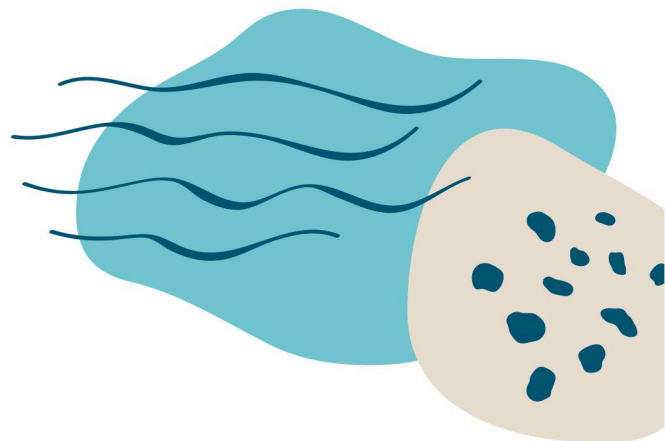


Media Release



26 August 2024

Water releases to benefit the Glenelg River communities

A water release from Rocklands Reservoir to the Glenelg River in coming weeks will help improve water quality and support landholder domestic and stock water needs.

A Glenelg River Compensation Flow (GRCF) will begin on August 29, in which 140 megalitres will be delivered to the river system over a two week period.

This release will be combined with passing flows which have built up in Rocklands Reservoir to make the total release of 560 megalitres.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA Water Resources Coordinator, Alex Lewis, explained the Glenelg River Compensation Flow (GRCF) was created to support downstream users after the construction of Rocklands Reservoir in the 1950s.

“The compensation flow is used in dry years when farm dams are low,” he said.

“Delivering it, along with environmental water or passing flows, will improve water quality and supply, helping landholders provide fresh water for stock if needed, but also benefiting native plants, fish, and recreational activities in the waterway.” Mr Lewis said.

A baseflow of 40 megalitres per day will be delivered until September 11. Additional releases of environmental water and compensation flow will occur over the summer.

“Rocklands Reservoir has had a significant impact on the seasonal flow patterns of the river downstream since it was built, taking more than half of the water that naturally flowed downstream, out of the river. Compensation flows were created to alleviate the negative impact of this to the river and downstream communities.” Mr Lewis said.

Despite the season being significantly dry, Mr Lewis said the flows still needed to be delivered to dilute the impacts of the seasonal conditions.

“We’ve been keeping an eye on river conditions through this very dry period, and while the Glenelg has continued to flow, salinity has built up in some sections higher in the catchment,” he said.

“The salinity levels currently being reached aren’t great for native species or farm productivity.

“Normally, that wouldn’t be an issue because natural winter flows would flush that salinity through the system, but that hasn’t happened this year.

“We can ensure water quality is good enough to support the ecosystem and landholders before summer gets here by releasing these flows at this time.”

“We’ll work with other agencies and communities to maximize the benefits of water delivery while protecting the river’s ecology. These releases should benefit native species and landholders between Rocklands and Casterton,” Mr Lewis said.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA works with GWMWater, the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) and local landholders on the Glenelg River Compensation Flow Users Group to plan these releases.

More information about environmental flows in the Glenelg River can be found at www.ghcma.vic.gov.au

ENDS



CAPTION: Environmental flows will be released into the Glenelg River over the next two weeks.