

Central Victorian Mineral Springs GMA

Groundwater management

The Central Victorian Mineral Springs Groundwater Management Area (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 licence volume and use

The total groundwater licence entitlement volume (licence volume) in the GMA in 2021/22 was 5,116.3 megalitres per year (ML/yr) (Table 1).

During 2021/22, 40 ML/yr of licence volume was issued.

Table 1. Licence volume, use and limits for 2021/22

Management zone	Zone cap/ PCV (ML/yr)	Licence volume (ML/yr)	Recorded use (ML)
Campaspe Zone (1120)	1,150.0	1,137.8	183.7
Coliban Zone (1121)	2,144.0	1,234.5	379.8
Loddon Zone (1122)	2,730.0	2,744.0	658.7
Total	6,024.0	5,116.3	1,222.2

Recorded use in the GMA was 1,222.2 ML in 2021/22, or 24 per cent of the total licence volume. This is 350.6 ML more than the volume used in 2020/21 (Figure 1).

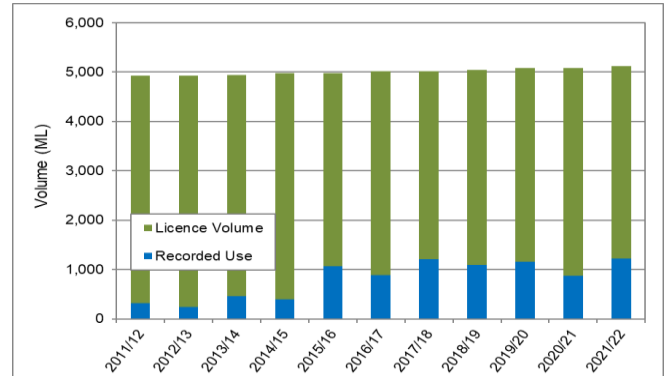


Figure 1. Recorded groundwater extractions

Licence transfers

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.

No permanent transfers occurred in the 2021/22 water year (Figure 2). One temporary transfer of 2 ML occurred within the Loddon Zone.

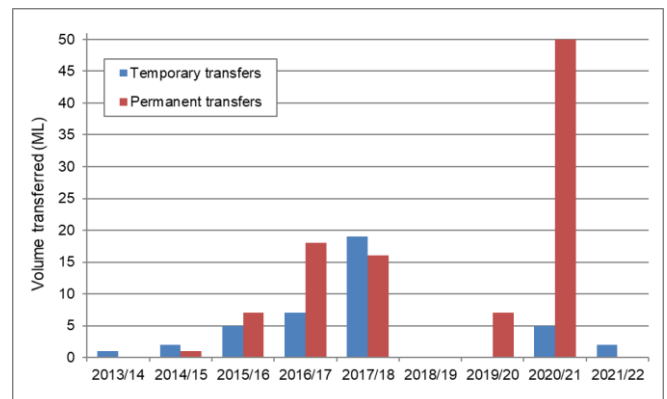


Figure 2. Annual licence transfer activity

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 2021/22.

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 show 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 2021/22 for most sites were within observed historic ranges.

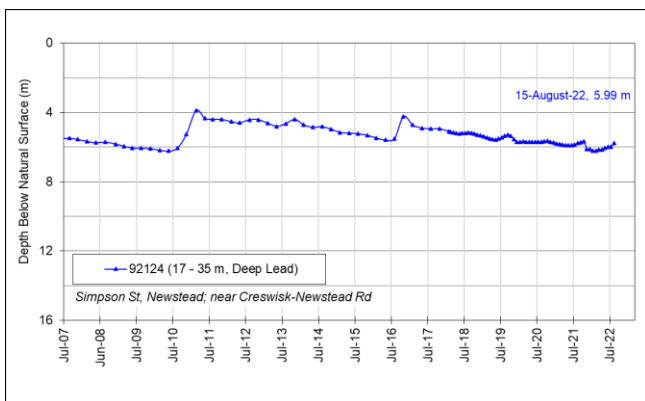


Figure 3. Groundwater level monitoring site in the Loddon Zone, at Newstead

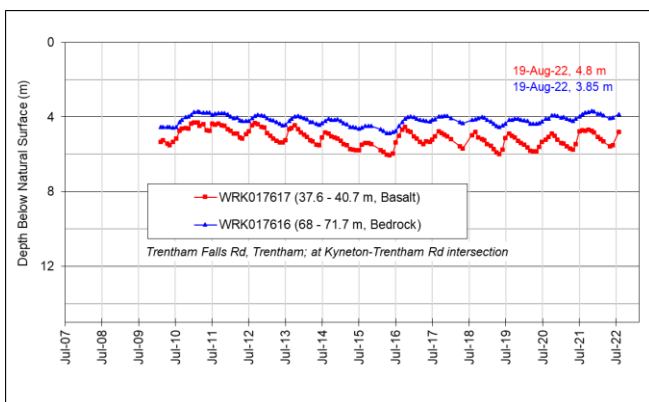


Figure 4. Groundwater level monitoring site in the Coliban Zone, at Trentham

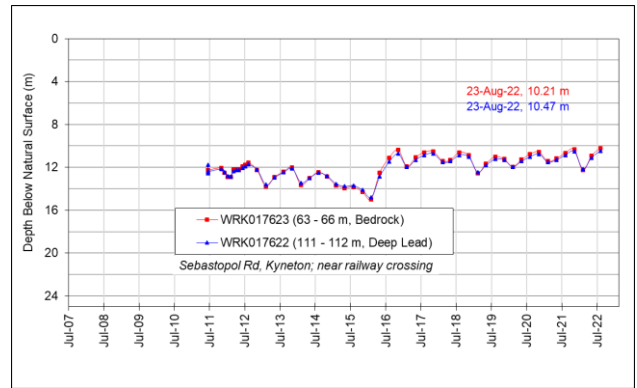


Figure 5. Groundwater level monitoring site in the Campaspe Zone, at Kyneton

GMW will continue groundwater level monitoring to assist with future resource management decisions.

Mineral springs

Mineral springs reserves, including 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 Strategic Masterplan 2015-2024*.



Figure 6. Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve

Licence compliance

In 2021/22 there were no reported instances of alleged unauthorised take of groundwater (incl. overuse) in the GMA.

GMW has a zero-tolerance approach to unauthorised take of non-urban water. Relevant actions, if required, are taken in accordance with GMW’s Risk-Based Compliance and Enforcement Framework.

Please visit www.gmwater.com.au/compliance for more information.

Plan review

Each year, GMW considers the need for any amendments to the Plan. No amendments were considered necessary in 2021/22. Any suggestions for how the Plan might be improved can be submitted to GMW at any time.