

Connections Project

# Water Change Management Framework

Annual Report 2018





# Document control

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# 1. Introduction

The GMW Connection Project's Water Change Management Framework (WCMF) is a requirement of the Victorian Minister for Planning and was approved by the Victorian Minister for Water on 14 August 2009. An update was approved by the State Minister for Water on 27 July 2010 following consultation with the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and written advice from the Expert Review Panel. The WCMF was also approved by the Department for Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (now the Department of Environment and Energy). A third update of the WCMF was approved by the State Minister for Water on 3 March 2014. A fourth update of the WCMF was submitted for approval on the 14 February 2018. Version 4 of the WCMF was approved by the Minister for Water with advice from the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change on the 24 October 2018.

The WCMF describes the means by which GMW will protect aquatic and riparian ecological values through management of water allocations and flows that may be impacted by implementation of the Connections Project within the modernised Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID). The WCMF outlines procedures for monitoring, reporting and auditing changes in hydrological conditions in relevant wetlands or waterways associated with the project's operation. It provides the environmental commitments, processes and methods for the relevant operations of the modified system.

## 1.1. Scope of reporting

The WCMF (Section 18.3) states that GMW will submit an annual report to the Secretary of DELWP, not later than 31 March. The report will include a statement of completed versus planned Environmental Watering Plans (EWPs). In addition, operating arrangements to specify the procedures to deploy mitigation water according to the specifications in the Environmental Watering Plans (Mitigation Water Operating Arrangements) were endorsed by the Secretary DSE on 14 December 2011. These arrangements include a requirement (Section 4.8) for GMW to report annually, on the contribution, or provision, of "GMW Connections Project Mitigation Water" towards achieving the wetland or waterway water regime identified in the EWP. This will be done through GMW liaison with other agencies in relation to monitoring and then reporting whether:

- mitigation water was available for delivery to the wetland or waterway
- a decision was made that water was required for the wetland or waterway for that year
- mitigation water was delivered to the wetland or waterway in accordance with the desired water regime proposed within the environmental watering plan (i.e. quantity, timing, duration, frequency)
- the ecological objectives were achieved or are being achieved.

## 2. 2018 Reporting

### 2.1. EWP completion

Table 1 shows the list of wetlands requiring an EWP, scheduled completion dates and actual progress against scheduled dates.

**Table 1 Wetlands assessed as requiring an EWP**

Wetland	Works scheduled	Works completed
Lake Elizabeth	2010	July 2010
Johnson Swamp	2009	August 2009
Lake Murphy	2010	July 2010
McDonalds Swamp	2010	July 2010
Lake Yando	2010	July 2010
Lake Leaghur	2010	July 2010
Lake Meran	2010	July 2010
Little Lake Boort	2010	July 2010
Round Lake (near Boga)	2010	July 2010
Pig Swamp (Gunbower Island)	2013	July 2013
Yambuna Wetlands	2019	Not yet complete

Table 2 shows the short-list of waterways requiring an EWP, scheduled completion dates and actual progress against scheduled dates.

**Table 2 Waterways assessed as requiring an EWP**

Waterway	Works scheduled	Works completed
Broken Creek and Nine Mile Creek (near Katamatite)	2010	May 2010
Campaspe River (Campaspe Weir to River Murray)	2010	July 2010
Loddon River (Loddon Weir to River Murray and Twelve Mile Creek)	2010	July 2010
Campaspe River (Reach 2)	2012	July 2012
Broken River	2013	July 2013

Up to the end of 2016, a total of 15 EWPs have been prepared and approved. Completed EWPs were reviewed by the Expert Review Panel (ERP) and approved by the Victorian Minister for Water and the Federal Minister for Environment Protection, Heritage and the Arts (Environment). In 2015, GMW Connections Project reviewed the EWPs and revised versions have been submitted to the Victorian Minister for Water and the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment for approval. The Victorian Minister for Water has approved the revised versions.

## 2.2. Water allocation and use

Advice from the Victorian *Environmental* Water Holder on water allocation and use is outlined in Table 3 as follows.

**Table 3 Water allocation and use 2017/18 (Source: Victorian Environmental Water Holder)**

System	Entitlement	Allocation 2017/18 (ML)	Total water available 2017/18 (ML)	Water use 2017/18 (ML)
Goulburn	NVIRP Savings water	610.0	2131.9	0.0
Murray	NVIRP Savings water	624.0	1745.8	1302.3

Table 4 and Table 5 show the deployment of mitigation water in the 2017/18 water year. Deployment of mitigation water in the 2018/19 water year will be reported in the 2019 WCMF Annual Report. Table 4 below outlines the delivery of mitigation water in wetlands.

**Table 4 Delivery of mitigation water in 2017/18 water year for wetlands (Source: Victorian Environmental Water Holder)**

Wetland EWP (MLTACIR ML/year)	Mitigation water determination (ABMW ML)	Mitigation water available for delivery	Mitigation water required	Mitigation water delivered (ML)
Johnson Swamp (814)	Not required	Not required	Not required (planned drying phase)	Not required
Lake Elizabeth (556)	Required (267)	Yes	Yes	530.3*
Lake Murphy (1157)	Not require*d	Yes	Yes	0.0*
McDonald Swamp (1298)	Required (121)	Yes	Yes	350.0*
Lake Leaghur (447)	Required (447)	Not required	Not required (planned drying phase)	Not required
Lake Yando (284)	Not required	Not required	Not required (planned drying phase)	Not required
Little Lake Boort (645)	Required (96)	N/A	N/A	Not required
Lake Meran (1440)	Required (147)	N/A	Not required (planned drying phase)	Not required
Round Lake (475)	Required (262)	Yes	Yes	422.0*
Pig Swamp	Required (170)	N/A	Not required	Not required

\* ML delivered is mitigation water only; does not include environmental water from other sources  
 MLTACIR = mean long-term annual controlled inflow required to provide desired water regime.  
 ABMW = annualised baseline mitigation water

Note that in the 2017/18, Lake Murphy received environmental water from other sources.

Table 5 below outlines the delivery of mitigation water in waterways.

**Table 5 Delivery of mitigation water in 2017/18 water year for waterways (Source: Victorian Environmental Water Holder)**

Waterway EWP	Mitigation water determination (ABMW ML)	Mitigation water available for delivery	Mitigation water required	Mitigation water delivered
Broken Creek and Nine Mile Creek (near Katamatite)	Not required	Not required	Required	N/A
Campaspe River Reaches 3 & 4(Campaspe Weir to River Murray)	Not required	Not required	Required	N/A
Loddon River (Loddon Weir to River Murray and Twelve Mile Creek)	Reach 4 - Required (624)	Yes	Required	0.0*
	Twelve Mile Creek – not required.	Yes	Required	0.0*
	Reach 5 - Required (1814)	Yes	Required	0.0*
Campaspe River Reach 2	Required (7058)	Not Required	Required	Not required
Broken River	Not required	Not required	Required	Not required

\* ML delivered is mitigation water only; does not include environmental water from other sources

Broken Creek and Nine Mile Creek, Campaspe River Reaches 3 & 4, Loddon River, Broken Creek and Campaspe River Reach 2 all received environmental water from other sources in 2017/18.

The Victorian Environmental Water Holder manages the availability of environmental water holdings resulted in the mitigation water account being carried over into 2018/19, for most sites. Decisions about which water to use at sites, including mitigation sites, are considered in relation to VEWH's whole water portfolio so that VEWH can optimise use of our different water sources. This includes considering carryover rules/capacity and minimising forfeiture. In some years, mitigation water might not be the optimal source of water once all our other sources, entitlement rules and flexibility of use are taken into account; in other years, it'll be an important water source.