

New Zoning Rules for the Victorian Waters of Lake Hume

Frequently Asked Questions

Who manages boating on Lake Hume?

Victorian waters of Lake Hume include all of the lake areas to the south of Bethanga Bridge. Goulburn-Murray Water is the local authority responsible for the implementation of Marine Safety Victoria's vessel operating rules in this area. The Victorian Water Police provide compliance monitoring and enforcement support.

Boating activity in the areas of the lake to the north of the bridge is managed by the NSW Maritime Authority.

Why change the rules?

Concerns have long existed regarding the zoning rules for Victorian waters of Lake Hume. These issues are complex, however in brief:

- Previously, a total of 23 zones, including swimming, non boating, speed limited zones and access lanes existed under scheduled zoning rules for the Victorian waters of Lake Hume. In comparison, in the NSW waters of Lake Hume there is only one area zoned.
- Boats frequently operated at high speeds close to shore, particularly when dropping off and starting skiers from the shoreline. Other personal watercraft such as jet skis would also commonly operate at high speeds close to shore. This was dangerous and presented an unacceptable risk to other lake users, particularly bathers and swimmers.
- Hume Dam experiences a greater annual fluctuation in storage levels than almost any other large storage in Australia. In some areas, the shoreline of Hume recedes hundreds of meters with a 1-2 m drop in storage level. As a result, the shoreline of Hume changes, and reshapes dramatically as levels rise or fall. Due to this irregular topography, the previous boating zones made little sense and were not viable when the lake dropped slightly below full supply level. In years past, up to 65 marker buoys had to be installed, moved and removed, often on a sub-weekly basis, as rapidly changing storage conditions changed the shape of the storage.

- Previous zones at Lake Hume were inconsistent with the standard boat zoning rules applicable to most other Victorian inland waterways, and the NSW waters to the north of Bethanga Bridge.
- A blanket 'go slow' 4 knot speed restriction had been introduced for the Victorian waters of Hume in 2002 due to concerns about the risks posed by hidden large, sawn-off tree stumps at approximately 6 – 8% capacity. These hazards remain in place; however with the low water levels experienced over the summer of 2006/2007 we have a much clearer picture of the location of the stumps. As a result we are now able to safely lift the restrictions over other lake areas to the south to enable continued unrestricted boating activity at much lower lake levels.

For these reasons, a review of boating zones at Lake Hume was identified as a priority action in the Lake Hume Land and On-water Management Plan (2007).

Was there any consultation?

Over a 12 month period Goulburn-Murray Water and the State Water Corporation NSW held numerous discussions with Marine Safety Victoria, Victorian Water Police representatives, NSW Maritime, the Lake Hume Recreational Coordinating Committee, the Lake Hume Volunteer Coast Guard, local government, representatives of tourism and boating businesses and clubs, and numerous interest groups and individuals. Letters were sent to all known stakeholders, and advertisements were placed in local news and media outlets with a call for public comments. Discussions were also held as part of the Lake Hume Land and On-water Management Plan (2007) consultative process. Comments received have been constructive and supportive of the proposed changes.

How can I get a copy of the vessel operating and zoning rules?

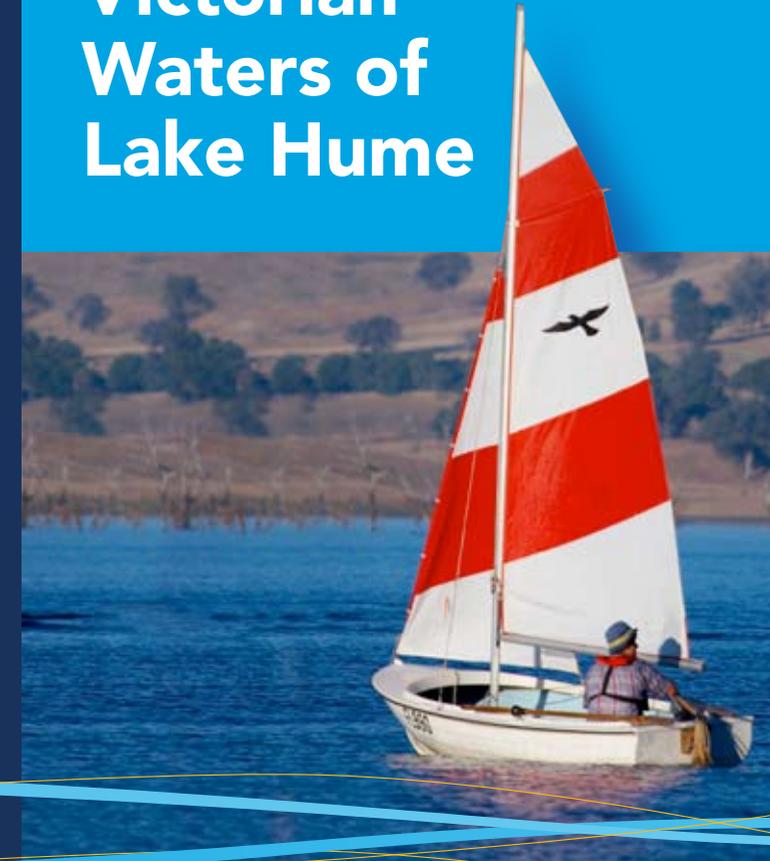
The Vessel Operating and Zoning Rules for Victorian Waters of Lake Hume may be downloaded from the Marine Safety Victoria's website at www.marinesafety.vic.gov.au.

Note: The information provided in this document is a guide only and is not intended to be, nor should be considered as, sole or complete navigation advice.

Vessel operators should ensure that they also consult boating signage at public boat launching areas and observe water zoning buoys and foreshore beacons in place on the storage.

The latest Vessel Operating and Zoning Rules for Victoria can be accessed from the Marine Safety Victoria website at www.marinesafety.vic.gov.au

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Lake Hume
Land and On-water Management Plan

In November 2007 new boating zones came in to force for the Victorian waters of Lake Hume. These include changes to Schedule 95 (Waters - Lake Hume) of the Marine Act 1988, section 15 Vessel Operating and Zoning Rules.

These changes greatly simplify the zoning rules for the lake, and improve public safety and access to the lake at low levels. The changes have been introduced following extensive consultation with affected stakeholders over a period of many months.



So what's new?

1. Adoption of the standard rule '5 knots within 50 meters of the waters edge at any level' for Victorian waters.

This involves the adoption of standard clause 3a of the Victorian Vessel Operating and Zoning Rules, which states: 'Unless otherwise specified in schedule, a person must not operate a vessel, on any inland waters at a speed exceeding 5 knots –
 a) within 50 metres of the waters edge; or
 b) within 50 metres of a fixed or floating structure in or on the water - except in an access lane.'

This rule already applies at most inland Victorian water bodies, but had not as yet been applied at Lake Hume. Separation of high-speed boating and more passive activity (e.g. swimming) in near shore areas provides a far safer environment for the benefit of all.

Water skiers and boat operators who enjoy 'bank starts' have been accommodated by the creation of a new designated Access Lane at Apex Park (The Pines), where boats and skiers can operate at higher speed (with care) nearer to the shore.

2. Removal of redundant zoning rules.

The new '5 knots within 50m' rule enables the removal of nearly 20 impracticable and confusing speed limited zones from the Victorian waters of Lake Hume, which greatly simplifies boating at Lake Hume.

3. Amendment of the existing 4 knot zone below 10% storage capacity.

Modifications have been made to the existing blanket 4 knot speed restriction which comes into force for all Victorian waters when the lake drops below 10% capacity. This restriction now only applies to a well defined area of potentially dangerous large tree stumps. This includes the waters south of Bethanga Bridge; and north of an east-west line extending from the southern end of the

Lake Hume

Lake levels 170.5m AHD (10% capacity) and above

Facts & Figures

Reservoir Capacity	3038 Gigalitres
Area Submerged	202.5 km ²
Catchment Area	15,280 km ²
Perimeter	370 km

Victorian Waters

ZONES AND MARKERS

-  Victorian inland waters, Victorian regulations apply
-  Access Lane
-  Prohibited Water - No boating
-  5 knot speed restriction zones (includes all waters within 50m of shore)
-  **RED - STOP - NO BOATS**
Don't go past these buoys - the water between them and the shore is prohibited to boats.
-  **YELLOW - CAUTION**
Slow down to speed shown
-  **GREEN - ACCESS LANE**
Unrestricted waters for locals and water skiers between a pair of standard size green buoys and the shoreline. No swimming, mooring or fishing is allowed in this area.
-  **NO BOATING**
-  **ACCESS LANES**

NSW Waters

ZONES AND MARKERS

-  NSW inland waters, NSW regulations apply
-  **BLACK & RED ISOLATED DANGER MARK**
Indicates the danger with navigable water all around it. These other marks, but at a safe distance.
-  **STARBOARD HAND MARKER**
Keep the mark on your starboard side when going upstream. Light when under way.
-  **PORT HAND MARKER**
Keep the mark on your port side when going upstream. Light when under way.
-  **YOU'RE THE SKIPPER YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE!**



Hume Dam embankment. The speed restricted area will be marked by buoys and shore beacons. This will free up a large body of water to the south where unrestricted boating activity can continue at lower lake levels in accordance with normal boating regulations.

These changes greatly improve safety while improving access for recreational boat operators, skiers and swimmers. They provide consistency with most other Victorian inland waters, and better align the Victorian rules with the regulations for

the NSW waters north of Bethanga Bridge. The new rules are simpler, and will eliminate the need for maintaining multiple swimming zones and speed limited zones which are not widely understood and impracticable to apply.

It may also have the added environmental benefit of reducing foreshore erosion from high speed boat wash in some sensitive areas.