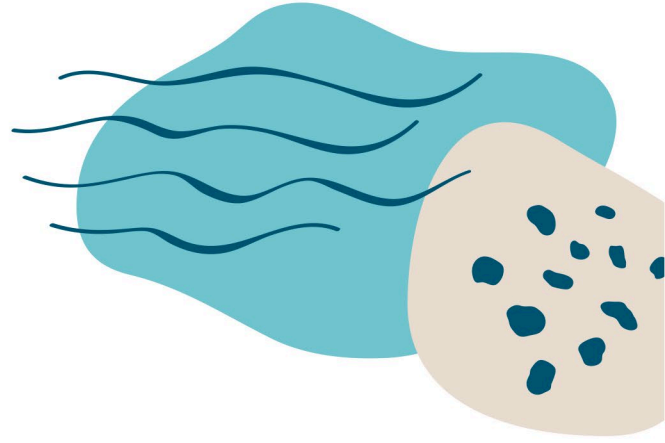


Media Release



1 December 2025

WIDE BENEFITS FROM GLENELG RIVER ENVIRO FLOWS

Difficult seasonal conditions in the Glenelg Hopkins catchment area in the last 12 months made decisions around environmental water flows in the Glenelg River challenging, however, the Glenelg Hopkins CMA's decision to support farmers and communities as part of these flows has benefits to more than just the river.

In a review of the 2024-2025 seasonal water delivery in the Glenelg River, Glenelg Hopkins Executive Manager Waterways, Simone Wilkie, said the CMA was challenged to meet the obligations for delivery of water for the environment under the Victorian Environmental Water Holder's Seasonal Watering Plan, due to the persistent and intensifying dry conditions in the region.

"Winter and spring 2024 saw drought across much of western Victoria, and the situation remained dry through summer which made decisions around the seasonal watering program very challenging because we could see the need for water across many fronts along the Glenelg River," she said.

In response to the dry start to the season, by November 2024, a decision was made for early releases of environmental water and compensation flows, which would allow landholders access to stock and domestic water supplies.

These flows countered declining streamflow and rising salinity levels and were critical in sustaining connectivity and improving water quality throughout the system, Ms Wilkie said.

"Overall, the watering actions in 2024-2025 were essential in managing the effects of prolonged drought conditions. They helped to maintain ecological function, reduce the salinity, maintain river connectivity and support the landscape for both domestic and native species, improving water quality across the Glenelg River system," Ms Wilkie said.

For landholders along the river, having access to fresh water supplies from the river to support on-farm storages was a significant benefit.

"We got a fright last year when salt levels rose so dramatically (in the river)," Balmoral landholder, Justin Weaver, said.

"Going into Summer this year, in the northern end of the catchment we're more concerned about quality rather than quantity because we have on farm storages that are better than last year."

Mr Weaver said without environmental flows and compensation flows, the region would have seen significant production losses on farms and quite possibly animal deaths, both domestic and native.

“The data clearly shows that salinity levels on the river went from toxic to well within an acceptable level as soon as the first pulse of flows went through, with salinity levels dropped from over 7000 to 1400 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$,” he said

Overall, the watering actions in 2024–2025 were essential in managing the effects of prolonged drought conditions,” Ms Wilkie said.

“The flows helped to maintain ecological function, reduce salinity, maintain river connectivity and support the landscape for both domestic and native species, improving water quality across the Glenelg River system and it is really that whole system and user benefit we aim for with environmental flows,” she said.

The Glenelg River’s environmental flows are guided by the Victorian Environmental Water Holder’s Water Sharing Plan which is released at the end of June annually.

The plan can be viewed online at <https://www.ghcma.vic.gov.au/what-we-do/water-for-the-environment/> together with a real-time map of the Glenelg River flows and levels at each of the gauge points on the river.

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