

## Goulburn River environmental flows

### Increase food sources and improve vegetation and water quality

June 2017

#### When is the increased flow scheduled to occur and how much water will be released?

The flow is planned to start from Goulburn Weir on Tuesday 20 June and gradually rise to about 9,500 ML/day on Tuesday 27 June at Murchison.

The flow will take approximately four days to reach McCoy Bridge i.e. will start increasing on 24 June and peak on 1 July.

The flow will slowly reduce to between 500 ML/d and 940 ML/day by 20 July at Murchison and 24 July at McCoy Bridge. The duration for these planned flows is about 30 days.

A graph showing the potential flow at Murchison during June and July is provided on the second page of this fact sheet.

The dates and peak flow rates for this event may vary depending on climatic conditions.

#### What is the environmental flow trying to achieve?

The environmental flow will benefit water bugs by improving their habitats and food sources, which in turn improves food for fish. The flow will also maintain lower bank-stabilising plants, inundate stream benches and encourage seed dispersal.

The fresh will also improve water quality which will help crayfish, shrimps, water bugs and native fish continue to recover after the naturally occurring blackwater event that occurred earlier this year after a summer storm.

#### What does this mean for river levels?

With a peak flow of up to 9,500 ML/day, river levels are likely to rise to about 4.3m at Murchison (recently the level has been about 0.7m), about 5.8m at Shepparton (recently about 2.7m) and about 5.4m at McCoy Bridge (recently about 1.5m). The table on the second page of this fact sheet shows relevant river levels and corresponding flow rates.

#### What if it rains?

If rain results in increased river flow, it is possible the timing and size of the environmental flows could change or be cancelled.

Rainfall forecasts are regularly monitored by GMW and the delivery of environmental water will reduce or stop if rainfall is expected to result in higher river flows.

#### How do we know if environmental flows are effective?

The Commonwealth Environmental Water Office has established the Lower Goulburn River Long term Intervention Monitoring Project to monitor and evaluate the ecological outcomes of environmental water use.

The project monitors river bank vegetation, fish movement and spawning, waterbug populations, bank stability and erosion, river productivity and water quality. To find out more about the project go to the GBCMA website at [www.gbcma.vic.gov.au/projects/environmental-water/monitoring](http://www.gbcma.vic.gov.au/projects/environmental-water/monitoring)

#### Will there be other planned environmental releases?

The Victorian Environmental Water Holder's (VEWH) Seasonal Watering Plan for 2016/17 includes plans for environmental water use across Victoria and can be viewed on the VEWH's website [www.vewh.vic.gov.au](http://www.vewh.vic.gov.au). The Seasonal Watering Plan for 2017/18 will be published in June 2017.

#### Will I be notified of changing river levels that are not due to environmental flows?

No. These communications provide information about planned releases relating to environmental flows above 3,000 ML/day. Changing river levels also occur due to natural events and information on flow and levels can be found in the links on the second page of this fact sheet.

# Frequently asked questions



## Who do I contact for more information?

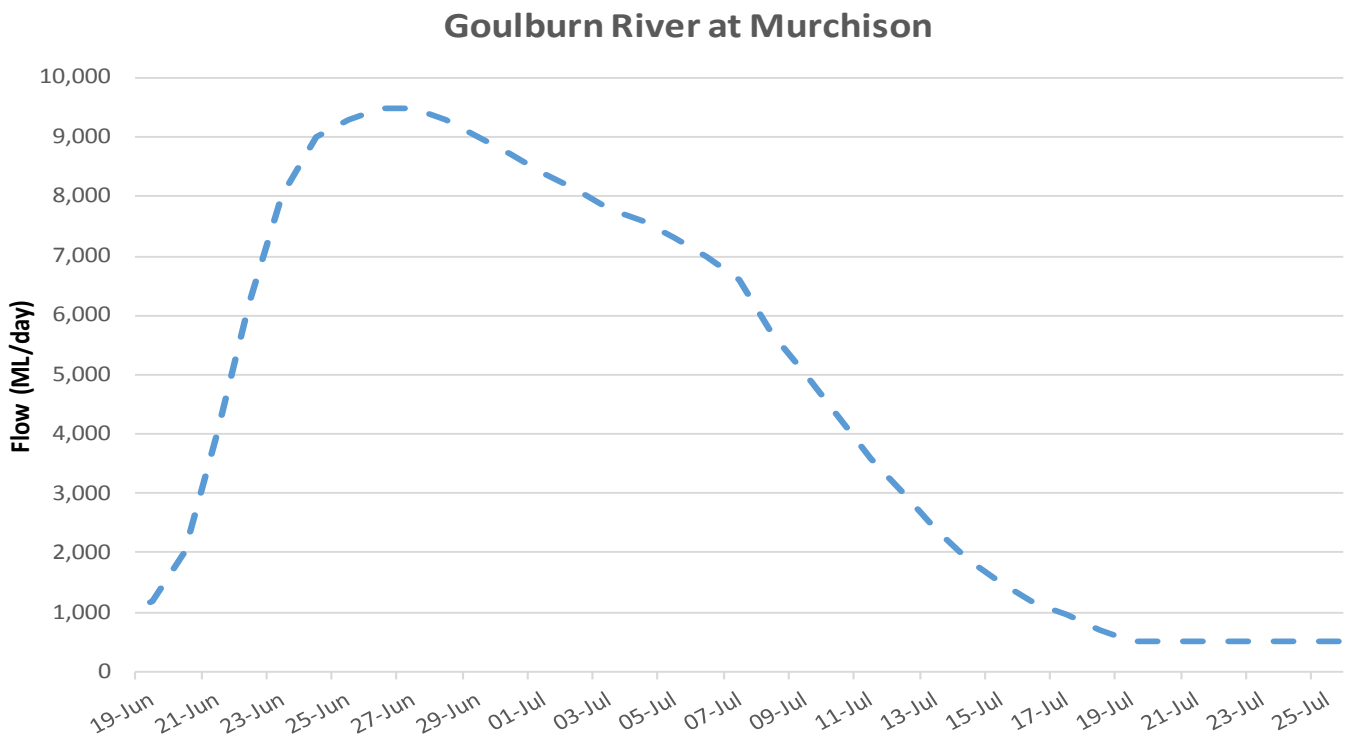
For information on river levels and to monitor levels in the Goulburn River, visit the Bureau of Meteorology website [www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood](http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood). River level and flow information can also be found at <https://waterline.gmwater.com.au/waterstatus/>

For planning of environmental releases in the Goulburn River, visit the GBCMA at [www.gbcma.vic.gov.au](http://www.gbcma.vic.gov.au) or phone (03) 5822 7700.

To help you in monitoring river flows, GMW publish daily updates on our website at [www.gmwater.com.au/water-resources/managing-water-storages](http://www.gmwater.com.au/water-resources/managing-water-storages) as the actual river flows may change in response to rainfall and downstream flow requirements. Future planned releases will be published on this page as they are confirmed.

There is also an automated advisory service that provides downstream releases from Goulburn Weir which is updated daily. This service can be reached by phoning (03) 5794 5991.

The chart below shows the potential flow at Murchison during June and July 2017



The table below shows relevant river levels and corresponding flow rates

Location	Level with flows of 1,000 ML/day	Level with flows of 3,000 ML/day	Level with flows of 9,500 ML/day	Minor Flood Level
Murchison Gauge	0.9 m	2.1 m	4.3 m	9.0m (29,200 ML/day)
Shepparton Gauge	2.8 m	3.4 m	5.7 m	9.5m (27,480 ML/day)
McCoy Bridge Gauge	1.5 m	2.6 m	5.4 m	9.0m (28,840 ML/day)