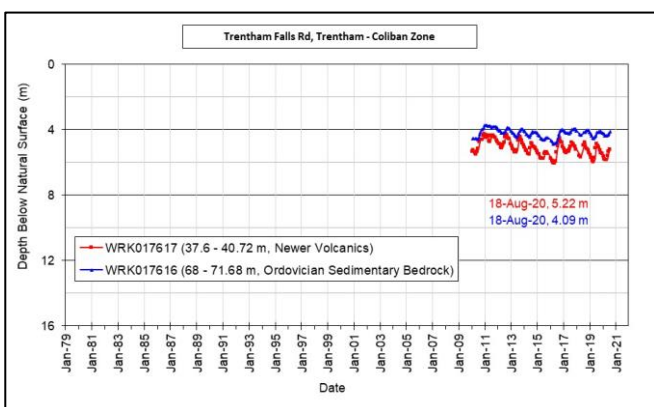


Figure 4. Groundwater levels in the Coliban Zone at Trentham