

GOULBURN BROKEN
CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

GOULBURN BROKEN
CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Annual Report

2025-26







VICTORIA
State Government

Acknowledgement

Goulburn Broken CMA acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognises the primacy of Traditional Owners' obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for their traditional lands and waters.

Goulburn Broken CMA pays respect to Elders past and present and values our ongoing partnerships to heal Country.

About this report

The 2025-26 Annual Report outlines Goulburn Broken CMA's governance, performance and financial results, and provides an assessment of progress against the objectives and targets set out in the 2025-2029 Corporate Plan. It also reports on the condition of the region's land, water and biodiversity assets, highlighting the collective efforts of communities, landholders, Traditional Owners, partners and stakeholders working to improve the resilience and sustainability of the catchment.

Goulburn Broken CMA remains committed to providing information that is relevant, transparent and accessible. Additional information, including detailed reporting and scientific data, is available at www.gbcma.vic.gov.au.

This report has been prepared in accordance with relevant Victorian legislation, including the requirements of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, which requires Catchment Management Authorities to report on the condition and management of land and water resources within their region and on the performance of their statutory functions. The report also complies with applicable Victorian Government reporting requirements and reflects a commitment to accountability, value for money and environmental responsibility.

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Accessibility

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Front cover

Main photo:

New fencing at Terip Terip following the devastation of the January 2026 bushfires.

Inset photos (left to right):

1. Goulburn Broken CMA designated 2026 as the Year of the Raptor for its annual community awareness campaign. Photo: Little Eagle by Dan Pendavingh.
2. Endangered Barred Galaxias surveying was undertaken with Goulburn Broken CMA, Arthur Rylah Institute and BiiK Cultural Land Management.
3. The Platy Patch project is improving waterways for local platypus. Photo Kathy Jones.

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Chair and CEO report

On behalf of the Board and employees of Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, we are pleased to present the 2025-26 Annual Report.

The year was marked by challenge, recovery and significant progress across the catchment. Dry seasonal conditions, bushfire impacts, ongoing flood recovery and changing water availability highlighted the importance of strong partnerships, local knowledge and coordinated action to build the resilience of our landscapes, waterways, biodiversity and our communities.

Supporting Traditional Owner self-determination remained central to our work through continued collaboration with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Land and Waters Council, including a new Memorandum of Understanding with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and shared projects across Barmah Ramsar, Waring and the Corop Cultural Waterscape.

Following the January 2026 bushfires which affected more than 145,000 hectares, the Goulburn Broken CMA worked closely with agencies, landholders and communities to support recovery, reduce environmental risks and protect waterways. Initial recovery efforts included distributing more than 4,000 straw bales for sediment control and supporting the relocation and return of endangered Macquarie Perch and Trout Cod to Seven Creeks.

Despite dry conditions placing pressure on agriculture, waterways and communities, the Goulburn Broken CMA continued to strengthen resilience through delivery of Future Drought Fund projects and implementation of the Goulburn Drought Resilience Plan.

Waterway health, environmental water delivery, wetlands, floodplains and biodiversity remained core priorities. Key achievements included the implementation of new designated flood levels for Nagambie, the renewal of the Goulburn Broken Regional Waterway Strategy, platypus habitat works through the Platy Patch project, the first capture and release of an endangered Broad-shelled Turtle hatchling in Barmah Ramsar since 2014 and the completion of the flood recovery projects following the 2022 floods. The Floodplain team also provided 1,307 referrals and advice responses, including 484 flood advice requests, 823 planning referrals and 79 works on waterways permits.

Sustainable irrigation, land and water management and floodplain management remained significant priorities. The Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2050 continued to guide action, preparations commenced for the transfer of drainage and salinity program delivery responsibilities and Disaster Ready Fund support was secured for the Murray Valley Drainage Course Declaration project.

Biodiversity, land health, Landcare and community-led natural resource management were strengthened through initiatives such as the Year of the Raptor, BushBank support for the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seedbank, climate-smart agriculture projects, Goulburn Drought Resilience Project, Carbon Farming Outreach, National Soil Monitoring and more than $290,000 in Victorian Landcare grants.

Climate change remained a key focus, with continued integration of adaptation and mitigation measures across programs and progress towards net zero emissions by 2030.

Goulburn Broken CMA maintained a sound financial position and a strong focus on service delivery, organisational culture and capability and governance. The 2025-26 result was a surplus of $5.2 million compared with a Corporate Plan forecast deficit of $3.9 million, reflecting increased revenue with additional large-scale projects across multiple programs and some expenditure deferred into 2026-27.

Looking ahead, the Corporate Plan 2026-30 provides a clear direction for continuing to improve catchment health through strong partnerships, environmental stewardship, sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, financial sustainability and organisational capability.

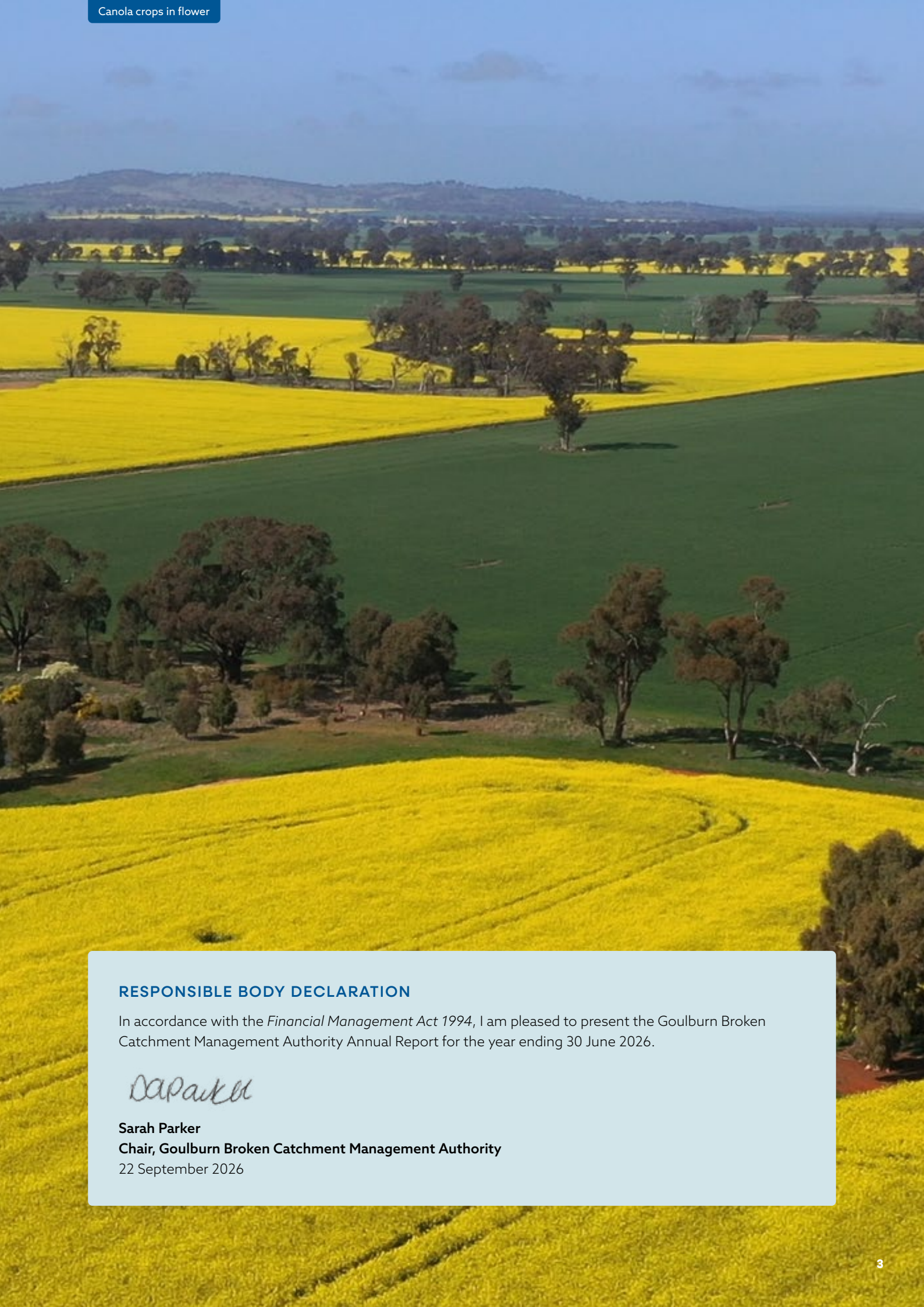
We thank Traditional Owners, community members, landholders, Landcare groups, partner organisations, employees, management and the Board for their contribution during a demanding year. The achievements outlined in this report reflect a shared commitment to a resilient, inclusive and sustainable Goulburn Broken catchment.



Sarah Parker
Chair



Carl Walters
CEO



Canola crops in flower

RESPONSIBLE BODY DECLARATION

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, I am pleased to present the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2026.

Sarah Parker
Chair, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
22 September 2026

1. Overview

CMA roles, responsibilities and objectives

Formation and duties

Goulburn Broken CMA is a Statutory Authority established by the Victorian Parliament in 1997 under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

The responsible Ministers:

- For the period 15 April 2026 to 30 June 2026, the Hon. Harriet Shing MLC, Minister for Water
- For the period 1 July 2025 to 14 April 2026, the Hon. Gayle Tierney MP, Minister for Water
- For the period 15 April 2026 to 30 June 2026, the Hon. Enver Erdogan MP, Minister for Environment
- For the period 1 July 2025 to 14 April 2026, the Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, Minister for Environment

Goulburn Broken CMA's role in water is described under the *Water Act 1989*. The undertakings of Goulburn Broken CMA are defined in the Statement of Obligations (SoO) for the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (Vic) (CaLP Act) and the *Water Act 1989*. Goulburn Broken CMA is guided by its statutory responsibilities and the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS), which is developed and renewed every six years, in consultation with the community.

Goulburn Broken CMA's role in water is described under the *Water Act 1989* and is to:

- Be the caretaker of river health, including managing the environment's right to water (managing the environmental water reserve) and implementing works on waterways via its operational arm.
- Provide waterway, regional drainage and floodplain management services.

Goulburn Broken CMA focuses on private land mostly managed for agriculture, on the interface of private and public land and supports Crown land managers with their functions.

Water storage, delivery and drainage systems are managed by partner agency Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW). Urban water and wastewater services are provided by another partner agency, Goulburn Valley Water (GVW).

Our vision, purpose, values and behaviours

FIGURE 1: GOULBURN BROKEN CMA VISION, PURPOSE, VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

OUR VISION FOR THE GOULBURN BROKEN REGION

Resilient landscapes, thriving communities.

OUR PURPOSE IS

Through its leadership and partnerships, the Goulburn Broken CMA will improve the resilience of the catchment and its people, land, biodiversity and water resources in a rapidly changing environment.

OUR VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

The Goulburn Broken CMA is committed to being a high performing organisation, with excellent employees working in a productive and healthy culture that delivers great service for the community on behalf of the Victorian and Australian governments.

Business objectives

Goulburn Broken CMA business objectives outline the key objectives as determined by the Board to support the meeting of its mission, purpose and delivery of the RCS and sub strategies.

The business objectives are:

Traditional Owners

We partner with Traditional Owners to care for Country and support self-determination.

Community and Partnerships

Our community and other partners value the services we provide. Our commitment to partnerships and community led approaches supports organisations and communities to thrive.

Our People

We have capable and motivated people who can fulfil their potential in line with our values and behaviours. Our people are safe and we provide a healthy environment to support their wellbeing.

Financial Sustainability

We seek to increase funding to deliver on requirements and priorities. We meet all our financial obligations.

Service Delivery

We deliver our services, programs and projects to achieve planned deliverables on time, on budget and to a high quality.

Governance

We have effective governance structures and practices in place that comply with all laws and regulations and satisfy community expectations.

Leadership and Strategy

We provide strategic and enabling leadership in resilience focused Integrated Catchment Management, through planning, influence and partnerships. Our strategy development and delivery reflects innovation, adaptivity and continuous improvement.

Climate Change Response

We lead in climate change adaptation and mitigation in our internal and external operations.

See section "Performance Indicators" on page 98 for performance against the objectives for 2025-26.



Rainbow Bee-eater

Goulburn Broken region

Regional overview

The Goulburn Broken catchment covers 24,300 square kilometres, representing 10.5 per cent of the state of Victoria, stretching from Mt Buller to the east, along the Murray River from Yarrawonga to Echuca, down to the outskirts of Melbourne in the south.

The Goulburn Broken catchment is home to approximately 250,000 people and supports a strong agricultural economy. Agriculture is the predominant land use, covering around 72 per cent of the catchment, including both dryland and irrigated production. Major industries include broadacre cropping, beef and dairy farming, sheep and wool production, horticulture, forestry and tourism. The region's diverse landscapes, climate zones and soils underpin significant environmental, economic and recreational values, providing clean air and water, productive farmland and opportunities for tourism and outdoor recreation.

The catchment generally experiences a warm temperate climate with hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters; however, climate change is contributing to more frequent extreme weather events and less reliable seasonal rainfall. The region also includes the Traditional Lands of the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC) and the Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC), whose ongoing care for Country and cultural knowledge make an important contribution to natural resource management.

To support strategic planning and investment, Goulburn Broken CMA recognises six distinct Social-Ecological Systems (SES) that reflect the region's diverse environmental, social and economic characteristics.

- **Agricultural Floodplains SES**

  Extends from the Shepparton Irrigation Region to the Murray River, supporting a population of more than 6,000 First Nations people, a modernised irrigation network, and major dairy, stone fruit and pome fruit industries that underpin a significant food processing sector.

- **Productive Plains SES**

  Located across the lower slopes and plains of the central catchment, the area has a rich Yorta Yorta and Taungurung heritage, with remaining habitat largely confined to waterways, roadsides, ranges and spring soak wetlands.

- **Commuting Hills SES**

  Covering the mountainous urban fringe in the south and south-west of the catchment, the area retains extensive public and private forested land used for native forests, recreation, forestry, lifestyle properties, intensive agriculture and grazing.

- **Upland Slopes SES**

  Extending across the southern hills and valleys, the area is the Traditional Country of the Taungurung people and is now characterised by grazing, lifestyle properties, viticulture and irrigated agriculture.

- **Southern Forests SES**

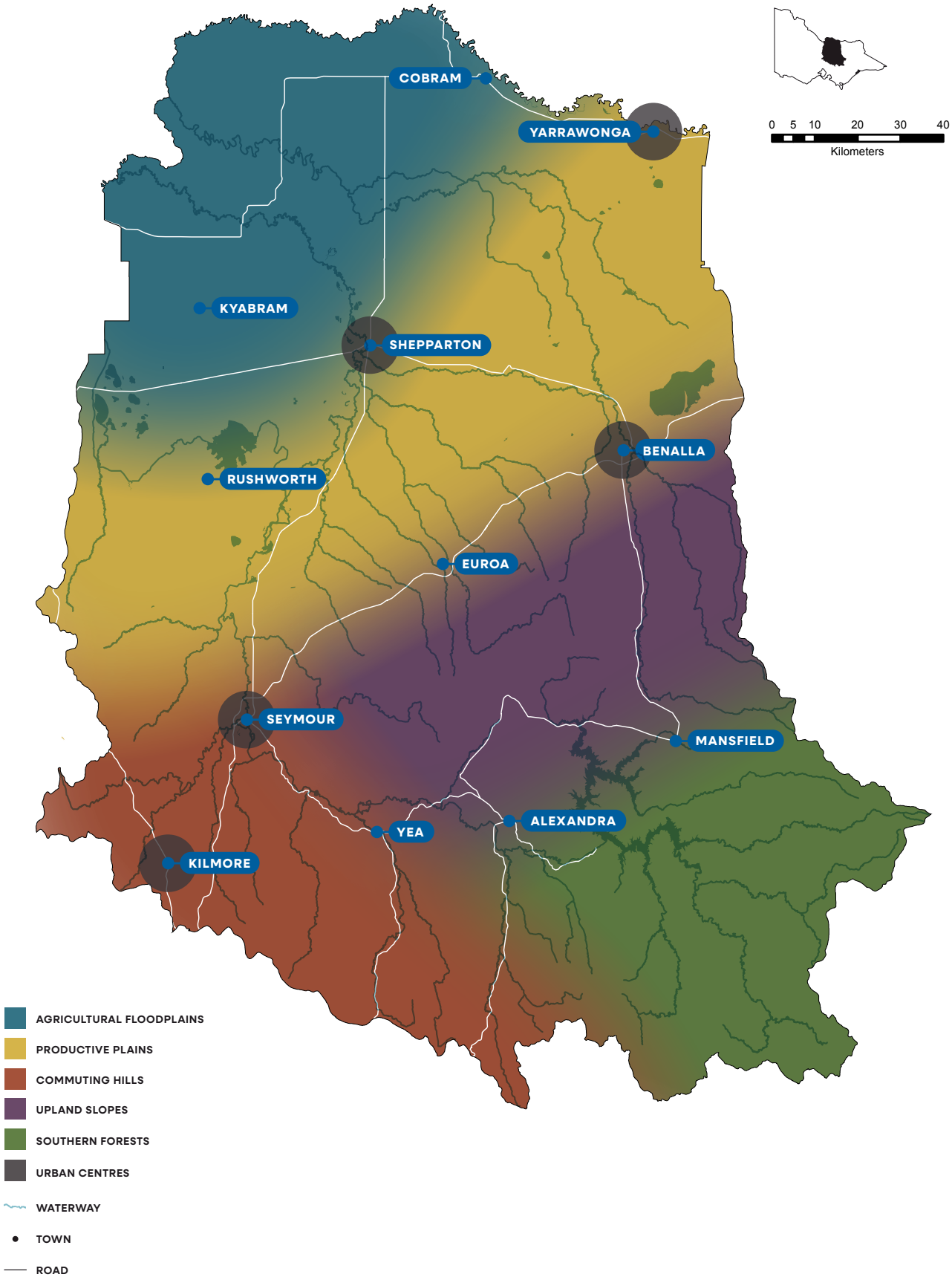
  Located in the south and south-east of the catchment, this alpine and forested area is the Traditional Country of the Taungurung people and is valued for its environmental, cultural, recreational and timber production values.

- **Urban Centres SES**

  Although the smallest sub-catchment by area, this region contains the largest population and is characterised by concentrated urban communities, services and industries with growing engagement in the natural environment.

The SES approach offers many benefits including providing for continued integration across local areas of program-based funding.

FIGURE 2: SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS



CASE STUDY

Corop Cultural Waterscape Program: A year in review

Goulburn Broken CMA is a key partner in TLaWC's Corop Wetlands Cultural Waterscape Program and is a signatory to the Statement of Commitment to heal and care for this waterscape. The program has a 100-year vision for a healthy and thriving cultural waterscape that supports and sustains all beings.

The program was initiated after decommissioning of Greens Lake and GMW approached TLaWC to discuss future use. A whole-of-landscape co-design process began thereafter, involving relevant partner organisations and the local community. The program is moving from a feasibility to activation phase with the Goulburn Broken CMA supporting initiatives including:

- Through the program's Institutional Working Group, considering the feasibility of collaborative governance models, exploring law and policy reform opportunities, strengthening right-way decision-making, and helping to shape a long-term framework for shared stewardship of Country. The group also contributed to discussions on Living Entity status and enduring governance arrangements aligned with Taungurung's 100-year vision for the waterscape.
- As part of the Biocultural and Environmental Working Group, progressing a Rapid Biocultural Assessment, improving access to and sharing of biophysical information, strengthening Indigenous Data Sovereignty, and supporting evidence-based decisions to heal and care for the Corop waterscape.
- Contributing to the program's Speaking and Listening Strategy, which aims to support meaningful engagement and developing relationships with local communities and landholders. Drafting a series of factsheets on key wetlands with input from the program's Livelihoods Working Group.
- Cultural heritage training for Goulburn Broken CMA staff – undertaken at Gaynor's Swamp and Lake Cooper by TLaWC staff.
- The Gaynor Swamp regulator upgrade project, being delivered in partnership with TLaWC and working with local landholders, to support more effective environmental water delivery and improve ecological and cultural outcomes. The project will reinstate and upgrade the structure so water levels can be managed more effectively in response to seasonal and ecological conditions, while also applying culturally informed engagement, governance and decision-making.
- A Disaster Ready Fund round four bid, which was submitted for the Wanalta Wallenjoe Wetlands Drainage Course Declaration Project. The project focusses on modelling, engagement, design and easement work aimed at improving flow connectivity through the Wanalta Creek wetland chain, reducing flood risk to farmland, roads and the Wanalta community, and supporting future controlled wetting and drying regimes for One Tree, Two Tree, Wallenjoe and Mansfield Swamps.

The Goulburn Broken CMA remains committed to this important program and partnership via strategic input, knowledge-sharing, connections and engagement.



Lake Cooper view from Mt Camel Range



Cultural heritage training

Regional Catchment Strategy, resilience and climate change

The Regional Catchment Strategy

The Goulburn Broken RCS 2021-2027 provides the long-term framework for improving catchment health and the integrated management of natural resources. Building on more than 30 years of strategic planning and delivery, the RCS identifies priority actions, desired outcomes and a vision for the catchment to 2040.

Achieving the RCS vision will require significant and sustained action, including new approaches, partnerships and investment to address natural resource decline and the impacts of climate change. The strategy is a shared responsibility across government, Traditional Owners, industry, community groups and landholders, with Goulburn Broken CMA responsible for coordinating, monitoring and reporting on progress.

Delivery is guided by the RCS Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning Plan. Community participation is supported through the RCS Pledge Portal, with 61 individuals and 30 organisations having pledged their support as of 30 June 2026.

Figure 3 (next page) provides a summary of the strategy.

The resilience approach

A resilience approach underpins the RCS, focusing on strengthening the capacity of communities, industries and ecosystems to adapt and thrive in the face of change.

The catchment continues to face challenges including climate variability, extreme weather events, changing water availability, land use change and evolving community expectations. In response, the RCS promotes resilient landscapes, communities and institutions that can adapt while maintaining environmental, social and economic wellbeing.

Recognising the interconnected nature of social, economic and environmental systems, the CMA uses evidence, monitoring and partnerships to inform decision-making and support sustainable outcomes. This approach guides work across landscape adaptation, water and land management, biodiversity conservation, natural disaster resilience and community engagement.



Murray-Darling Rainbowfish

FIGURE 3: GOULBURN BROKEN REGIONAL CATCHMENT STRATEGY 2021-27 SUMMARY

Purpose: Collaborative strategy to guide actions to improve and protect the Goulburn Broken Catchment's land, water, biodiversity and community.

SITUATION IN 2021
Why we need to take action

CATCHMENT CONDITION

Water

CONDITION	TREND
Satisfactory	Declining

Biodiversity

CONDITION	TREND
Poor	Declining

Land

CONDITION	TREND
Satisfactory	Stable

Community

CONDITION	TREND
Satisfactory	Stable

CATCHMENT DRIVERS AND TRENDS

- Climate change.
- Ongoing negative impacts from historic actions.
- Urban population and land use changing.
- People increasingly value the environment for recreation and tourism.
- Biodiversity is under pressure.
- Water issues are more prominent and complex.
- Increasing role and recognition of Traditional Owners and First Nations People.
- Increasing and competing priorities for public resources.
- Agriculture is changing.

PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE CHANGE
How we'll decide what to do

STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNITY-LED

EMBED RESILIENCE PRINCIPLES

SUPPORTED BY SCIENCE

FOSTER STEWARDSHIP

For more detailed information on the RCS and performance to date please visit the Goulburn Broken RCS website at www.goulburnbroken.rcs.vic.gov.au.

PRIORITY DIRECTIONS
What we'll do

6-YEAR CATCHMENT PRIORITIES

1. Reverse the declining health of the Catchment's land, water and biodiversity.
2. Implement pathways to adapt and transform to drivers of change.
3. Give effect to priorities in First Nations Country Plans.
4. Continue to build our understanding of tipping points and their role in navigating change.
5. Build values of environmental stewardship amongst an increasingly diverse community.
6. Broaden investment and contributions to natural resource management.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE IN 2040
Our goals

CATCHMENT VISION

Resilient landscapes, thriving communities.

LOCAL AREA VISIONS

Agricultural Floodplains
The Agricultural Floodplains' community leads Australia in producing food in harmony with the environment.

Commuting Hills
The Commuting Hills has a safe, sustainable future and a great quality of life, while protecting and enhancing the wonderful natural environment.

Productive Plains
Through strong and supportive community networks, the Productive Plains balances land productivity, quality water access and native vegetation quantity and condition in a changing climate.

Southern Forests
With the community, the Southern Forests balances ecological, economic, cultural and recreational needs to preserve natural resource health.

Upland Slopes
The Upland Slopes is a climate resilient socio-ecological system, supported by a strong sense of place and pride in our engaged, knowledgeable and adaptive community.

Urban Centres
Urban Centres offer employment, facilities and services for residents while valuing the natural environment.

THEME VISIONS

Biodiversity
Biodiversity is valued, resilient and flourishing.

Land
A diverse and productive landscape with healthy, functioning soils.

Community
A motivated and connected community leads positive change for people, land, water and biodiversity.

Water
Water resources deliver agreed cultural, environmental, economic and social values now and for future generations.

2. Year in review

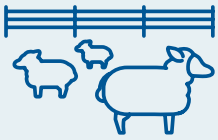
FIGURE 4: KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



82
Community events



12,401
Event participants



41 km
Fencing



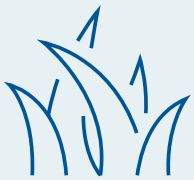
$1,300,411
Grants awarded



770,719 ML
Environmental water delivered



322 Ha
Revegetation



2,823 Ha
Weed control



44,755 Ha
Pest animal control



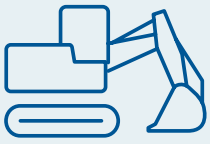
1,307
Referrals received



484
Flood advice referrals



823
Planning referrals



79
Works on waterways permits



Straw bales used to trap sediments after the Longwood fires

Challenges and opportunities in the region for long-term catchment management

During 2025-26, Goulburn Broken CMA worked with government agencies, local government, landholders and community organisations to improve preparedness, recovery and long-term resilience to flood, fire and other natural hazards. This included supporting projects that improve landscape resilience, strengthen community capacity and inform future risk management and adaptation planning.

While 2025-26 was a year of significant achievement, it was also marked by ongoing challenges across the catchment. Some of the most significant challenges influencing short and long-term catchment management include:

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change continues to influence the way people, industries and ecosystems operate across the catchment. Long term trends include increasing temperatures, decreased but more variable rainfall, more frequent extreme weather events and changing seasonal conditions. During 2025-26, drier conditions across the region placed additional pressure on agriculture, water resources, natural systems and rural communities.

Climate action remains embedded across all areas of Goulburn Broken CMA's work. During the year, we supported community discussions on drought resilience, climate adaptation and carbon farming opportunities, while contributing to regional climate initiatives through the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance (GMCA) and its partners. Victorian CMAs also maintained their collaborative investment in climate coordination and knowledge sharing to support evidence-based planning, policy development and on-ground action. We committed to renewing our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work with partners through re-signing to the GMCA. At a statewide level, Victorian CMAs collectively funded a climate change coordinator to provide support for CMAs, facilitate joint projects, enhance knowledge exchange and provide coordinated input into policy and program design at state and federal levels.

FIRE AND FLOOD

The growing frequency and severity of natural disasters have presented ongoing challenges for communities, infrastructure and the natural environment across the catchment. As recovery efforts from previous flood events progressed, many communities were also impacted by the Longwood Fires of January 2026, which burned approximately 145,000 hectares.

DROUGHT

Drought poses serious challenges to agriculture, resulting in reduced crop yields, livestock losses and financial hardship for farmers and regional communities. The year was challenging for community because of the drier conditions in the region in 2025 and early 2026. Through the Future Drought Fund, Goulburn Broken CMA worked with federal and state governments, industry and communities to implement priorities identified in the Goulburn Drought Resilience Plan and strengthen preparedness for future climate challenges.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community participation is central to successful catchment management. However, changing demographics, competing priorities and increasing demands on community volunteers influences how people engage with environmental and community activities.

As traditional volunteer models evolve, there is an increasing need to develop new approaches that support participation, build community capacity and strengthen partnerships. Goulburn Broken CMA works with community groups, landholders, Traditional Owners and partner organisations to identify innovative ways to engage people in caring for the region's land, water and biodiversity.

Demand and expectation continues to increase for individuals and communities to undertake catchment improvement works. However, as numbers of volunteers decline, there is an urgent need to review all models, to identify one which will best support community involvement in natural resource management.

RURAL LAND USE

The catchment continues to experience significant changes in land use driven by population growth, agricultural restructuring, climate adaptation, renewable energy development and changing market conditions. Ongoing consolidation of farming enterprises, particularly in northern parts of the catchment, is reshaping rural communities and influencing the way land and water resources are managed.

Monitoring and understanding landscape change remains critical to effective catchment management. Through regional partnerships and initiatives such as land use mapping and landscape monitoring, Goulburn Broken CMA carries on building the evidence base needed to support informed decision-making, adaptive management and long-term planning.

FIRST NATIONS SELF-DETERMINATION

The Victorian Government is committed to First Nations self-determination and there is and will be rapid policy change arising from truth-telling processes led by the Yoorrook Justice Commission. Goulburn Broken CMA strengthened its resolve to support self-determination through adding to its business objectives, developing its third Reconciliation Action Plan. The CMA also continues to strengthen long-standing partnerships with Traditional Owner organisations.

As part of the Reconciliation Action Plan implementation, Goulburn Broken CMA initiated and facilitated a successful Treaty myth-busting session during National Reconciliation Week which demonstrated a high level of interest and learning from partner organisations and the community.

A general reduction in funding provided to CMAs over the past three years has seen a decline in total expenditure on First Nations businesses. Nevertheless, the number of First Nations businesses supported is growing and with some larger multi-year agreements expected in the near future with Traditional Owner organisations, this may see an increase in the CMA's investment into Traditional Owner partnerships. Increasing capacity of Traditional Owner organisations (including accessing funding directly) is resulting in a reduced level of reliance on the CMA.

AVIAN INFLUENZA (H5N1)

Avian influenza H5N1 is an emerging risk for the Goulburn Broken catchment due to its wetlands, waterways and waterbird habitat. While no confirmed Victorian incursions had been recorded as at 30 June, recent detections in wild birds have highlighted the importance of maintaining vigilance, strong biosecurity measures and a coordinated response. An outbreak could increase health and safety requirements and impact environmental water delivery, monitoring activities, threatened species recovery efforts and biodiversity programs.

Key events

FIGURE 5: KEY EVENTS OF 2025-26



JULY 2025

Community workshops seeking local input were held in the development of the Goulburn Broken Regional Waterway Strategy (RWS). The strategy will set key directions for action and priorities for funding for the coming decade, to improve the health of rivers and wetlands and support community values.

SEPTEMBER 2025

We farewelled outgoing board member Adrian Weston who served on the board for 12 years, recognising his commitment, leadership and drive. We also farewelled fellow outgoing board member, Les McLean, and welcomed Jeff Odgers.

NOVEMBER 2025

RiverConnect marked 20 years. Goulburn Broken CMA was the founding partner and is proud and honoured to have been on this collaborative journey since its inception in 2005. The program has been pivotal in building appreciation of the significance of the local river environment through providing access, events, partnerships and school education.

JANUARY 2026

The Longwood and Yarroweyah bushfires devastated the region. More than 145,000 hectares of the catchment was severely affected. Goulburn Broken CMA committed to restore landscapes, waterways and biodiversity with available funding.

MARCH 2026

Nationally endangered Macquarie Perch and Trout Cod were returned to Seven Creeks at Gooram following the January bushfires. Fish were moved to the Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery to safeguard the population as sediment and ash flowing into the Seven Creeks from the Longwood fire-affected area would have threatened their survival.

MAY 2026

To improve habitat across Seven Creeks and several sites along the Goulburn River in Shepparton where platypus live and feed, on-ground works are being delivered through the Platy Patch Project. Goulburn Broken CMA is a partner in the landmark $24 million, four-year statewide initiative, supported by significant co-funding from the Australian Government, the Victorian Government and Melbourne Water.

JUNE 2026

Goulburn Broken CMA welcomed Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder Dr Simon Banks to Moodie Swamp to showcase the vital work completed at the site. New infrastructure upgrades have led to improved efficiency and reliability of water deliveries.

APRIL 2026

Goulburn Broken CMA CEO Carl Walters joined a panel of regional water leaders in Shepparton to discuss the strategic risks climate change posed to water security. The focus was on adapting to climate impacts by using water for the environment effectively, enhancing the health of waterways and wetlands, and preparing the region for a future with less water.

FEBRUARY 2026

More than 4,000 straw bales for sediment traps were distributed across fire-impacted areas of the catchment to reduce run off from burnt ground. They helped slow flow and hold back sediment from entering landholder dams, streams and waterways.

DECEMBER 2025

Goulburn Broken CMA secured funding through the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund to deliver the Murray Valley Drainage Course Declaration project. This initiative will remove obstructions along natural drainage lines, reduce flood risk and improve disaster resilience and protect productive irrigation land and vital infrastructure across 13,500 hectares.

OCTOBER 2025

Local natural resource management groups were successful in the 2025 Victorian Landcare Grants with koala habitat restoration, a community bioblitz and grassland revival funded. Some 23 projects received a total of more than $290,000.

AUGUST 2025

With a 20-plus year history of working together on the shared aspiration of caring for Country, a new Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Goulburn Broken CMA and YYNAC.

July 2025

- Water for the environment was delivered into the Goulburn River. The winter fresh helped the entire food chain by depositing seed-rich sediment on the banks, promoting the growth of bank-stabilising plants. It moved sediment from the riverbed, creating diverse habitat for native fish and water bugs.
- A one-to-two-day old Murray River Turtle hatchling was spotted in Barmah National Park. This species is critically endangered in Victoria. Goulburn Broken CMA's Barmah Country Project, funded by the Commonwealth Government Natural Heritage Trust, supported scientists from the Arthur Rylah Institute to undertake turtle recruitment and turtle nest predation surveys.
- Goulburn Broken CMA held community workshops to hear local input into the development of the RWS. Across Shepparton, Yea, Benalla and Euroa people took up the opportunity to have their say on waterways. This strategy will set key directions for action as well as priorities for funding for the coming decade, to improve the health of our rivers and wetlands and help sustain what our communities value about waterways.
- Goulburn Broken CMA hosted Occasional Counsellor training for those working with and in support of farmers and people in agricultural industries and communities. The sessions aimed to build practical skills for recognising signs of stress, having difficult conversations and supporting others in challenging times. The training was provided as part of Goulburn Broken CMA's involvement in the Goulburn Regional Drought Resilience Plan that identifies and outlines actions to build social, environmental and economic resilience to future dry seasons and drought.
- Goulburn Broken CMA hosted a stall at Dharnya Day where Yorta Yorta culture was celebrated in the heart of Barmah National Park, during National NAIDOC Week. Many people visited the stall, with plenty of questions about local plants and animals and the many elements of our work.

August 2025

- The invasive watsonia weed was the subject of control efforts on public land between Hughes Creek and Hughes Creek Road at Tarcombe. In partnership with Mitchell Shire Council, Goulburn Broken CMA coordinated control to target watsonia in the early growth stage. This work is part of flood recovery funded by the Victorian Government and Mitchell Shire's Roadside Weeds and Pest Program.
- Goulburn Broken CMA and YYNAC have a 20-plus year history of working together on the shared aspiration of caring for Country. A new Memorandum of Understanding was signed that reflects a collective understanding of what it takes to maintain a healthy partnership and recognises the benefits of walking side-by-side.

September 2025

- Goulburn Broken CMA hosted soil health workshops in Molyullah and Seymour, bringing together local farmers to explore practical ways to care for their land. Participants put their new knowledge into action testing soil health through hands-on methods like water infiltration, soil pH checks, ground cover assessments and soil texturing to build more resilient, productive farms across the region.
- Water for the environment was released into the Goulburn River to stimulate fish movement and promote the growth of native plants to help protect the riverbank. The Goulburn River spring fresh benefited native vegetation by wetting the river's banks and then receding, encouraging new growth.
- Goulburn Broken farmers gathered to deepen their knowledge of soil health at a workshop led by soil scientist Declan McDonald. The event explored how combining soil chemistry and biology can lead to long-term productivity and resilience. The workshop was supported by funding from the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust Climate-Smart Agriculture Program, in collaboration with local Landcare and farming systems groups.
- The Vic No-Till Conference was held. This two-day event was dedicated to empowering farmers passionate about developing farming systems that promote soil, human, economic and environmental health. Vic No-Till brought together some of the brightest minds in finance, nutrition and agriculture to help all grow stronger on and off the farm.

- Employees and Board members attended the National NRM Knowledge Conference and presented on the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seedbank, highlighting their vital role in supplying seed for restoration projects and advocating for ongoing funding and linkages with First Nations.

October 2025

- Local natural resource management groups were successful in the 2025 Victorian Landcare Grants program with projects such as koala habitat restoration, a community bioblitz and grassland revival funded. Some 23 projects received a total of more than $290,000 while support grants totalling $11,500 were also awarded.
- With dry conditions impacting the catchment, Goulburn Broken CMA's Spring Ahead Field Day focused on preparing feed budgets, planning options and looking after yourself. This project of the Regional Drought Resilience Planning program was supported through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Victorian Government.
- Researchers from the ARI visited Holland's Creek at Tatong to conduct native fish surveys ahead of the installation of large woody debris. These structures will help improve habitat for species like Macquarie Perch by creating shelter and enhancing stream complexity. This work is part of our ongoing efforts to support healthy waterways and thriving native fish populations in the Goulburn Broken catchment.
- The inaugural Shepparton Irrigation Region Forum meeting was held, chaired by Heather du Vallon. The forum is a community-based advisory group established to provide feedback and guidance to Goulburn Broken CMA and government on implementing the Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2050 (SIRLWMP).
- 'A Day in the Hills' Farmers Day out was held in Dookie and attracted 110 attendees. The weekend event also featured a screening of the film 'Just a Farmer' to 50 attendees, with director and actor Leila McDonald in attendance to share insights and engage with the audience. The project was supported through the Goulburn Drought Resilience Plan project and coordinated by Goulburn Broken CMA on behalf of state and federal governments.

November 2025

- CEO Carl Walters and Board Chair Sarah Parker were part of a statewide CMA presentation to more than 100 representatives from Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Agriculture Victoria, the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) and Landcare. They highlighted the importance of water availability in the catchment along with the value of partnering with local communities, Traditional Owners and other organisations for successful integrated catchment management.
- Our Zombie Fish community education morning at Dunyak Moira Fishing Ponds saw Merrigum Primary School students and Burnanga Indigenous Fishing Club members release the once thought to be extinct Southern Purple Spotted Gudgeon (aka Zombie). The fish came from the Melbourne Aquarium and Bendigo to their new home to grow and thrive and eventually be released into local waterways to help re-establish wild populations of this critically endangered fish.
- Environmental water was delivered to Kanyapella Basin. Under the VEWH's Seasonal Watering Plan, around 1600ML of environmental water was delivered. This water supported woodland and waterbird habitat, maintained wetland vegetation health and protected threatened plant species.
- Goulburn Broken CMA presented at the 9th Natural Resource Management Knowledge Conference in Queensland, attended by Federal Minister for Environment and Water Minister Murray Watt. More than 200 people attended our presentation on biodiversity restoration. The importance of ecological monitoring and partnerships for environmental water delivery was another presentation.
- A corrobboree circle and bush tucker garden was launched at Winton Wetlands featuring corrobboree dancing, bush tucker talks and YYNAC display stalls and demonstrations.

December 2025

- Keneisha Lines Howell completed the 2025 Fairley Leadership Program. This achievement was made possible through the Ken Sampson Community Scholarship, proudly sponsored by Goulburn Broken CMA.
- Goulburn Broken CMA's Year of the Tree Hollow (2025) education campaign was completed, with strong media coverage.
- Turtle monitoring was undertaken in Barmah Ramsar, with a highlight including the capture and release of a Broad-shelled Turtle (endangered in Victoria) hatchling for the first time since 2014.

January 2026

- The 20th edition of Goulburn Broken CMA's calendar was published. The calendar celebrates biodiversity in the catchment, featuring images taken by amateur photographers. There were more than 280 entries.
- Goulburn Broken CMA designated 2026 as the Year of the Raptor for its annual community awareness campaign. Each month a species of raptor local to the catchment and the habitat they need to survive is featured.
- The Longwood and Yarroweyah bushfires devastated the region. More than 145,000 hectares of the catchment was severely affected. Goulburn Broken CMA committed to restore landscapes, waterways and biodiversity with available funding.

February 2026

- The Victorian Environment Minister Steve Dimopoulos visited the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seedbank to announce $900,000 in funding to support the collection, storage and supply of Indigenous seeds. This investment recognises the critical role Indigenous seed plays in large scale revegetation, supporting biodiversity, cultural values and resilient ecosystems now and into the future.
- Following the bushfires, Goulburn Broken CMA held many valuable conversations with landholders and local community members, including at the Ruffy Farmers Community Connect day and bushfire recovery workshops. Employees talked to fire-impacted people about post bushfire waterway recovery, riparian fencing, weed control, natural regeneration and revegetation and managing erosion and sediment impacts on local streams and private farm dams.

March 2026

- Goulburn Broken CMA welcomed guests to the Sustainable Irrigation Program Quarterly Forum, showcasing innovation in land and water management across the Shepparton Irrigation Region. The tour included a modern barn style dairy, Kinnairds Wetland and an almond farm.
- Goulburn Broken CMA continued to build momentum in natural capital and environmental markets through engaging employees and Board learning sessions delivered by the Centre for Community Capital. The sessions strengthened shared understanding and confidence to explore practical opportunities that support catchment outcomes and deliver broader regional benefits.
- Water for the environment was released into the Goulburn River to help improve river health, encourage native fish movement and support riverbank vegetation. After a dry year with multiple heatwaves and low rainfall, the Goulburn River autumn fresh helped reinvigorate mid bank plants and encouraged Golden and Silver perch to move back into the river from the Murray.
- Federal Environment Minister Murray Watt announced the Australian Bushland Program including $11 million for Victoria to expand existing private land covenanting to add 4,000 hectares to Australia's protected area estate. Goulburn Broken CMA will work with Trust for Nature, adjoining CMAs and DEECA.
- More than 20 Goulburn Broken CMA employees were trained in the adaptation pathways approach, enabling us to create proactive and flexible long-term plans for the catchment that consider climate change and other driving forces.

April 2026

- Baddaginnie residents attended a flood study community drop-in session, sharing their experiences from previous floods and viewing draft flood mapping. Goulburn Broken CMA is working with Benalla Rural City Council on the flood study which will provide detailed flood mapping and intelligence to improve future emergency and community preparedness from floods, land-use planning and development considerations.
- Goulburn Broken CMA employees attended cultural heritage training at Gaynor Swamp as part of employee learning and partnership with Taungurung Land and Waters Council. Gaynor Swamp is part of the Corop Cultural Waterscape, one of Taungurung's priority locations on Country. The training delivered

by TLaWC focussed on reading the diverse landscape features of the area in the context of cultural heritage significance and learning about the different forms of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

- Goulburn Broken CMA hosted a stall at the three-day Seymour Alternative Farming Expo, having many great conversations with community members. From native fish on display, bush fire recovery to current projects in natural resource management across the region, we answered questions, chatted and shared many of our great publications.
- Goulburn Broken CMA hosted a National Regional Delivery Partners three-day Ecological Monitoring System Australia on-ground training session which was delivered by TERN Australia from University of Adelaide, covering floristics, photo-points, vegetation cover and mapping.

May 2026

- To mark National Reconciliation Week, Goulburn Broken CMA, as a member of a local Reconciliation Collective, helped organised a successful cultural walk through Shepparton. Led by Yorta Yorta man Michael Bourke, 45 participants walked from Lake Victoria to the William Cooper Statue in Queens Gardens. Mr Bourke shared stories of his culture and people, stopping at places of cultural significance and artworks honouring Yorta Yorta leaders.
- A new trial started to help tackle the invasive cabomba weed in Lake Benalla with the help of aquatic weevils. Weevils were released into the lake as part of a first-of-its-kind trial in Victoria. The weevil feeds only on cabomba, weakening the plant and slowing its spread. This work is a partnership between Goulburn Broken CMA, CSIRO, Benalla Rural City Council and GMW and forms part of a national biocontrol program.
- After being wiped out decades ago, about 1000 of one of the rarest fish species in the Murray-Darling Basin, the Olive Perchlet, was re-introduced into a lagoon at Barmah National Park. Due to past droughts, barriers, habitat loss and competition from introduced species, this small wetland fish has been missing in Barmah for more than 20 years, so the release marked the start of recovery for this species here. This was part of our work in native fish recovery and re-establishing wild populations.
- Additional pest animal management works started at Barmah, aiming to increase the resilience of Australia's highest-risk native species to potential H5N1 (bird flu) impacts through targeted preparedness and threat mitigation actions.

June 2026

- At a property near Avenel, Goulburn Broken CMA joined with 20 volunteers to improve habitat along Hughes Creek. Together, the group planted indigenous seedlings and installed paired stakes in the creek to trap leaf litter and twigs, creating "resource islands". Planting, in-stream vegetation and large wood installation supports threatened Macquarie perch and aquatic wildlife.
- Forty years of Landcare was marked across the catchment. In the Goulburn Broken catchment, Landcare Networks, Groups, and volunteers achieved the following in the past year: 39,000 hours of volunteer time; 8,395 active group members; 4,100m of fencing completed; 20 hectares of revegetation; 460 hectares of weed control; 123 pest animal assessments; 30 Landcare community events.
- Planning started to understand long-term landscape change across the irrigation region, aiming to combine updated Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District (GMID) land use mapping data in 2025-26 with community and industry insights to support future planning and adaptation. The Sustainable Irrigation Program will develop the GMID: Story of Change report in 2026-27.
- Preparations began for the transfer of drainage and salinity program delivery responsibilities from GMW to Goulburn Broken CMA. This significant milestone supports implementation of the SIRLWMP and will strengthen the integration of land, water, drainage and salinity management across the irrigation region.
- Goulburn Broken CMA hosted Commonwealth employees from Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for a tour of NSW and Victorian Sandhill Pine Woodlands ecological community, which is proposed to be listed in the Critically Endangered category of threatened ecological communities under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

CASE STUDY

Early intervention improving fire recovery

From December 2025 to January 2026, bushfires severely affected parts of the Goulburn Broken catchment. More than 149,000 hectares was burnt, causing significant impacts to our communities and their properties, as well as waterways and natural features of the region.

Landholders and communities were faced with exposed soils, damaged vegetation and pastures, vulnerable waterways at risk from increased ash and sediment movement, threats to farm dams and water supplies and uncertainty about how landscapes and wildlife would recover.

Goulburn Broken CMA responded quickly with regional agencies, local government, Landcare, community organisations, landholders and Traditional Owners to provide practical local support. The recovery effort combined urgent action to reduce environmental impacts with trusted advice to help people make decisions about farms, waterways and natural assets.

An early priority was protecting streams, farm dams, wetlands and waterways from ash, soil and sediment movement after following the January 2026 bushfires. Although January recorded just 2.4 millimetres of rainfall for the month, significant rain fell across the region in February, increasing the risk of runoff from burnt ground. Sediment and run off threatened significant water quality and important instream habitat, particularly in summer when some streams had already experienced low flows or had ceased to flow. To reduce these impacts, Goulburn Broken CMA distributed more than 4,000 straw bales to create sediment traps, slow runoff and help prevent sediment entering waterways, wetlands and private dams.

The recovery effort also protected threatened native fish. Nationally endangered Macquarie Perch and Trout Cod were temporarily relocated from Seven, Hughes and Watchbox Creeks to Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery when sediment and ash from the Longwood fireground washed into waterways during rainfall in February threatened their survival. With streams at cease-to-flow or at extremely low-flow conditions, urgent action was needed before rainfall runoff led to impacts on water quality and was affected alongside native fish populations.

Goulburn Broken CMA employees worked directly with fire-affected landholders and communities at community events, providing advice on post-fire waterway recovery, remnant and habitat restoration, riparian fencing, weed control, natural regeneration, revegetation, soil health, erosion, and sediment management.

Early assessments identified approximately 4,000 kilometres of waterways and wetlands, including 350 kilometres of priority waterways, had been affected. Recognising the long-term risks to waterway health, biodiversity, agricultural productivity and community wellbeing, Goulburn Broken CMA moved quickly to assess impacts, engage landholders and develop a coordinated recovery response. Employees used desktop assessments, spatial data, program records and local knowledge to identify priority waterway and biodiversity assets at risk, quantify likely impacts and build an evidence base for investment while many fire-affected sites remained inaccessible.

Priority works identified included repairing and replacing riparian fencing, restoring alternative stock watering infrastructure, controlling post-fire weed outbreaks, removing debris from waterways, and implementing erosion and sediment controls to protect waterways, wetlands and riparian zones. These interventions were critical to preventing the loss of recovery gains and reducing long-term environmental impacts. As a result of the assessments, planning and advocacy, Goulburn Broken CMA secured $2.9 million through DEECA, jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Victorian governments through Disaster Recovery Funding arrangements.

The funding enabled critical on-ground works across the Longwood fire footprint, gave confidence to affected landholders and communities, allowed waterway and wetland recovery to start quickly, and laid the foundation for longer-term restoration.

Support also extended to on-farm recovery and support of community-led action. Goulburn Broken CMA worked with community and partners to support community-led engagement events, covering a range of issues including pasture assessment, soil recovery, soil biology, dam management, stock health, biodiversity monitoring, and mental health.

Biodiversity recovery was supported through a meeting with community and agency partners in the Longwood fire area, which aimed to coordinate biodiversity monitoring post fire. Ten sub-groups were established for further action including native daisies, invertebrates and grasslands; wildlife; springs, soaks, bogs and wetlands; water quality; nest boxes and hollows; bird citizen science; deer monitoring; flora and threatened plants; fungal community; and community engagement.

Together, these activities show an integrated recovery approach grounded in care, collaboration, and practical action, which will be an important foundation for on-going recovery. This approach also showed the value of standing alongside communities after disaster: listening, sharing knowledge and working together to help catchments recover.



Longwood Landcare Group discussing sediment traps



Hughes Creek before on-ground works before and after

Key programs and projects delivered

Goulburn Broken CMA undertakes its programs by working with partners and community stakeholders across the region. Our partners, community groups and land managers invest significantly in improving the health of land and waterways. The roles of catchment partners are outlined in Appendix 2.

Goulburn Broken CMA is principally responsible for protecting and improving the health of the region's natural resources through partnerships in line with the RCS and sub-strategies and delivering its statutory responsibilities for waterway, rural drainage and floodplain management. More specifically, services include:

- River and wetland health planning, management and strategy
- Environmental Water Reserve utilisation (through planning and delivery of environmental water)
- Strategic water quality and biodiversity monitoring and coordination
- Community and landholder engagement
- Corporate and statutory functions:
  - Floodplain
  - Works on waterways
  - Other land issues
- Sustainable agriculture and land management, including national soil monitoring, drought resilience, and carbon farming
- Water savings and water use efficiency (including whole farm planning)
- Surface and sub-surface water management
- Biodiversity
- Landcare and other NRM groups, industry groups and Recognised Aboriginal Parties engagement and support
- Fire, drought and flood recovery and resilience planning
- Pest plant and animal management
- Climate change adaptation
- Strategic planning, resilience and climate adaptation
- Drainage and salinity management
- Landscape change monitoring and analysis

Goulburn Broken CMA continues to explore and evaluate new and existing mechanisms and partnerships for delivery and implementation that can maximise on-ground outcomes in a financially constrained environment. Continued commitment from all partners in our Catchment Partnership Agreement (2023-2028) has enabled the CMA to achieve stronger outcomes than it could alone, supporting coordinated delivery, shared investment, local knowledge and collective action across the catchment.



Sustainable Irrigation Program works

Program areas

In 2025-26 Goulburn Broken CMA delivered its business through four theme-based programs.

Floodplain Program
This program seeks to provide expert advice on floodplain management and waterway health, including the provision of flood advice, responses to floodplain referrals and the provision of Works on Waterways permits.

Sustainable Irrigation Program
This integrated place-based program leads implementation of the SIRLWMP and supports sustainable irrigation, climate adaptation, drainage and salinity management, water use efficiency and regional resilience.

River and Wetland Health Program
This program seeks to ensure ecologically healthy and resilient rivers, wetlands, floodplains and adjacent land that provides for our social, economic and cultural values.

Biodiversity, Land Health and Landcare Program
This program seeks to protect, enhance, and connect the region's natural assets, while supporting community stewardship and sustainable land management.

The following two programs support the delivery of the theme-based programs.

Corporate and Business Services Program
This program contributes to the achievement of catchment objectives by supporting the safe and effective participation of employees, Board members, partners and community members in natural resource management activities delivered by Goulburn Broken CMA. The team provides high-quality finance, human resources, information and communications technology (ICT), governance and business support services that enable the effective delivery of programs and organisational outcomes.

Strategy and Engagement Program
This program aims to set the strategic direction of the organisation through organisational and regional catchment strategies. It also supports programs by providing enabling frameworks and initiatives in stakeholder and community engagement, Traditional Owner partnerships, communications, investment coordination and climate change.

Project delivery

Delivery of the Victorian Water Program Investment Framework (Environmental Contribution levy tranche 6; EC6) funded program continues. EC6 delivers state and regional priorities such as Water for Victoria, the RCS, RWS and Our Catchments, Our Communities. Key EC6 projects include:

- Renewal of the RWS.
- Planning and delivery of annual environmental watering actions.
- With TLaWC, continued co-design and shared delivery of the Walking with Waring Flagship project.
- Working with joint managers YYNAC and Parks Victoria in coordinating the Barmah National Park Ramsar program.
- Delivery of Sustainable Irrigation Program projects such as Murray Valley West Drainage Course Declaration (DCD) works and the Whole Farm Plan incentive program in partnership with Agriculture Victoria.
- Delivery of the Connecting Culture and Country project with a focus on biodiversity activities with YYNAC and TLaWC.

Regional delivery projects funded by the Australian Government's National Heritage Trust (NHT) Program continue to be implemented to June 2028. Projects include:

- Landscape Legacies – Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodland
- Barmah Country – Working with First Nations in the Barmah cultural landscape
- Climate Smart Agriculture Program
- Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator
- Regional Capacity Services

Through the Australian Government, the Victoria Government funded the coordination of the Goulburn Drought Resilience Plan implementation, the H5N1 Preparedness Project, Carbon Farming Outreach Program, and the National Soil Monitoring project.

In 2025-26 work continued through the Victorian Government funded Flood Recovery River Health project which continued to deliver core river health recovery activities in response to damage caused by the October 2022 floods.

Expenditure for key projects delivered as at the end of June 2026 are summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1: KEY PROJECTS DELIVERED BY PROGRAM AREA AND FUNDING SOURCE

PROJECT	2025-26 EXPENDITURE $000
BIODIVERSITY, LAND HEALTH AND LANDCARE PROGRAM	
VICTORIAN WATER PROGRAM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK	
Connecting Culture and Country (Our Catchments, Our Communities)	310
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT LANDCARE PROGRAM	
Victorian Landcare Grants 2025	308
Regional Landcare Coordination 2025-2026	193
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT	
Goulburn Drought Resilience Plan Implementation	207
NATIONAL HERITAGE TRUST	
Landscape Legacies — Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodland — Year 3 of 5	873
Barmah Country — Working with First Nations in the Barmah cultural landscape — Year 3 of 5	347
Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator — Year 3 of 5	163
Regional Capacity Services — Year 3 of 5	386
Nature Services for Ag — Year 2 of 5	351
OTHER	
Carbon Farming Outreach Program	130
National Soil Monitoring Program — Victoria	25
SUSTAINABLE IRRIGATION PROGRAM	
VICTORIAN WATER PROGRAM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK	
Resilient SIR Communities and Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan (SIRLWMP) 2050 Implementation	450
Optimising Water Resources in the SIR	182
Basin Salinity Management in the SIR	381
Enhancing Environmental Resilience: SIR Drainage Management	1,031
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT	
Integrated Water Management 2025-2028	125
FLOODPLAIN PROGRAM	
VICTORIAN WATER PROGRAM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK	
Implementing the Regional Floodplain Management Strategy	198
Waterway Stat Functions — Floodplain and Waterway Protection	710
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT	
Levees — Flood Readiness and Response Strategies	184
Lower King Parrot Creek Flood Study	83
Yea Flood Study	80
Baddaginnie Flood Study	55
Mid Goulburn River Flood Mitigation Study	163
Wunghnu Flood Study	50

PROJECT	2025-26 EXPENDITURE $000
RIVER AND WETLAND HEALTH PROGRAM	
COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT	
Moodie Swamp Works and Measures Stage 2	251
VICTORIAN WATER PROGRAM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK	
Environmental Water Management	938
Walking together with Waring Flagship Project	238
Strathbogie Streams Flagship Project	173
Waterway Investment Northern Plains (Yorta Yorta Country)	345
Barmah Ramsar Management Waterway Health	319
Waterway Investment Southern Uplands (Taungurung Country)	548
Goulburn Broken River and Wetland Health Program Management	529
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT	
Goulburn Broken CMA Fish Monitoring 2024-2028	27
Goulburn to Murray Trade Review Research and Investment 24/25-27/28	436
Securing Spotted Tree Frogs — Year 4 of 4	39
Summer 2023-24 Storm and Flood Recovery	540
The Platy Patch (Urban Rivers Platypus Recovery Initiative)	130
Goulburn River off-channel habitat assessment (Phase 1)	128
Enhanced Environmental Water Delivery — Stage 2	233
Moodie Swamp Works and Measures Stage 2	225
Longwood Fire Recovery January 2026	887
JOINT INITIATIVE FUNDED BY THE NSW, VIC, SA AND AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS	
The Living Murray 2025-2026	562
OTHER	
Hughes Creek Macquarie Perch Population Resilience	76
STRATEGY AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM	
VICTORIAN WATER PROGRAM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK	
Nurturing Resilience: Strengthen Regional Partnerships (Our Catchment, Our Communities)	57
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT	
Victorian CMA Water Cycle Adaption Action Program	333
Victorian CMA's Natural Capital Project	23
OTHER	
CMA's Statewide Climate Change Coordinator	79

Over the 2025-26 year, the following standard outputs (Victorian Government) and Service Units (Australian Government) have been delivered for Goulburn Broken CMA projects.

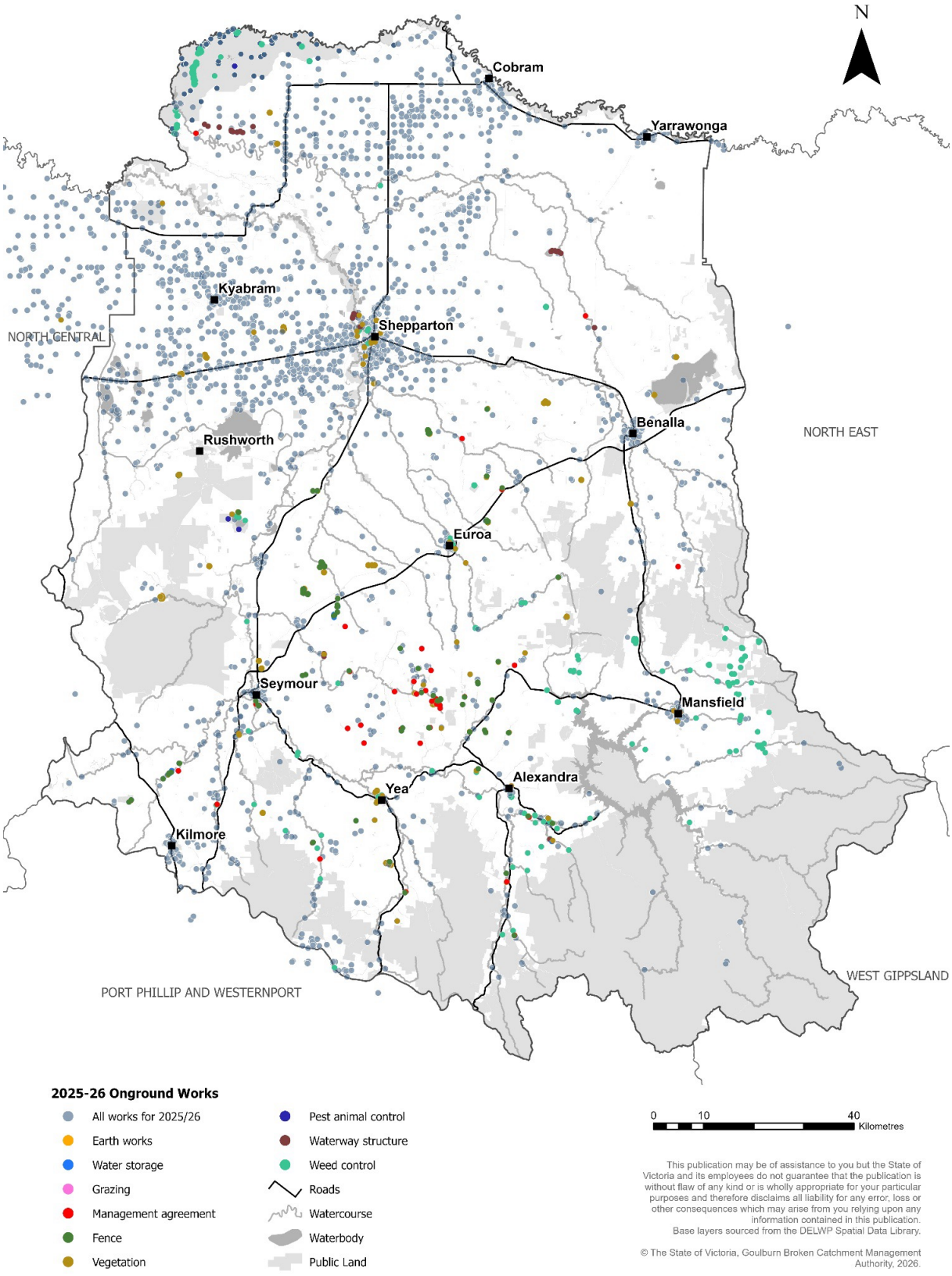
TABLE 2: OUTPUTS ACHIEVED IN 2025-26 AGAINST TARGET

CATEGORY	OUTPUT	UNIT OF MEASURE	2025-26 ACTUAL	2025-26 TARGET
Australian Government	Community Stakeholder Engagement	Number	**31**	27
	Controlling Pest Animals	Hectares	**14,632**	14,632
	Fauna Survey	Number	**5**	5
	Flora Surveys	Number	**8**	8
	Identifying and Prioritising the Location of Potential Sites	Number	**38**	38
	Pest Animal Survey	Number	**28**	28
	Removing weeds	Hectares	**640**	569
	Revegetating Habitat	Hectares	**180**	180
	Seed Collection and Propagation	Number of days	**28**	28
	Synthesising and Finalising Baseline Data	Number	**0**	0
	Weed Distribution Survey	Number	**20**	20
Environmental Works	Earth works	Hectares	**0**	2
	Pest animal control	Hectares	**30,123**	3,000
	Rubbish Removal	Hectares	**0**	1
	Threatened species response	Number	**3**	1
	Vegetation	Hectares	**142**	72
	Weed control	Hectares	**1,654**	579
Management Services	Grazing	Hectares	**34**	26
Planning and Regulation	Approval and advice	Number	**1,292**	1,271
	Assessment	Number	**152**	167
	Engagement Event	Number	**58**	118
	Engagement Event	Number of Participants	**12,401**	1,647
	Information management system	Number	**3**	5
	Management agreement	Hectares	**155**	155
	Management agreement	Number	**43**	17
	Partnership	Number	**94**	64
	Plan	Number	**22**	22
	Publication	Number	**57**	48
Structural Works	Channel	Kilometre	**0**	0
	Fence	Kilometre	**41**	35
	Monitoring structure	Number	**13**	13
	Terrestrial feature – Nest box	Number	**127**	105
	Water Storage	Number	**8**	9
	Waterway structure	Number	**534**	672

Regional works 2025-26

The below map shows all sites where Goulburn Broken CMA programs were undertaken in 2025-26. The coloured dots showcase the sites where physical works were completed, while the grey coloured sites show all other sites where non-capital works were undertaken, such as groundwater monitoring. On-ground works that landowners fully fund themselves are not shown. Goulburn Broken CMA is investigating ways to capture such important contributions. The points indicated on this map are an approximate location of where the works occurred.

FIGURE 6: 2025-26 LOCATION OF ALL WORKS DELIVERED BY EACH PROGRAM



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Base layers sourced from the DELWP Spatial Data Library.

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Summary of financial results

TABLE 3: LAST FIVE YEARS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

	2021-22 $000	2022-23 $000	2023-24 $000	2024-25 $000	2025-26 $000
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE					
State Government	15,673	13,840	12,650	11,093	16,837
Australian Government	3,282	2,970	1,319	2,145	2,669
Government contributions	**18,955**	**16,810**	**13,969**	**13,238**	**19,506**
Revenue from government entities	687	767	984	995	1,183
Other revenues	1,603	1,595	1,973	1,581	1,724
Total Revenue	**21,245**	**19,172**	**16,926**	**15,814**	**22,413**
Expenditure	15,810	17,737	17,008	17,036	17,246
Total expenses	**15,810**	**17,737**	**17,008**	**17,036**	**17,246**
Net result	**5,435**	**1,435**	**-82**	**-1,222**	**5,167**
BALANCE SHEET ITEMS					
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash	17,166	17,093	17,252	16,721	21,054
Receivables	1,296	1,587	2,089	1,527	1,529
Prepayments	208	276	374	393	363
Total current assets	18,670	18,956	19,715	18,641	22,946
Non-Financial assets	1,922	1,618	1,487	1,367	2,309
Total assets	**20,592**	**20,574**	**21,202**	**20,008**	**25,255**
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Trade creditors	1,339	835	2,028	2,082	1,229
Unearned revenue/Contract Liabilities	85	106	0	0	0
Interest Bearing Liabilities	808	1,000	727	845	778
Accruals	721	282	77	7	-
Provisions	2,029	1,783	1,781	1,934	1,994
Total current liabilities	**4,982**	**4,006**	**4,613**	**4,868**	**4,001**
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Interest Bearing Liabilities	1,049	523	649	401	1,366
Other	32	81	58	79	61
Total non-current liabilities	**1,081**	**604**	**707**	**480**	**1,427**
Net assets	**14,529**	**15,964**	**15,882**	**14,660**	**19,827**
EQUITY ITEMS					
Contributed capital	4,209	4,209	4,209	4,209	4,209
Reserves	10,320	11,755	11,673	10,451	15,618
Total equity	**14,529**	**15,964**	**15,882**	**14,660**	**19,827**
CASH FLOW ITEMS					
Net operating activities	5,241	343	443	-211	5,011
Net investing activities	359	47	172	121	-248
Net financing activities	-411	-463	-456	-441	-430
Net cash movement	**5,189**	**-73**	**159**	**-531**	**4,333**

TABLE 4: FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR 2025-26 AGAINST CORPORATE PLAN

	CORPORATE PLAN 2025-26 $000	ACTUAL 2025-26 $000	ACTUAL VARIANCE TO CORPORATE PLAN $000
COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT			
Total revenue	16,149	22,413	6,264
Total expenditure	(20,138)	(17,246)	2,892
Net result	**(3,989)**	**5,167**	**9,156**
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION			
ASSETS			
Cash and receivables	11,733	22,583	10,850
Other	190	363	173
Non-current assets	1,600	2,309	709
Total assets	**13,523**	**25,255**	**11,732**
LIABILITIES			
Payables	1,235	1,229	(6)
Employee provisions	2,013	2,055	42
Lease Liabilities	1,400	2,144	744
Total liabilities	**4,648**	**5,428**	**780**
Net assets	**8,875**	**19,827**	**10,952**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The actual result to the end of June 2026 shows a surplus of $5.2m, significantly higher than the Corporate Plan forecast of $3.9m deficit. This $9.1m variance was driven by:

- **Increased revenue** of $6.3m above the Corporate Plan; and
- **Reduced expenditure** of $2.9m compared to budget.

Current assets are above expectations, with a cash balance of $22.5m - well above the budgeted $11.7m. This is primarily due to income received in advance and delays in project expenditure.

The additional revenue was attributed to several key projects:

- Longwood Bushfire Recovery ($2.9m)
- Murray Valley West DCD — Disaster Ready Funding ($945k)
- Goulburn to Murray Trade Review Research and Investment ($556k)
- Moodie Swamp Works and Measures Stage 2 ($476k)
- Wunghnu Flood Study ($450k)
- Gaynor Swamp Works ($400k)
- Urban Rural Drainage — Disaster Ready Funding ($130k)

Expenditure was $2.9m below budget, largely due to employee vacancies and delays in flood studies and delivering on-ground works. These costs are expected to be incurred in the 2026–27 financial year.

SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

There were no subsequent events between 30 June 2026 and the date this report went to print that had a material impact on Goulburn Broken CMA's financial position.

Minister's letter of expectations performance

Climate change and energy

Explore opportunities and/or deliver carbon sequestration initiatives and adapt to climate change and climate variability.

Climate change remains a key focus for Goulburn Broken CMA, with increasing risks associated with rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns and more frequent extreme events such as floods, bushfires and droughts. Climate action is integrated across all areas of Goulburn Broken CMA's work, including biodiversity, waterway health, sustainable irrigation, land management and strategic planning.

Goulburn Broken CMA demonstrated regional and statewide leadership in climate action through delivery of the statewide Vic Catchments climate change program, leadership of the Water Cycle Adaptation Action Program, and support for collaborative networks such as the GMCA. Goulburn Broken CMA has supported land managers and partners to respond to climate change through initiatives promoting climate-smart agriculture, carbon farming, natural capital, biodiversity, soil health and waterway resilience.

The Victorian CMAs maintained their collective investment in a statewide Climate Change Coordinator, hosted by Goulburn Broken CMA, to support climate change adaptation and mitigation across the CMA network. The role strengthened collaboration, stakeholder engagement, advocacy, project delivery, research and knowledge sharing, helping ensure a coordinated CMA voice in policy and program development.

Four Victorian CMA Climate Change Forums were held during the year, bringing together CMA employees and external experts to share project updates, explore emerging initiatives and identify opportunities for collaboration. Learning and development was further supported through bi-monthly updates, guest presentations and targeted information sharing on research, funding opportunities, policy developments and project outcomes.

Victorian CMAs also contributed to several significant policy and program initiatives, including submissions to DEECA's Water Sector Emissions Transition Plan and the Commonwealth's Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme review. Engagement with DEECA on Adaptation Action Plans helped ensure regional perspectives and CMA expertise informed decision-making. Planning also progressed for the Victorian CMAs Adapt Conference, to be held in Melbourne in September 2026, focusing on innovation, collaboration and integration.

The Water Cycle Adaptation Action Program continued to build CMA capability to embed climate adaptation into water cycle and catchment management. More than 20 Goulburn Broken CMA employees participated in an adaptation pathways training workshop in Euroa in March 2026, strengthening skills in adaptation planning and identifying the importance of shared language, cross-team collaboration, and clearly defined signals and triggers for change. A statewide sensemaking workshop in June 2026 provided an opportunity to share outcomes and identify priorities for the next phase of the program.

Goulburn Broken CMA also participated in statewide and regional initiatives focused on climate adaptation, natural capital and carbon. This included the Spatial Scenario Modelling for Regional Climate Adaptation project, which utilised the Land Use Trade-Offs Model (LUTO2) to support long-term land use and climate adaptation planning. The resulting Victorian CMAs Natural Capital Report established a shared sector direction, with collaborative actions advancing through a statewide natural capital coordination position.

Progress towards the CMA's target of net zero Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 2030 included emissions reduction initiatives, annual carbon offset purchases and increased use of electric vehicles. Goulburn Broken CMA also explored carbon offset opportunities and strengthened its contribution towards government net zero ambitions for Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. Through the Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator, landholders were supported to build awareness of natural capital, carbon and nature market opportunities.

Climate risks continued to be assessed through organisational planning and program delivery, while opportunities to leverage natural capital, carbon and biodiversity markets were further explored to support long-term environmental and community resilience.

Waterway and catchment health

Provide leadership in delivery of programs to improve the health of priority waterways and catchments at priority sites.

Goulburn Broken CMA continued implementing the RCS, including completing a mid-term review which confirmed the strategy's value in providing strategic direction, strengthening partnerships and supporting project development across the catchment.

Significant effort was directed towards renewing the RWS, in partnership with Traditional Owners, One Basin Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) and the community, while also contributing feedback to the Victorian Waterways Management Strategy.

Key water programs and environmental water delivery continued to be successfully implemented, including annual planning, monitoring and development of 2026-27 seasonal watering proposals. The CMA also provided regional leadership in major water policy and planning initiatives, including the Basin Plan review, Broken Reconfiguration Project Business Case, Goulburn River constraints investigations, Goulburn to Murray trade rule monitoring and FlowMER.

In response to the 2026 summer bushfires, the CMA delivered a waterways recovery program focused on protecting water quality and stream health in partnership with communities, landholders and agencies.

Implementation of the Goulburn Broken Regional Floodplain Management Strategy (2018-2028) also continued.

Water for agriculture

Support a productive and profitable irrigation sector and vibrant and resilient regional communities.

In partnership with Agriculture Victoria, GMW, local government, industry and irrigators, Goulburn Broken CMA promoted sustainable irrigation management across the Shepparton Irrigation Region through Whole Farm Planning, extension services and advice on water efficiency, groundwater management, biodiversity, energy use, carbon opportunities and climate adaptation. The Whole Farm Planning program was reviewed and enhanced to better support farm productivity, resilience and long-term sustainability.

On-ground works through drainage course declaration and obstruction removal programs helped reduce salinity, waterlogging and flood impacts, while salinity risks continued to be managed in line with Basin Salinity Management 2030 requirements to support agricultural productivity and protect environmental assets.

Throughout the year, Goulburn Broken CMA worked with the SIR community and catchment partners to support adaptation to a more water-efficient and climate-resilient future by:

- Supporting irrigation modernisation and farm system improvements to improve water use efficiency and optimise public irrigation infrastructure, including through projects such as the Broken Reconfiguration Project.
- Implementing the Agricultural Redevelopment Coordination Project to improve development outcomes and reduce environmental impacts across the irrigation region.
- Building the evidence base for future planning through land and water use mapping and landscape change analysis.
- Working with research organisations, industry and government partners, including the One Basin CRC and GMID Water Leadership Group, to better understand the opportunities and implications associated with changing water availability, MDBA Basin Plan and agricultural transformation.
- Progressing implementation of the SIRLWMP 2050 through strengthened community governance, partnership development and priority project delivery.

Customer, community and engagement

Ensure that all aspects of service delivery will be customer and community-centred.

Goulburn Broken CMA continued implementing its Engagement Strategy which aims to support, promote, and build capacity in our community networks across the catchment. Communication of relevant events, key messages and case studies continued throughout the year, with the CMA having key groups identified for community engagement and partnerships including:

- The Shepparton Irrigation Region Forum (SIRF) and sub-groups such as Farm and Regional Prosperity Technical Group and Drainage Working Group
- Landcare Network Chairs Group
- Coordinators and Facilitators Group
- YYNAC and TLaWC (and associated consultation forums)
- Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group
- Municipal Catchment Coordinators Group
- Environmental Water Advisory Groups (3)
- Goulburn Murray Resilience Task Force
- Regional Partnerships
- Goulburn Broken Partnership Team
- Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Advocacy Group

There is a network of around 96 Landcare and community NRM groups representing more than 5,000 members across the catchment. Ongoing support from Landcare facilitators and coordinators helped deliver projects and maintain strong community engagement, while a new interactive map on the CMA website provides up-to-date information on Landcare and community NRM activities.

Community input also informed the development of new flood studies and the Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan (SIRLWMP) 2050, including a new focus on building regional community resilience and capability.

Recognise Traditional Owner values

Promote self-determination of Traditional Owners, including by supporting the Treaty process and the government response to the Yoorrook Justice Commission. Support the implementation of Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap by building formal partnerships with Traditional Owners in waterway and environmental water management and decision-making and promote access to waterways and water for cultural, spiritual and economic purposes.

Goulburn Broken CMA strengthened its work with Traditional Owners through joint project teams, service delivery on Country, and activities supporting the Victorian Government's Water is Life policy. During the year, a renewed Memorandum of Understanding with YYNAC was drafted, two Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Land Management Agreements were implemented across Yorta Yorta and Taungurung Country, and the consultation forum with YYNAC provided a platform to share priorities, identify co-design opportunities, and advance projects that heal Country and increase Traditional Owner involvement in catchment management.

Both Registered Aboriginal Parties' land management crews, Woka Walla and BiiK Cultural Land Management, delivered on-ground works across the catchment. Work with YYNAC focused on establishing longer-term, more flexible arrangements that support Traditional Owner leadership, improve planning, and enhance delivery of shared waterway health outcomes. This included activities at the Barmah National Park Ramsar Site and Reedy Swamp, where restoration works are improving wetland habitat diversity. Discussions also highlighted opportunities to better coordinate cultural burning, environmental watering and community engagement activities.

Goulburn Broken CMA supported the TLaWC through the Corop Wetlands Cultural Waterscape Program and delivery of the Waring Flagship Project. Activities included wetland restoration, Healing Country works, environmental watering investigations, and community and landholder engagement. Traditional Owner-led watering at Molesworth and Horseshoe Lagoons demonstrated growing leadership in culturally informed water management. The Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement remained embedded in project delivery, supported by organisational processes and employee training that strengthen compliance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*.

Resilient and liveable cities and towns

Contribute to healthy communities and support resilient, liveable environments.

Goulburn Broken CMA participated in and invested in both the Goulburn Broken and State Integrated Water Management (IWM) Forums, supporting regional collaboration, partnership development and the identification and delivery of shared projects. A newly funded IWM project, Adaptive Management of Urban Stormwater Discharges into Rural Drainage Systems after Extreme Rainfall Events, will develop practical frameworks, standards and decision-support tools to better manage urban stormwater discharges, reducing flood risk while protecting farms, downstream waterways and the environment.

During 2025-26 Goulburn Broken CMA employed a dedicated officer to support the Goulburn Broken IWM forum and strengthen regional integrated water management.

The RiverConnect program has recently celebrated 20 years of delivering highly successful waterway-focused engagement and educational opportunities with urban and peri urban communities living near the Goulburn and Broken Rivers, supported by Goulburn Broken CMA. Discussions were held with local governments about the feasibility and interest in establishing programs like RiverConnect in other major regional urban centres.

Through the renewed RWS development process, Goulburn Broken CMA has engaged with the community to understand waterway values and articulate the benefits of waterways, specifically those associated with improved urban liveability and waterway access, ensuring these are reflected draft RWS directions and priorities.

Recognise recreational values

Support the well-being of communities by considering recreational values in waterway planning and management.

Recognising and supporting environmental, cultural, social, recreational and economic values is central to Victoria's waterway management framework. These values have been an important consideration in the development of the renewed Regional Waterway Strategy (RWS), ensuring regional priorities reflect the diverse ways waterways are valued by communities. As consultation on the draft RWS progresses in 2026-27, Goulburn Broken CMA will engage with Traditional Owners, community members and stakeholders to help shape future waterway management outcomes.

Goulburn Broken CMA maintained strong engagement with recreational waterway users and community groups, including Burnanga Indigenous Fishing Club, the Australian Trout Foundation and Native Fish Australia. Supported by the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) and other agencies, fish habitat works were completed in Holland and Hughes Creeks, while community events such as small-bodied native fish releases at Dunyak Moira promoted community involvement in waterway stewardship. Recreational users, Traditional Owners and community members also contributed to environmental water planning and waterway restoration through advisory groups and on-ground activities.

Recreational values are increasingly reflected in environmental water planning, with broader representation on environmental water advisory groups and consideration of recreational activities in delivery decisions. Where practical and without compromising ecological outcomes, environmental water deliveries were timed to accommodate major recreational events, including the opening weekend of the Murray Cod fishing season. Efforts to improve public understanding of environmental watering included seasonal updates on river conditions, flows and ecological benefits, helping to build awareness of the role healthy waterways play in supporting recreation, communities and the environment.

Leadership, diversity and culture

Reflect the diverse needs of the community and develop strategies and goals that will increase cultural diversity in the workforce and gender equity in both executive leadership and throughout the organisation.

Goulburn Broken CMA developed a new Gender Equity Action Plan and completed the Workplace Gender Audit Compliance Report achieved compliance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*. With significant changes in the senior leadership team, our median gender pay gap has reduced from 22 per cent to 7 per cent.

The Board approved the first People, Culture and Leadership Strategy which focuses on four strategic pillars to build a high performing organisation.

The annual People Matter Survey (PMS) and Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI) will continue to serve as critical tools to measure improvements in employee engagement, cultural diversity, physical and psychological safety and to ensure our constructive culture continues to grow, driving a high performing organisation and achievement of our strategies.

Goulburn Broken CMA remains committed to the ongoing flexible work arrangements, which mirrors the evolving nature of our modern workforce and continues to invest in our people's leadership capability through participation and sponsorship of the Fairley Leadership Program.

To support development of youth and Indigenous leaders in the community, two mentee roles were developed for the Board, one for an Indigenous associate and the other a youth delegate. Both roles were engaged for a 12-month period.

Goulburn Broken CMA participated in the annual public sector PMS and the organisation continues to demonstrate a strong, values-led and inclusive workplace culture, with engagement, leadership, integrity, inclusion and wellbeing outcomes performing above comparator and public sector benchmarks. The results indicate a highly positive organisational climate, supported by strong manager relationships, high levels of pride, cultural safety and employee advocacy. The results showed an employee engagement index of 85, above comparator organisations at 82 and the public sector at 71.

Performance and financial management

Commit to delivering integrated catchment management, including leading the implementation and monitoring of catchment partnership agreements.

Goulburn Broken CMA remained an active member of Vic Catchments and the Regional Investment Coordinators Group, working with DEECA to support reporting processes and systems. Organisational key performance indicators (KPIs) were established in collaboration with management and the Board, with progress reported bi-annually and included in the Annual Report. Reporting against the state-wide Catchment Indicators framework, developed through the RCS renewal process, is also incorporated into this report.

Goulburn Broken CMA contributed to Vic Catchments' Action and Achievements Report and participated in a range of state-wide focus groups covering governance, strategy, floodplain management, waterways, sustainable irrigation and corporate services. The Goulburn Broken RCS Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning Plan supported the collection and analysis of information used to assess progress towards the strategy's long-term outcomes.

Goulburn Broken CMA maintained its lead role in managing shared services of Microsoft Dynamics 365 financial system used by seven CMAs, the state-wide CMA Teams collaboration platform, and a shared firewall service supporting five CMAs. Future development of Dynamics 365 will strengthen system governance, technical support and reporting capabilities. During 2025-26, the CMA remained compliant with mandated State Purchase Contracts and the Standing Directions 2018 and played a significant role in the state-wide Occupational Health and Safety Compliance Project.

Customer data protection

Committed to the protection of its data, Goulburn Broken CMA continued to mature its Information Security Management Framework which included cyber awareness campaigns and training for traditional and emerging technologies along with improved governance and consistent investment in cyber security systems.

Following a formal external review of Goulburn Broken CMA's compliance to Standards 1-4 and 9 of the Victorian Protective Data Security Standards (VPDSS) the Protective Data Security Plan is being updated with a continued focus on improving employee awareness, updating governance documents, improving information assessment and management practices, using information security indicators and assessing third party risk to ensure information is protected.

Goulburn Broken CMA maintains a Risk Management Framework that supports the effective management of data breaches through clear organisational accountability and Board oversight. A Cyber Security Incident Response Procedure guides the response to cyber incidents and facilitates the timely engagement of the Victorian Government Cyber Incident Response Service (CIRS) and other relevant government stakeholders. During the year, information assets were reviewed to confirm their Business Impact Level classifications in accordance with Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) requirements. A Notifiable Data Breach Response Plan also supports the assessment and management of suspected or actual eligible data breaches, including notification of affected individuals and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) where required under the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Notifiable Data Breaches scheme.

No cyber incidents were reportable to CIRS, OVIC or OAIC during the year.

Through internal policy and procedure updates, Goulburn Broken CMA aimed to clearly outline how it collects, uses, discloses, stores, secures and disposes of personal information, in accordance with the Victorian Information Privacy Principles, the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*, and, where applicable, the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Health Privacy Principles.

Cyber security

Goulburn Broken CMA acknowledges the ongoing and emerging risks of cyber security to Victorian Government entities and the delivery of our services and continues to mature its cyber security capability by increasing employee awareness, enhancing technical controls and investing in system resilience. Cyber security risks are managed through the organisational risk framework and monitored as a strategic risk by the Board.

Goulburn Broken CMA applies the Australian Cyber Security Centre's (ACSC) Essential Eight Maturity Model and undertakes annual cyber maturity assessments through the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority benchmarking process, supported by Board oversight.

Key achievements included reviewing the Major Incident Response Plan, updating disaster recovery plans, implementing a cloud-based identity platform backup solution and leading a statewide CMA cyber governance initiative.

Technical controls were strengthened through expanded system security assessments and the use of AI-enabled cyber defence monitoring to identify vulnerabilities, threats and control gaps. These capabilities improved visibility of cyber risks, supported earlier detection and prioritised remediation, and helped improve the organisation's cyber security posture against agreed targets. The ACSC Cyber Threat Intelligence Sharing platform was onboarded, further enhancing contextual threat understanding and enabling rapid access to contemporary cyber threat indicators for use within its cyber defence systems.

Major upgrades were completed against geospatial systems and databases ensuring modern, resilient and cost-efficient services secure the organisation's spatial information assets which underpin operational delivery and flood intelligence capability.

3. Catchment condition and delivery highlights

This section explains the long-term condition of the catchment and what was achieved in 2025-26, using statewide themes of land, water, biodiversity, and community, as well as Goulburn Broken CMA's focus on sustainable irrigation.

Key factors affecting catchment health and how it's managed

The success of on-ground management work depends a lot on the bigger picture – especially the condition of the catchment, including the climate at the time and how much capacity Goulburn Broken CMA and its partners have to do the work. Many of the underlying factors that influence changes in catchment health and how it is managed are shared across multiple areas or themes. Agriculture is changing, many native plant and animal species are declining, water issues are becoming more complicated, farmland is being used differently, and more rural areas are being urbanised.

Although major natural events or actions can have a big impact, the overall condition of the catchment usually only changes noticeably over a long period of time (more than 10 years). This is because many connected factors influence it, such as:

- Climate change
- New technologies
- A shift toward a service-based economy
- An increase in urbanisation
- An ageing population
- More demands and competition for public funding
- Changes in how land is used
- A growing role and recognition of Traditional Owners and First Nations People
- Water being treated as something that can be bought and sold.

2025-26 climatic conditions, impacts and responses

The year was marked by prolonged dryness, elevated temperatures and several extreme-weather spikes.

Below average winter and spring rainfall and hot, windy conditions early in 2026 increased fire risk. January's bushfires around Longwood (132,150 hectares), Goomalibee (1,602 hectares) and several other localities were mainly on private land, requiring a different emergency management and recovery approach than major public land events such as Black Saturday in 2009. These fires caused significant environmental damage, affected important waterways and placed substantial pressure on private landholders and local communities.

The environmental impacts of the fires included loss of animals and thousands of hectares of native vegetation, including significant old growth trees, shrub and ground vegetation, and increased pest plant and animal incursions. Community wellbeing was severely impacted through loss of homes, businesses, stock and livelihoods, and ongoing emergency disruptions and recovery demands, though strong local coordination supported fire responses and ongoing recovery efforts.

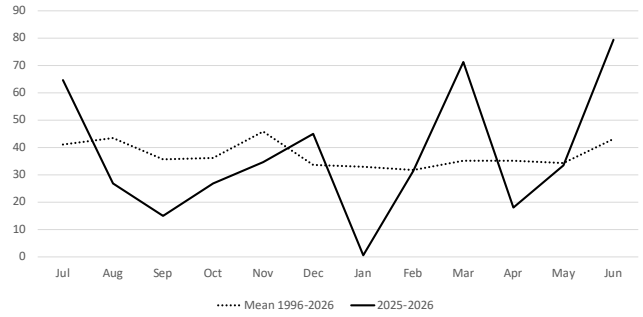
Across the catchment, agencies and communities collaborated on fuel reduction works, emergency water deliveries, environmental flow adjustments and targeted landholder support to stabilise conditions and aid recovery. Major erosion repair, bank stabilisation and other works were also delivered, addressing damage from the 2022 flood and storm and flood events of 2023 and 2024.

More broadly, the climatic conditions reduced water storage levels, which in turn affected irrigation allocations, stock water reliability and environmental flows, prompting targeted water-management responses to protect priority wetlands and river reaches.

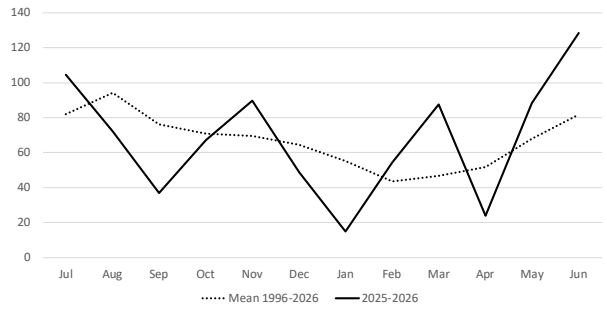
Agriculture experienced mixed impacts: dryland pastures deteriorated early, crop yields were constrained by limited spring moisture, and horticulture required increased irrigation to maintain productivity. Fire affected farms faced additional challenges including fencing loss, livestock stress and smoke damage.

FIGURE 7: MONTHLY RAINFALL 2025-26 AT SHEPPARTON AIRPORT AND LAKE EILDON, MM

Shepparton Airport

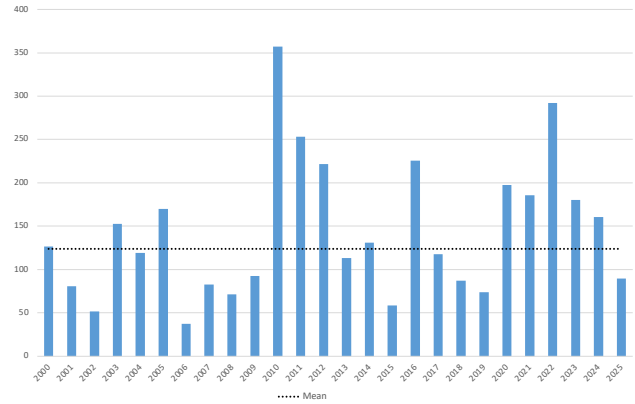


Lake Eildon



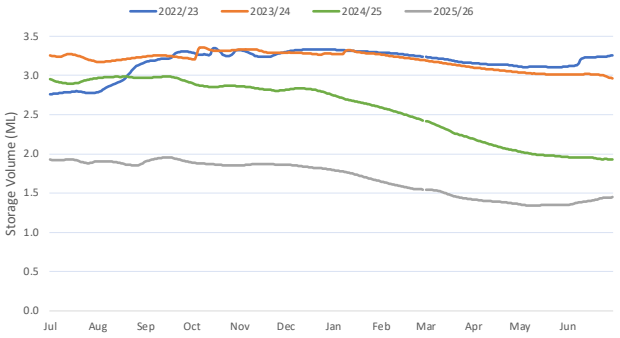
Source: Bureau of Meteorology

FIGURE 8: ANNUAL RIVER INFLOW GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT, MM



Source: ausenv.tern.org.au 2025 report

FIGURE 9: WATER STORAGE VOLUME AT LAKE EILDON



Source: Data supplied by Goulburn-Murray Water

TABLE 5: 2022-2023 CATCHMENT CONDITION RATING*

WATER	LAND	BIODIVERSITY	COMMUNITY	INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT
Moderate	Moderate	Poor	Moderate	Good

* *Condition rating categories and the year (2022-2023) shown above are consistent with the statewide framework. The Goulburn Broken CMA uses slightly different categories in the 2021-27 RCS (see page 10) and trajectory graphs on the following pages.*

TABLE 6: 2025-2026 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT RATING

	NO. INDICATORS ASSESSED AS MEETING EACH CATEGORY					
THEME	NA NOT APPLICABLE	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MET EXPECTATIONS	ABOVE EXPECTATIONS	TOTAL NO. INDICATORS ASSESSED	OVERALL RATING
WATER	0	3	1	3	7	**Met Expectations**
LAND	0	1	1	0	2	**Met Expectations**
BIODIVERSITY	0	0	0	3	3	**Above Expectations**
COMMUNITY	1	0	1	2	4	**Above Expectations**
INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT	0	0	0	1	1	**Above Expectations**

Investment received to undertake programs

Table 7 represents the investment (funding) received from government and other sources within each theme. In 2025-26, it was the Victorian Government's second year of EC6 funding, and it was the third year of the Australian Government's NHT four-year funding program. Note that government investment in the "integrated catchment management" theme occurs via each of the four key themes and so is not separated for accounting purposes.

TABLE 7: INVESTMENT RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENT AND OTHER SOURCES

THEME	2021-22 $000	2022-23 $000	2023-24 $000	2024-25 $000	2025-26 $000
Water					
Waterways	6,571	5,760	5,606	3,462	**8,041**
Sustainable Irrigation	5,971	5,164	1,391	3,289	**4,768**
Floodplain Management	868	1,637	2,662	2,334	**2,090**
Biodiversity	2,838	2,514	1,608	2,768	**2,704**
Land	501	420	104	134	**282**
Community	1,144	732	642	513	**543**

Management achievement summary 2025-26

Table 8 shows how well Goulburn Broken CMA delivered its programs and activities for 2025-26 in each theme. The ratings are based on how well the planned activities and goals were achieved. To decide the overall rating, the CMA uses statewide indicators listed in the table, along with others used by Goulburn Broken CMA, especially those mentioned in the detailed theme highlights in the next sections. You can find more details about how this assessment works in Appendix 1: How to interpret Catchment Condition and Management Assessment.

TABLE 8: MANAGEMENT ACHIEVEMENT SUMMARY

THEME (STATEWIDE INDICATOR)	ACHIEVED	TARGET	MANAGEMENT RATING[i]	COMMENT AND REFERENCE
WATER	**Overall**		**Met expectations**	Reflects generally dry catchment conditions during 2025-26. Conditions remained good for on-ground delivery and monitoring, despite January bushfires affecting water quality and previous restoration works (see page 57).
Extent of protected or improved riparian land (ha)	225	310	Below expectations	Measured from riparian area fenced (weed control and revegetation were also key contributing activities; see page 57).
Fence (km)	34	31	Above expectations	
Water Storage – trough (no)	2	9	Below expectations	
Vegetation (ha)	40	52	Below expectations	
Weed control (ha)	185	119	Above expectations	
Number of Management Agreements (perpetual or non-perpetual)	44	17	Above expectations	
Environmental flow compliance	Yes	Yes	Met expectations	Water for the environment was delivered in accordance with VEWH processes, with assistance and cooperation of partners. Water deliveries made to eight priority wetlands (see Appendix 3).

THEME (STATEWIDE INDICATOR)	ACHIEVED	TARGET	MANAGEMENT RATING[i]	COMMENT AND REFERENCE
LAND	**Overall**		**Met expectations**	See page 46.
Area of improved Agricultural Practices (ha)	1,278	1,456	Below expectations	Based on Sustainable Irrigation Program's whole farm plans (see next).
Number of property plans	16	16	Met expectations	Whole farm plans completed (see page 72).
BIODIVERSITY	**Overall**		**Above expectations**	See page 40.
Vegetation (ha)	581	279	Above expectations	Remnant vegetation fenced and indigenous vegetation planted (see pages 44).
Pest herbivore and predator control (ha)	44,755	17,632	Above expectations	Achieved targets that were set at a high level, including Barmah Ramsar site management pest control. See page 49.
Additional area of permanent protection through CMA programs (ha)	0	0	Not applicable	Permanent protection (covenant) provided through Trust for Nature. None completed for 2025-26 year.
COMMUNITY	**Overall**		**Above expectations**	See page 61.
Number of formal partnership agreements with Traditional Owners / First Nations	6	5	Above expectations	2024-2034 Goulburn Broken CMA and TLaWC Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Land Management Agreement. 2019-2029 Goulburn Broken CMA and YYNAC Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Land Management Agreement 2025 Goulburn Broken CMA and YYNAC MOU. Both Registered Aboriginal Parties signed the 2025 Goulburn Broken Catchment Partnership Agreement.
Number of participants in Engagement Events	12,401	1,647	Above expectations	
Number of Volunteers in CMA programs	N/A	N/A	Not applicable	
Total quantum of grants awarded ($)	1,300,411		Met expectations	See Table 9.
INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT	**Overall**		**Above expectations**	
Number of partnerships	60	58	Above expectations	Partnerships continue to drive RCS delivery.
ADDITIONAL				
Water Act permits (no.)	79	90	Below expectations	Works on Waterway permits (see page 56).
Statutory advice (no.)	1,307	800	Above expectations	Includes advice and referral responses (see page 56).

(i) Possible ratings for overall management and state-wide indicators: Above expectations, Met expectations, Below expectations, Not applicable, Unknown.

Biodiversity theme

Biodiversity means the variety of all living things – plants, animals, and fungi – and how they interact with each other and their environments. It also includes the differences within species (genetic diversity) and the ecosystems they live in. Biodiversity is important for people in many ways. It supports cultural connections to the land, provides essential services such as clean water, healthy soil and pollination, and creates beautiful natural places for people to enjoy.

Biodiversity plays a vital role in how natural and human systems work together and it's included in all aspects of managing natural resources. However, to make planning and reporting clearer, including in this Annual Report, Goulburn Broken CMA also looks at biodiversity separately from other natural features like land and waterways.

Since our beginning in 1997, Goulburn Broken CMA has been working to protect and improve biodiversity. It has reviewed and updated its biodiversity strategies in 2000, 2004, 2010 and 2016 to keep improving its long-term approach. The biodiversity strategy and the biodiversity part of the RCS are implemented through investment from the Victorian Government, Australian Government and other fund sources.

Goulburn Broken CMA will maintain its delivery of Victorian and Australian government-funded projects and advocate for funding to implement the RCS, Biodiversity 2037 and the catchment's Biodiversity Strategy.

Catchment condition for biodiversity[1]

Figure 10 shows how two key types of biodiversity – biodiversity in and near streams and wetlands (riparian and aquatic) and biodiversity on other land (terrestrial) – have changed since 1990, and the long-term risks to reaching their desired condition. These two types are closely linked and often overlap. While the difference between them often is subtle, it is helpful to look at them separately because they are usually managed in different ways.

Goulburn Broken CMA is working to build healthy, resilient ecosystems. A key focus is on improving and expanding natural habitats (extent) so that native species, including those that are threatened, can survive, grow and adapt over time.

1. *The condition of the catchment is reviewed through a deliberative process led by Goulburn Broken CMA senior managers, using a wide range of evidence to understand how resilient the catchment is. More details about this process can be found in Appendixes 1 and 3.*



Wattle in bloom in the catchment

FIGURE 10: TRAJECTORIES IN BIODIVERSITY (RIPARIAN AND AQUATIC) AND BIODIVERSITY (TERRESTRIAL)

BIODIVERSITY

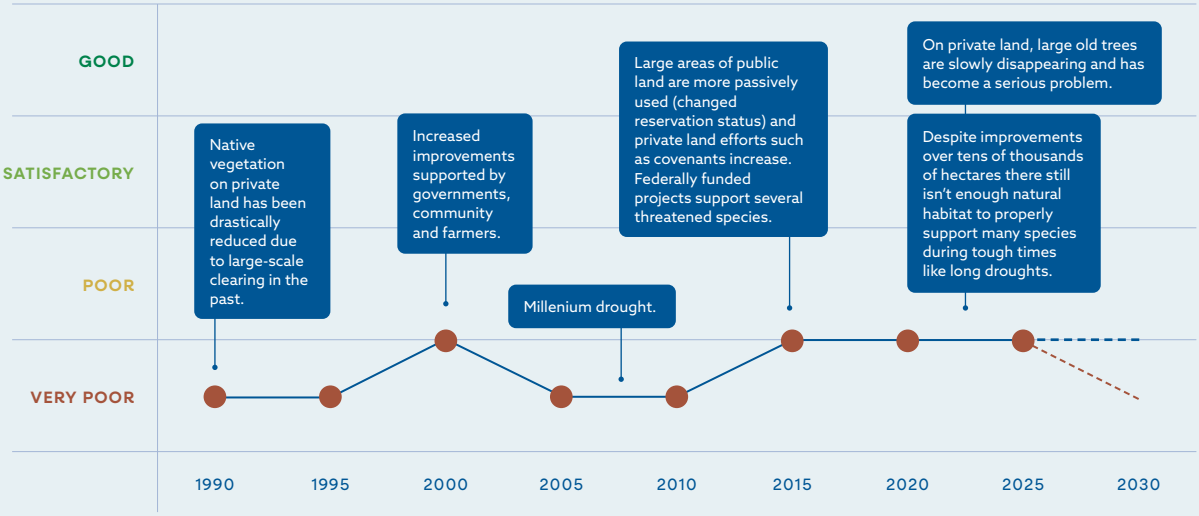
Many ecosystem, and the plants and animals that live in them, are at risk of disappearing. This is shown by their conservation status at national and state levels. The 2026 fires will have significant lasting impacts on biodiversity.

Improvements in connecting isolated trees to larger areas such as river areas and wetlands have assisted many threatened species such as the Bush Stone-curlew, Grey-crowned Babbler, Superb and Swift parrots, and Brolga.

Increased funding is critical to making a change.

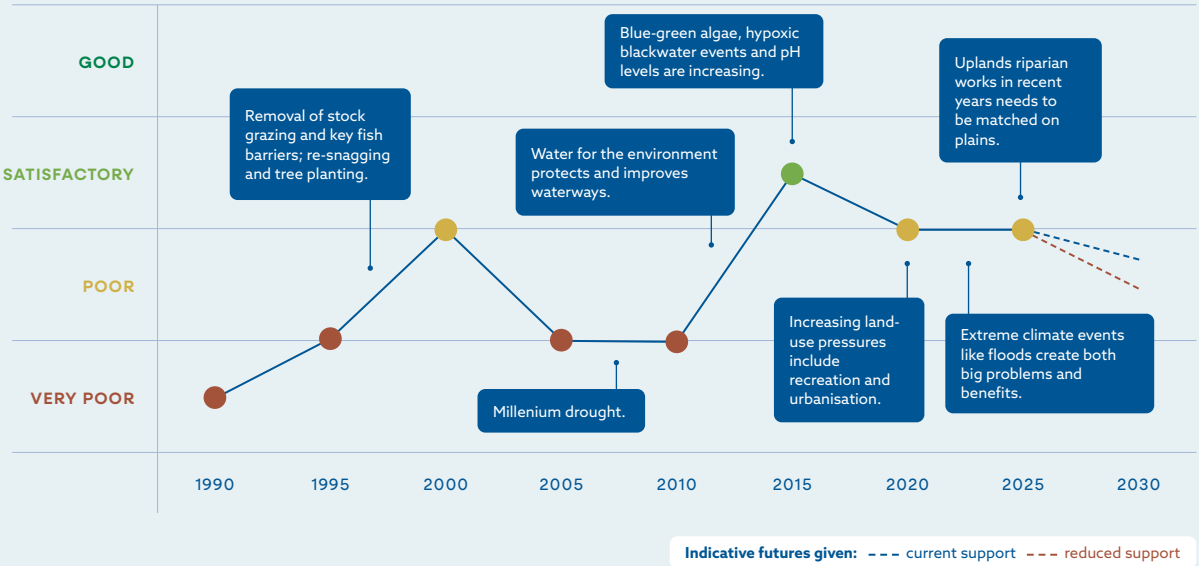
TERRESTRIAL

Long-term Intent: Biodiversity is valued, resilient and flourishing.



RIPARIAN AND AQUATIC

2040 Intent: Riparian, aquatic and wetland vegetation is healthy, provides for the many values and uses it supports and ensures the recovery and persistence of dependent biota.



Indicative futures given: current support reduced support

TERRESTRIAL BIODIVERSITY CONDITION

The extent and quality of native vegetation is key to how well terrestrial biodiversity functions and how species survive.

The connectivity of native vegetation across the landscape, particularly between privately owned land and larger areas of public land, is essential for enabling the movement and dispersal of species. Historic large-scale clearing of native vegetation on private land has significantly reduced the availability of habitat. In the past, native vegetation was further impacted by salinity, waterlogging and grazing pressures. Vegetation clearing continues to occur, both legally and illegally, including the removal of large old trees and the cultivation of native grasslands, resulting in ongoing and significant environmental damage. Extreme weather events, such as storms and bushfires, also pose increasing threats to native vegetation.

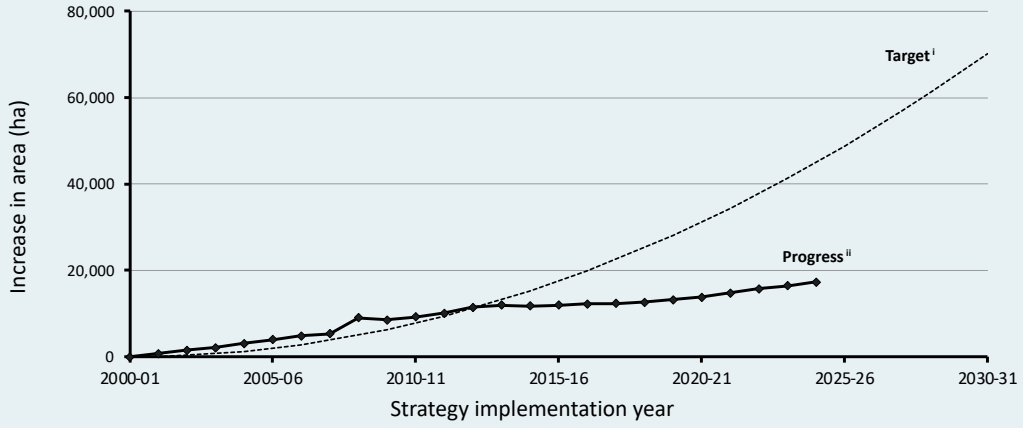
Areas of native vegetation on private land that are actively managed for conservation, including those protected through long-term conservation agreements and short-term management arrangements, generally remain in good condition. However, without further action to protect, enhance and restore the extent and quality of native vegetation, species and ecological communities are expected to continue declining.

To stop the decline in biodiversity, we need to build on the long history of great work already being done by landholders, community groups and organisations to protect, replant and connect areas of native vegetation.

Results have been encouraging where funding and effort have been invested into many large sites, such as Winton Wetlands (8,750 hectares), numerous Trust for Nature covenants on private land (10,341 hectares since 1991), long-term projects through Goulburn Broken CMA and other organisations and changing the purpose of various reserves to more passive uses. However, the area of native vegetation is expanding much more slowly than needed (see Figure 11). The main reason more native vegetation isn't being planted on private land is a lack of funding, not a lack of interest from landholders or communities.

Over the past 10 years, revegetation and improved grazing management have enhanced native vegetation on 10,559 hectares of private land, representing approximately 0.7 per cent of the catchment. However, after accounting for estimated vegetation losses over the same period, including estimated losses from the 2026 fires, the net increase in native vegetation is approximately 5,136 hectares, or 0.3 per cent of the catchment. The estimated scale of vegetation loss from fires has significantly offset gains in biodiversity, highlighting both the vulnerability of these achievements and the importance of continuing restoration and protection efforts to tip the balance in favour of biodiversity. The line chart below, Figure 11, shows overall progress towards the 2030 native vegetation extent target over the past 26 years (See also Figure 10).

FIGURE 11: PROGRESS TOWARDS NATIVE VEGETATION EXTENT TARGET, INCREASE IN AREA (HA)



(i) Resource condition target (revised 2009): Increase the extent of native vegetation in fragmented landscapes by 70,000 hectares by 2030 to restore threatened Ecological Vegetation Classes and to improve landscape connectivity.

(ii) Several assumptions used to measure progress are documented on the Goulburn Broken CMA's portal.

RIPARIAN AND AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY CONDITION

The condition of riparian and aquatic fauna varies from poor to good. Despite the maintenance of habitat at a number of sites with environmental flows, bird populations seem to be declining because of past habitat loss. Some fish populations have improved substantially with the removal of fish barriers, re-snagging of streams, tree planting and delivery of water for the environment. The extent of aquatic and riparian vegetation varies from poor to excellent, with the best condition on public land and in mountainous areas. Private landholders are increasingly fencing off riparian vegetation to exclude stock and revegetate.

Biodiversity theme actions in 2025-26

Goulburn Broken CMA continued to deliver multiple projects as Australian Government's Regional Delivery Partner for the catchment (2023-2028), alongside Victorian Government Our Catchments Our Communities funding (2024-2028), which allowed government to directly support and invest in local environmental projects. These include:

- The Landscape Legacies (Commonwealth) project, which focuses on the Nationally Threatened Grey Box Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands vegetation community. The third year of this project delivered 154 hectares of weed control, 129 hectares of revegetation, 4.9 kilometres of fencing, two hectares of cultural burning, one fauna (bird) and eight flora surveys, seed collection, and two community engagement events.
- The Barmah Country (Ramsar) (Commonwealth) project, in its third year, delivered weed control over 415 hectares, pest animal management across 14,632 hectares, four wildlife (fauna) surveys, 28 pest animal surveys, 20 weed surveys, and the annual Floodplain Ecology Course (25 attendees from 17 organisations, and 20 presenters). Ecology Australia completed pig disturbance monitoring with disturbance levels remaining below the historical (2015) baseline, indicating that consistent control efforts are successfully suppressing the population of pigs within Barmah. Ecology Australia completed fox activity monitoring (camera trapping), while the ARI completed monitoring of juvenile freshwater turtle recruitment, to assess effectiveness of ongoing fox control activities. While results showed a slight increase in average fox activity, wetlands prioritised under the baiting program showed declining fox activity, indicating that targeted control is proving effective at priority sites. For the first time since project commencement, a hatchling Broad-shelled turtle was detected at one such priority site.
- In partnership with Traditional Owners and other agencies, the second year of the Connecting Culture and Country project, funded by the Victorian Government's Our Catchments, Our Communities Program, achieved many on-ground outcomes. Highlights include 167 hectares of pest plant control, 600 hectares of pest animal control, 31 hectares of revegetation, 300 metres of fencing and a field day at Reedy Lake that was attended by 27 participants. This project focuses on Sand Hill areas primarily around Reedy Lake and Gemmill's Swamp. Taungurung Land & Waters Council Cultural Heritage Unit visited a private property at Reedy Lake with the landholders to document potential cultural heritage values to build awareness of the cultural significance of the property and the wider Reedy Lake landscape (see case study page 45). In 2026, as part of this project, Goulburn Broken CMA launched the Year of the Raptor to help raise community awareness about raptors. Twelve media articles were published, and two ABC Regional Radio interviews were conducted.

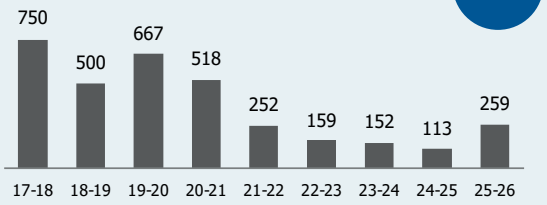
Native seed is essential for all this work. In partnership with the Euroa Arboretum and the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seedbank, Goulburn Broken CMA supported the establishment of seed production areas to grow and harvest large scale volumes of genetically healthy native seeds. Euroa Arboretum and Goulburn Broken CMA continue to operate under a Memorandum of Understanding, including working in partnership to advocate for increased funding for seedbank facilities, seed production areas and staffing. In January 2026, the Minister for Environment announced funding of $900,000 for the seedbank through DEECA's Bushbank grants.

Goulburn Broken CMA continued to play a vital role in several groups and partnerships focused on protecting nature. These include forums and teams such as the Victorian CMA Biodiversity Managers Forum (chair and CEO representative), Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Advocacy Group, Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group, Grey Box Implementation Team, GMCA, Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seedbank Steering Committee, Mountain Pygmy-possum Recovery Team and other Communities of Practice.

Trust for Nature covenanted (permanently protected) 426 hectares of private land in the catchment in 2025-26. In addition, through the Victorian Government's BushBank Program, led by Cassinia Environmental, a further 372 hectares of private land (removing any cross over with Trust for Nature) across the catchment was restored, supporting large-scale environmental restoration and improving biodiversity. Since 1991, a total of 10,341 hectares of private land has been permanently protected by Trust for Nature in the catchment.

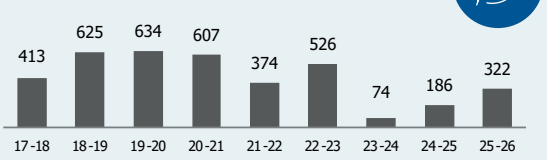
See also the Land section (page 46) for details on projects such as the Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator Role and the Climate Smart Agriculture Program.

FIGURE 12: REMNANT VEGETATION FENCED AND INDIGENOUS REVEGETATION BY YEAR



REMNANT VEGETATION FENCED: **259 HA**

Interest in protecting remnants remains high. Loss of remnants from fire has caused devastating impacts on biodiversity.



INDIGENOUS REVEGETATION (PLANTED): **322 HA**

Interest in revegetation remains high and connectivity projects continue to be important in creating resilient landscapes.

What's next for biodiversity?

Goulburn Broken CMA will continue delivering Victorian and Australian government-funded projects and advocate for investment to support implementation of the Goulburn Broken RCS, the Goulburn Broken Biodiversity Strategy and Victoria's Biodiversity 2037. In 2026-27, key areas of focus are:

- **Paddock tree advocacy**
  Advocate for the protection of native vegetation including large old trees, by raising community awareness and supporting policy reforms that strengthen native vegetation clearing controls.
- **Threatened species**
  Advocate for increased investment to achieve outcomes for threatened species such as Buxton Gum, Regent Honeyeater, Superb Parrot and Swift Parrot. Continue delivering funded projects that improve the extent, connectivity, and condition of habitat across the catchment.
- **Seed production**
  Continue championing improved resourcing, coordination, and collaboration for indigenous seed management, in partnership with the Euroa Arboretum, Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seedbank.
- **Partnerships**
  Coordinate community and partnership forums to enhance awareness of biodiversity issues and foster collaboration, such as the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Advocacy Group, Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group, and the statewide CMA Biodiversity Managers Forum. Strong partnerships will support the delivery of landscape-scale conservation outcomes.
- **Traditional Owners**
  Continue partnering with Traditional Owners to support work on Country through co-design, collaborative decision-making, and collaborative project planning and delivery.
- **Biosecurity**
  Strengthen preparedness for biodiversity threats such as Avian Influenza (H5N1), through alignment with national and state biosecurity policies, and response arrangements. Continue to advocate for a regional voice and biodiversity protection.
- **Adoption of best practice**
  Advocate for the adoption of best practice and access to research to improve knowledge of biodiversity (such as condition, extent and species thresholds/ requirements) and to strengthen implementation.
- **Strategic review**
  Review the Goulburn Broken Catchment Biodiversity Strategy and biodiversity components of the RCS.

CASE STUDY

Connecting culture and country through stewardship at Reedy Lake

Goulburn Broken CMA's Our Catchments, Our Communities – Connecting Culture and Country project recognises that integrated catchment management is strengthened by supporting First Nations self-determination, empowering communities, and building strong partnerships for catchment stewardship.

A key achievement of the project in 2025–2026 was expanding activities beyond the public land interface of Reedy Lake through collaboration with the TLaWC and neighbouring private landholders. The project created opportunities to share knowledge, build understanding of cultural and environmental values and undertake practical on-ground action.

Local landholders John Cummins and Dr Lynda Campbell expressed interest in becoming involved in the project. Following site visits and discussions, they committed to a Goulburn Broken CMA Management Agreement to undertake conservation works across eight hectares of their property.

As part of this collaboration, TLaWC's BiiK Land Management team established a one-hectare fenced restoration area, within which 300 locally indigenous seedlings were planted, such as Silver Banksia, Lightwood, Golden Wattle, Black Wattle and Murray Pine. Across a further seven hectares, 22 large browser-proof mesh guards were installed to protect strategically planted trees and shrubs, helping to restore woodland structure.

Future stewardship activities will include ongoing pest plant and animal control, monitoring of restoration outcomes, and continued management.

TLaWC's Cultural Heritage Unit also visited the property with the landholders to explore the site, identify and document potential cultural heritage values, and build awareness of the cultural significance of the property and the wider Reedy Lake landscape. Through these conversations and shared activities, the project has fostered a deeper understanding of Country and demonstrated the value of bringing Traditional Owner knowledge together with private landholder commitment to stewardship.

John and Lynda's dedication to their property and to the broader ecological health of the Reedy Lake region is clear when Lynda says:

> *"As our love for this place and ecosystem has deepened, we have certainly planted and fenced many trees, but this project has provided an opportunity to develop more of an understory on part of the farm. This place has been marginal farming land for a long time, and this is our gesture of recompense for historical timber-felling and land degradation, and a celebration of a fragile sand ridge habitat."*

This project is supported by the Victorian Government through the Our Catchments Our Communities stewardship program.





TLaWC Cultural Heritage Unit at the Sandhill property



Mesh guards in place to protect seedlings



Completed fencing and plantings at Sandhill property

Land theme

Approximately 70 per cent of the Goulburn Broken catchment is privately owned, mostly used for farming, with growing interest in solar and wind energy. Lifestyle, recreation and biodiversity remain significant land uses. Rising land values and housing demand are driving subdivision and urban spread, especially in the south and around regional centres. Changing commodity prices are changing the types of land use in the catchment, with an increase in cropping and horticulture.

Public land (30 per cent) is mainly used for conservation and tourism, increasingly co-managed with Traditional Owners. Recreational use is rising, and issues like rubbish, illegal firewood collection and invasive species persist. Interest in opportunities through carbon and nature markets is strong, but uptake is low. Interest and uptake of grants for biodiversity projects on farms remains strong.

Catchment condition for land[2]

This summary focuses on soil health for farming and how land is used and managed on private and public land.

Land across the Goulburn Broken catchment supports a range of uses, including agriculture, conservation, water quality and recreation. The RCS defines good land condition as land that can be sustainably managed to support healthy natural systems while delivering environmental, cultural, social and economic outcomes. The RCS land vision is for a diverse and productive landscape with healthy, functioning soils, measured through indicators including plant diversity, ground cover, soil organic carbon and soil acidity.

Ground cover and soil carbon remain critical for rainfall use efficiency, soil health and resilience. While historic land clearing and intensive grazing reduced native vegetation and landscape diversity across much of the catchment, many landholders are now restoring native vegetation corridors and increasing plant diversity to improve productivity, carbon storage and climate resilience.

On public land, conservation-focused management has increased since 1990, supported by biodiversity projects delivered in partnership with Parks Victoria and Traditional Owners. Activities such as pest plant and animal control, turtle monitoring and cultural burning help protect important sites including Barmah National Park, Reedy Swamp, Gemmill's and Grey Box reserves.

Drought conditions during 2025, followed by bushfires in 2026 that affected 145,000 hectares, placed significant pressure on agricultural production, biodiversity, water resources and soil health. The loss of vegetation and groundcover increased the risk of erosion, runoff and reduced water infiltration, highlighting the importance of sustainable land management across the catchment.

Figure 13 shows the trajectories of critical attributes of land since 1990 and their indicative futures.

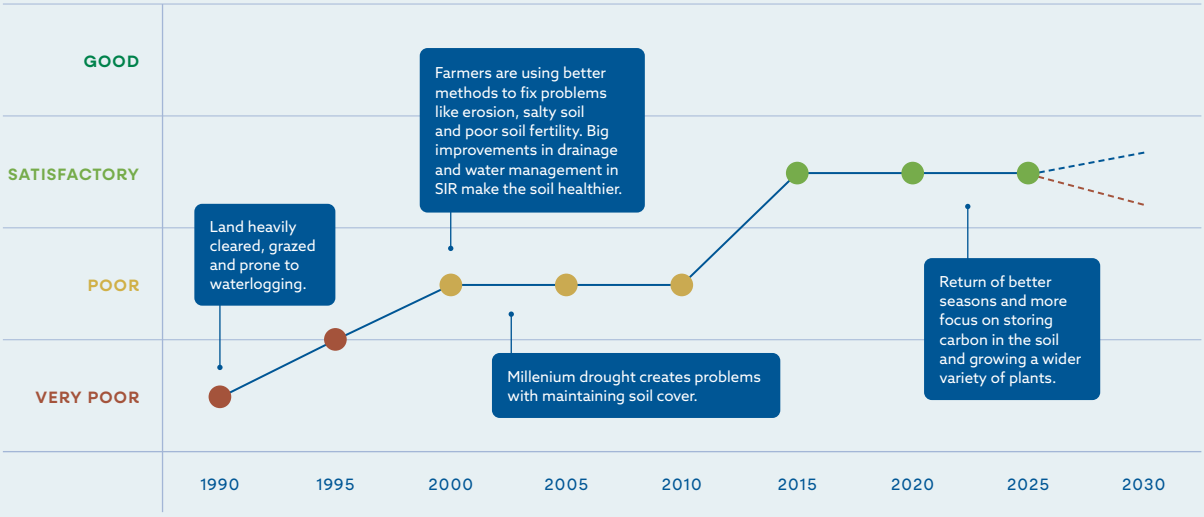
2. *The condition of the catchment is reviewed through a deliberative process led by Goulburn Broken CMA senior managers, using a wide range of evidence to understand how resilient the catchment is. More details about this process can be found in Appendixes 1 and 3.*

FIGURE 13: TRAJECTORIES IN CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES OF LAND

SOILS FOR AGRICULTURE

Indicators like plant diversity, ground cover, soil organic carbon and soil acidity are used to assess land condition.

Long-term Intent: A diverse and productive landscape with healthy, functional soils.



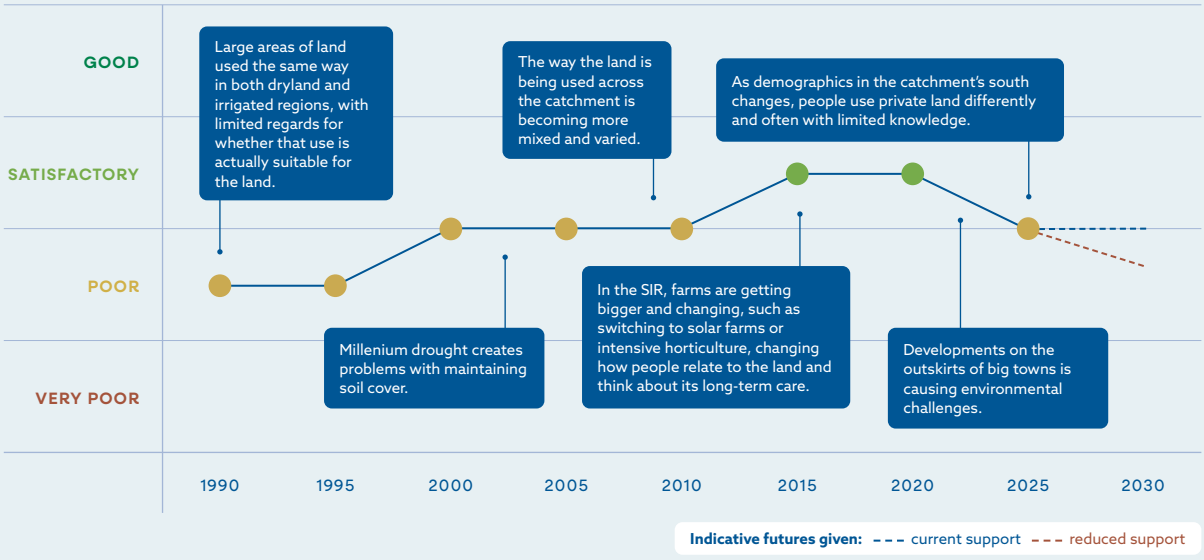
PURPOSE AND USE OF PRIVATE LAND

In the past, private land was often cleared and heavily grazed, which has made the landscape simpler and less diverse.

Many native plants including perennial ground cover have disappeared.

Land-use is becoming more mixed and varied. Aligning the changing purpose of use of many land sites with their most appropriate purpose is often difficult to influence.

2040 Intent: Improved land health for enhanced resilience across the catchment.



PURPOSE AND USE OF PUBLIC LAND

Public land is now mainly for conservation and tourism and is increasingly co-managed with Traditional Owners.

It is hard to get the best conservation results when there are not enough resources.

2040 Intent: Improved land health for enhanced resilience across the catchment.





Sustainable agriculture field day

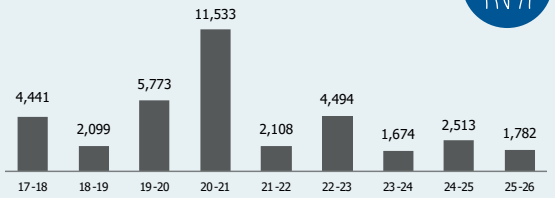
Land theme actions in 2025-26

Goulburn Broken CMA, in conjunction with partners, continue to support landholders in improving soil health, enhancing carbon storage, water retention and productivity. This included implementing management changes informed by soil testing, such as increasing soil organic matter and addressing soil acidity, fertility and erosion issues. Strong participation in soil health, carbon farming and drought management workshops reflected growing awareness of practices that support sustainable and resilient farming systems.

Land management initiatives are supported through a range of Victorian and Australian government programs. Through funding from the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust, Goulburn Broken CMA partnered with the agricultural community to deliver soil and climate-related programs across the catchment. Current programs include:

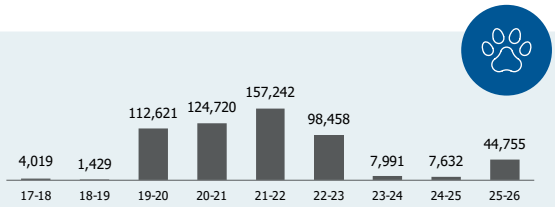
- The Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator supported the agricultural community to adopt low-emission, climate-resilient farming practices, access carbon and biodiversity opportunities, and protect natural capital. Key activities included 46 communications, one-on-one support to 37 farmers, facilitation of 25 extension and training events, and participation in 130 meetings.
- The Climate-Smart Agriculture Program supported the adoption of sustainable, climate-resilient farming practices through demonstration trials, soil testing, training and on-ground works. Key achievements included 170 soil tests, 20 workshops and field days, 35 hectares of revegetation, 70 hectares of improved grazing management, and strong landholder engagement in soil health and climate resilience initiatives.
- The National Soil Monitoring Program, in partnership with Vic Catchments and CSIRO, commenced in 2025 to support climate-smart and sustainable agriculture and gather nationally consistent soil data to understand changes in soil biology. 27 sites have been sampled to date.

FIGURE 14: WEEDS TREATED AND PEST ANIMAL CONTROL BY YEAR



WEEDS TREATED: **1,782 HA**

Weed control is a focus for the Victorian and Australian governments to improve habitat.



PEST ANIMAL CONTROL: **44,755 HA**

Pest animal control is a focus for the Victorian and Australian governments to reduce threats to native flora and fauna and improve habitat.

Until its completion in March 2026, Goulburn Broken CMA coordinated implementation of the Goulburn Drought Resilience Plan, supporting drought preparedness, climate adaptation, mental health initiatives, and on-farm planning activities. Goulburn Broken CMA also delivered the Carbon Farming Outreach Program, in partnership with Victorian CMAs, Agriculture Victoria and Landcare Victoria Inc, providing independent carbon farming information and training to 275 participants, including 182 farmers, to support informed decision-making and resilience in the agricultural sector (see case study page 51).



Native regeneration after bushfires

What's next for land?

Goulburn Broken CMA will continue to support the community in managing land health. In 2026-27, the focus will be:

- **Information and education**
  Continue to partner for a coordinated regional effort including information-sharing opportunities (e.g. natural capital) across communities and agencies, to grow the land health network and reduce competition for scarce resources.
- **Training and extension**
  Promote training and extension opportunities that encourage improved land management practices, such as low-emission technologies and practices.
- **Program implementation**
  Collaborate with partners to deliver environmental protection, sustainable farming, and natural resource management services, including supporting Landcare, community and industry groups to run land health and sustainable farming projects (e.g. soil and vegetation carbon).
- **Funding advocacy**
  Continue to implement and advocate for national programs like the Natural Heritage Trust and Future Drought Fund through a coordinated regional process to increase resource efficiencies.
- **Strategic review**
  Review the Goulburn Broken Land Health Strategy and RCS land theme to identify key future actions.

CASE STUDY

Applying carbon farming in agriculture: Carbon Farming Outreach Program

Carbon farming is increasingly recognised as an important tool for mitigating climate change and is intrinsically linked to agriculture through the use and management of land. Across the Goulburn Broken, land managers are seeking to better understand how carbon farming may impact their businesses and properties.

The carbon farming landscape intersects with farm productivity, land management, carbon markets, supply-chain requirements and natural capital investment. It presents opportunities for farmers and landholders to generate income through carbon offsets, meet emerging emissions expectations, and participate in the ACCU Scheme, while also influencing land use and investment decisions.

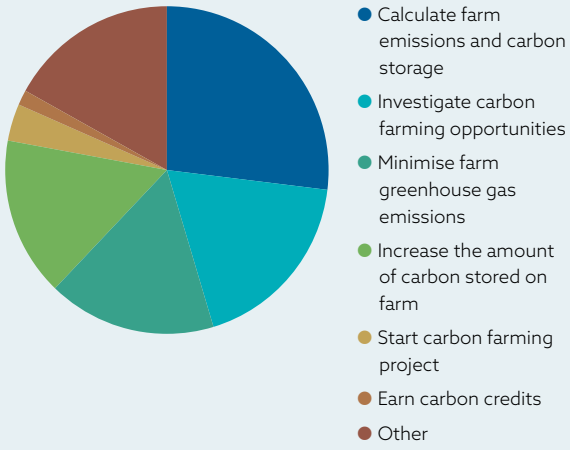
Given the complexity of carbon markets, emissions accounting and evolving policy and market requirements, farmers need access to reliable, independent information. In response, the Australian and Victorian Governments partnered with CMAs and Landcare Victoria through the Carbon Farming Outreach Program to deliver carbon farming extension, education and training across Victoria.

The Carbon Farming Outreach Program — Supporting Victorian farmers transition to a low carbon future was established in the Goulburn Broken in August 2024 to build farmer knowledge and confidence in carbon farming, emissions management and emerging carbon market opportunities.

Delivery highlights (November 2024 to March 2026)

- 11 events hosted in partnership with Gecko CLaN, Goulburn Murray Landcare Network, Murrindindi Climate Network, North East Catchment Management Authority, GMCA, Goomalibee BestWool BestLamb Group, Cathedral Landcare Group, Molyullah Tatong Landcare Group.
- 275 participants were engaged, including 182 farmers and 65 service providers.
- Participant satisfaction averaged 8.9/10 with 91 per cent recommending program events.
- Average understanding of carbon farming increased from 4.8/10 before training to 7.4/10 after training.
- 60 per cent of participants intended to take follow-up action (Figure 15).

FIGURE 15: PARTICIPANT SELF-REPORTED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS AFTER CARBON FARMING OUTREACH PROGRAM TRAINING



Evaluation findings highlighted that while interest in carbon farming is growing, cost remains the greatest barrier to participation. Other commonly cited barriers included participant age, the complexity of emissions accounting and monitoring requirements, perceived project risk, uncertainty around financial returns, financial liabilities, and concerns that smaller property sizes could limit the viability of carbon farming projects.

These results demonstrate strong demand for trusted carbon farming information and highlight the value of regional extension programs in supporting farmers and land managers to make informed decisions in an increasingly carbon-conscious agricultural sector.



Carbon Farming Outreach Program event 'Improve profitability and sustainability for cattle and sheep producers' February 2026. Photo courtesy of the Gecko CLaN.

Water theme

This section reports on Goulburn Broken CMA's management of water through its waterways and floodplain management programs. See also the Sustainable Irrigation Program section for further details on the CMA's water management (pages 67 to 75).

More than 11 per cent of the Murray-Darling Basin's water comes from the Goulburn Broken Catchment. The Goulburn Basin produces a lot more water than the Broken Basin.

The Goulburn Broken catchment is home to 19 of the 46 native fish species found in the Murray-Darling Basin. It's also the most popular spot for inland recreational fishing in Victoria, attracting over a quarter of the State's fishers.

Catchment condition for water[3]

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT

Since European settlement, waterways across the catchment have been significantly altered through river regulation, vegetation removal, groundwater use, invasive species, stock access, and urban and agricultural development. Despite these impacts and growing population, development and recreational pressures, river health has improved through fish passage works, riparian fencing and revegetation, improved wastewater management, habitat restoration and environmental water delivery.

Waterways continue to face challenges from blue-green algae, low-oxygen events, rising pH levels, climate extremes, urban growth and changing land use. Floods in 2022 and 2023-24 caused erosion and channel changes in several waterways, while the January 2026 bushfires resulted in significant vegetation loss and water quality impacts across the Strathbogie Ranges and mid Goulburn River.

These events highlighted the value of riparian vegetation, erosion control and sustainable land management in supporting recovery and building climate resilience.

Environmental water has contributed to improved river and wetland health, although increasing downstream water demands pose ongoing challenges. Climate change is also increasing low and cease-to-flow events in unregulated waterways, prompting further planning and research by Goulburn Broken CMA and DEECA. Strong partnerships with agencies, community groups and Traditional Owners continue to support waterway management, with Traditional Owners playing an increasing role in planning and delivering water management on Country.

For further information on waterway management, refer to 'water availability for agriculture' from page 69.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

Floodplain management has improved across the catchment, with more progress underway. While new infrastructure on floodplains can increase flood risks, using management tools helps keep average damage levels stable and boosts community awareness and preparedness.

Figure 16 shows the trajectories of critical attributes of waterways management and floodplain management since 1990 and their indicative futures.

RIPARIAN AND AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY

Riparian and aquatic biodiversity are critical attributes of river and wetlands health.
See page 43 for details.

3. *The condition of the catchment is reviewed through a deliberative process led by Goulburn Broken CMA senior managers, using a wide range of evidence to understand how resilient the catchment is. More details about this process can be found in Appendices 1 and 3.*

FIGURE 16: TRAJECTORIES IN CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES OF WATERWAYS AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

WATER AVAILABILITY (GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT OVERALL)

More than 11 per cent of the Murray-Darling Basin's water comes from the Goulburn Broken catchment, which flows through the Shepparton Irrigation Region (SIR).

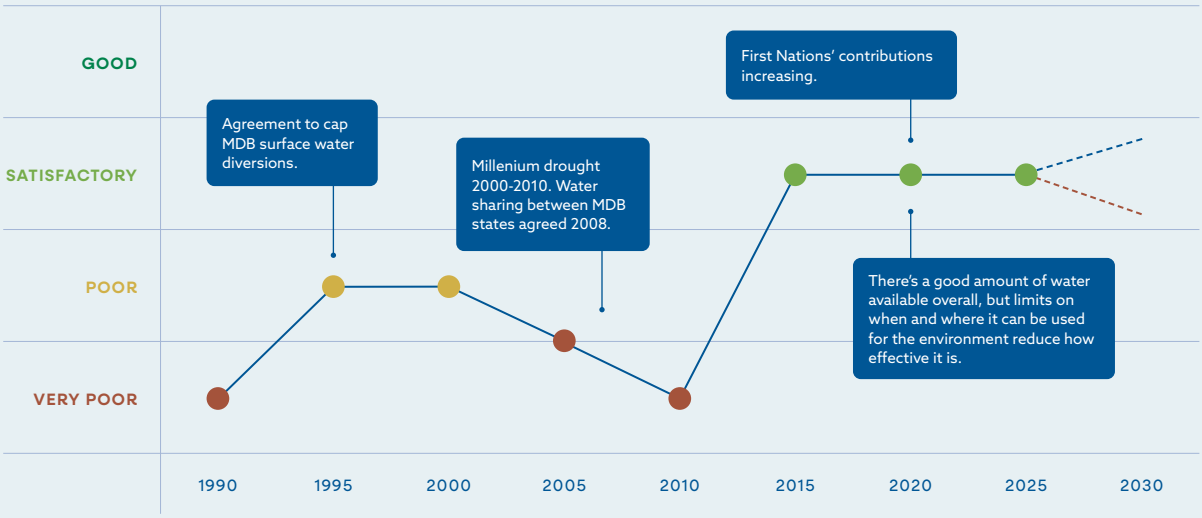
The Goulburn Basin has a lot more water available than the Broken Basin. Both basins, along with Murray River contributions, are regulated.

Climate change is causing longer dry periods and reducing water inflows, while demand for water is rising for both the environment and food production.

Water is also being moved out of the SIR to other areas. Intervalley transfers e.g. from the Goulburn to the Murray River systems, have led to high off-season flows, which are damaging riverbanks along the Murray and lower Goulburn rivers.

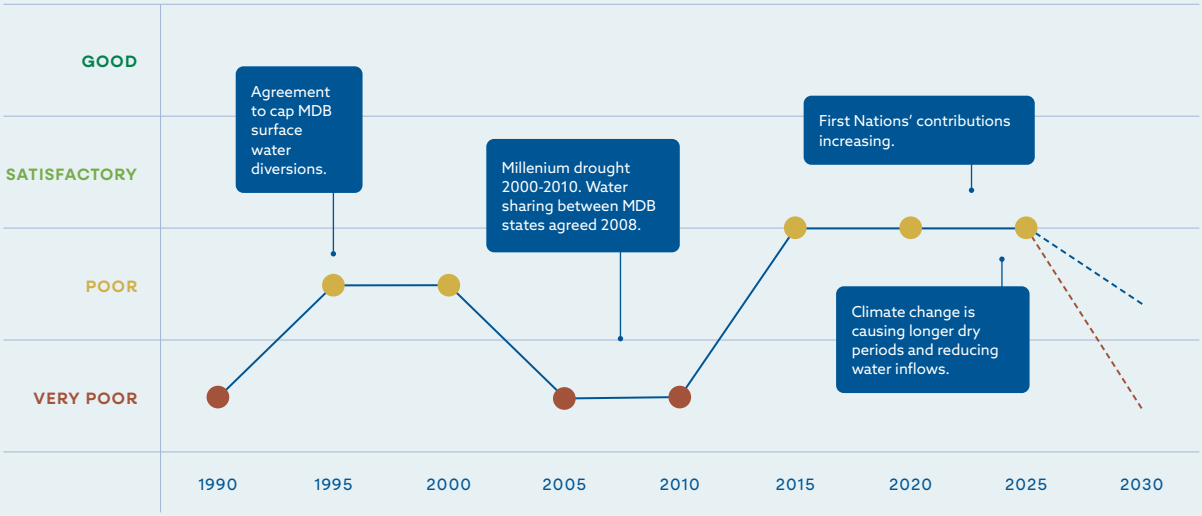
ENVIRONMENT (REGULATED STREAMS ACROSS THE GOULBURN BROKEN)

2040 Intent: Water is managed to ensure the right volume in the right place 100% of the time.



ENVIRONMENT (UNREGULATED STREAMS ACROSS THE GOULBURN BROKEN)

2040 Intent: Water is managed to ensure the right volume in the right place 100% of the time.

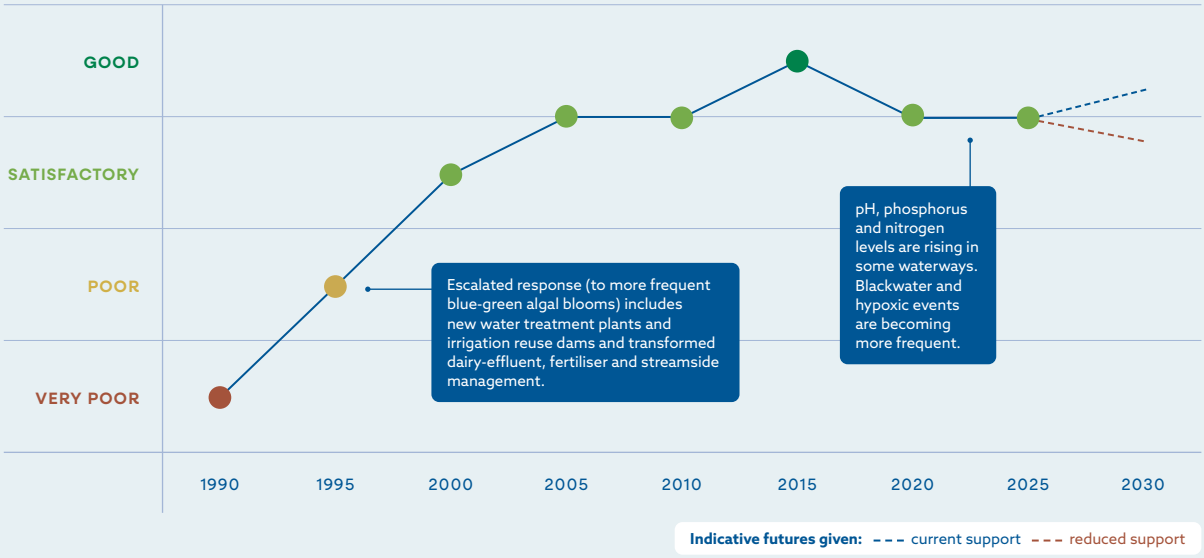


Indicative futures given: - - - current support - - - reduced support

WATER QUALITY

Goulburn Broken waterways meet environmental quality standards under the *Environmental Protection Act 2017*. Ongoing monitoring is mainly needed for sudden changes or long-term issues, such as impacts from the January 2026 bushfires. Salinity levels also meet Murray-Darling Basin Authority targets.

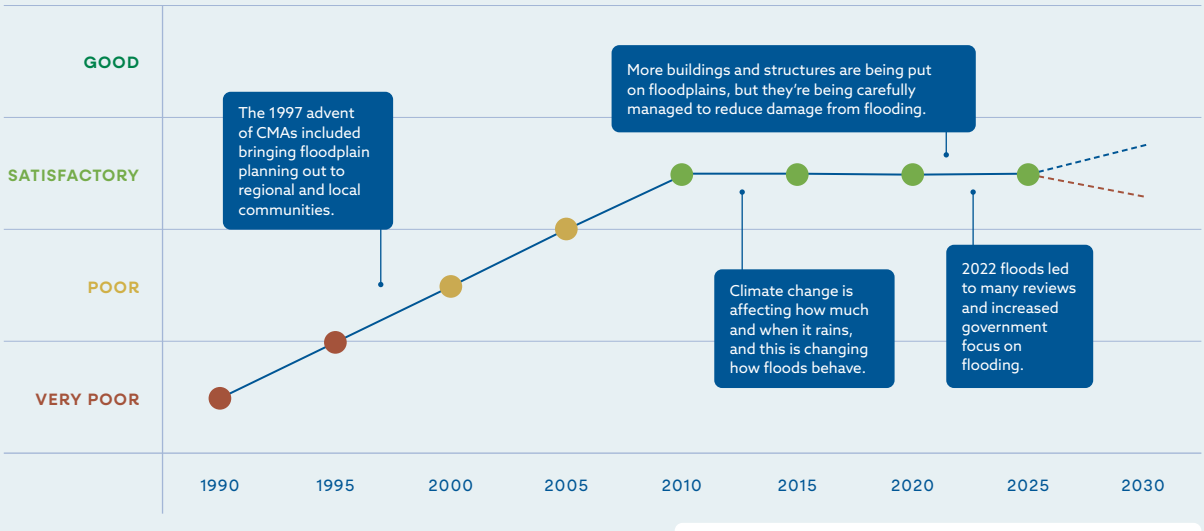
2040 Intent: Meeting State and Murray-Darling Basin standards and targets is embedded in water quality management.



FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

Floodplain planning, on-ground works, and community education have helped reduce flood damage over time.

2040 Intent: Through partnerships, improve the flood resilience of the catchment's people, infrastructure, land, water and biodiversity.



Water theme actions in 2025-26

Waterway and floodplain management generally met expectations.

The year was marked by prolonged dry conditions, several intense rainfall events and the major January 2026 Longwood bushfire, which affected more than 140,000 hectares in the southern Goulburn Broken catchment. Dry conditions increased pressure on unregulated streams and native fish refuges, while fire impacts created new risks for water quality, riparian condition and threatened species in waterways such as Hughes Creek, Seven Creeks and the Goulburn River. However, generally drier conditions also supported delivery of many on-ground works (see rainfall graphs on page 37).

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT

The waterway program included planning and delivering environmental water, renewing the Regional Waterway Strategy, monitoring fish, platypus, waterbirds, frogs and vegetation, managing water quality risks, delivering riparian and instream works, and engaging community, Traditional Owners and agency partners. This work supports regional and state waterway strategies, Commonwealth environmental watering programs and recovery from floods, storms and fire.

WIDE RANGE OF RIVER HEALTH ACTIVITIES

Despite predominantly dry conditions throughout winter, spring and much of summer, significant on-ground works were delivered to improve river and wetland health. Along Waring (mid Goulburn River), more than 1.5 kilometres of riparian fencing, 40 hectares of weed control, revegetation and stock exclusion works were completed.

In the Strathbogie Ranges, recovery efforts following the Longwood bushfires included the rescue and return of Macquarie Perch and Trout Cod, and the installation of more than 60 large woody habitat logs and 160 pinning posts in Hughes Creek to enhance native fish habitat. Extensive fencing, revegetation, erosion control and platypus habitat improvement works were also undertaken across the Goulburn and Broken river systems.

At Barmah, implementation of the Fish Recovery Strategy saw the release of approximately 1,000 Olive Perchlet and 1,600 Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon into priority wetlands.

Together, these actions improved and protected habitat, strengthened ecosystem resilience and supported the recovery of threatened native species. Ongoing challenges include increasing deer impacts and weed spread, particularly in fire-affected areas.

FIRE AND FLOOD RECOVERY FOCUS

A major focus was responding to the January 2026 bushfires, particularly the Longwood fire. Early work included assessing waterway impacts, reducing sediment and ash runoff, supporting landholders and planning riparian recovery. Around 4,000 straw bales were delivered for sediment control. By June, 49 riparian management agreements had been prepared. Committed works included 107.7 kilometres of fencing, 34 hectares of revegetation, 11 hectares of weed control and 28 alternative water points, with additional fencing, revegetation and weed control being planned.

Flood recovery works from the 2022 floods and 2023-24 storm and flood events were also completed, including major erosion repair and bank stabilisation works on waterways such as King Parrot Creek and the Rubicon River.

ENVIRONMENTAL WATER SUPPORTS STRONG ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS

Environmental water deliveries of 770,719 megalitres across the Goulburn River, lower Broken Creek, Broken River system, Barmah National Park and priority wetlands supported river and wetland health. In the Goulburn River, managed flows improved native fish habitat, riparian vegetation, platypus habitat, water quality and ecological resilience, with monitoring showing healthy bank vegetation and suitable dissolved oxygen levels despite post-fire runoff impacts.

In the lower Broken Creek and Broken River systems, environmental flows maintained habitat and water quality, supported fish movement and aquatic vegetation, and contributed to strong native fish populations. Monitoring recorded Murray Cod, Golden Perch, the first Trout Cod since the 2022 fish death event, and around 30 nationally endangered Macquarie Perch.

Wetland watering also delivered positive outcomes. Moodie Swamp received approximately 500 megalitres through the upgraded Geary's Channel, supporting species such as Brolga and Sloane's Froglet. In Barmah National Park, watering enhanced floodplain marsh vegetation, Moira Grass and waterbird habitat, with ongoing monitoring of vegetation, waterbirds, turtles, frogs and other wetland values.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS IN WATERWAY HEALTH

Community and partner participation in waterway health included:

- Continued expansion of WaterWatch program monitoring, expanding beyond the Strathbogie Streams Flagship project.
- Promotion of waterway program knowledge and fire recovery opportunities at the Seymour Alternative Farming Expo.
- Community workshops to help shape the new RWS.
- Continuing support of TLaWC's capacity and leadership in environmental water delivery, at places such as Molesworth Billabongs and Gaynor Swamp.
- Environmental Water Advisory Group community and agency representatives touring the lower Goulburn River and Reedy Swamp.
- RiverConnect celebrating 20 years of connecting people to waterways through education, volunteering and community events.
- Local primary school students and Burnanga Indigenous Fishing Club releasing endangered Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon ('Zombie Fish') to help rebuild native fish populations.
- Post-fire recovery efforts seeing more than 4,000 straw bales distributed to reduce sediment entering waterways.
- Engaging with fire affected landholders and community members, providing advice on waterway recovery, erosion control and revegetation.
- Native fish recovery partnerships achieving Olive Perchlet reintroduction into Barmah National Park wetlands and habitat restoration along Hughes Creek for threatened Macquarie perch.
- Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder visiting Moodie Swamp to view outcomes from environmental watering infrastructure improvements.

REGIONAL WATERWAY STRATEGY RENEWAL

Renewal of the RWS progressed during the year, informed by extensive community and stakeholder engagement. Development of the draft strategy and implementation plan continued, with a strengthened focus on climate change adaptation, Traditional Owner-led waterway management, community connection, resilience to floods, fire and drought, and adaptive management over the next decade.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ACTIONS IN 2025-26

Goulburn Broken CMA is responsible for managing floodplains and waterway health. Its key duties include:

- Reviewing planning applications from councils and other authorities.
- Giving flood risk advice to individuals and developers.
- Issuing permits for works on waterways.
- Helping councils update planning schemes with current flood data.
- Conducting flood studies and creating floodplain management plans.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025-26

- Responded to 823 planning referrals and 484 flood advice requests, with an average response time of 14.8 days (98.0 per cent of responses provided within statutory timeframes).
- Processed 79 permits for works on waterways.
- Maintained the Goulburn Broken Community Flood Intelligence Portal with six local councils, helping 15,730 people access flood risk information and download 5,360 property reports.

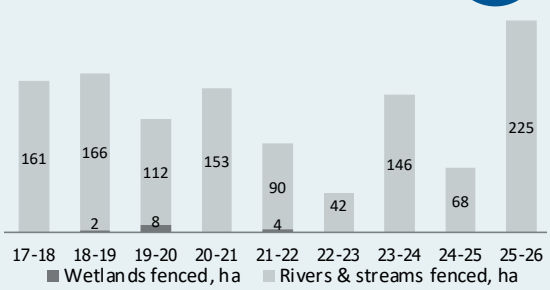
SUPPORT FOR LOCAL FLOOD PLANNING

- Helped councils across the catchment to start new flood studies and progress planning scheme amendments to implement findings from completed flood studies.

FLOOD RESPONSE AND IMPACT

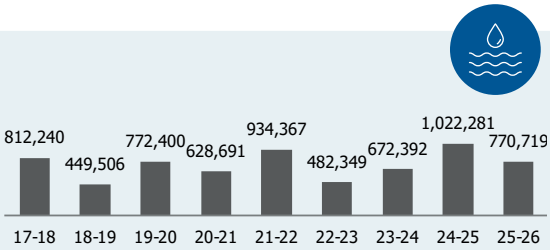
- No major flood events during 2025-26.
- Continued to support Victoria State Emergency Service by updating existing flood intelligence documents (municipal flood emergency plans and local flood guides) and preparing new local flood guides for communities with known flood risks.

FIGURE 17: KEY WATERWAY INDICATORS BY YEAR



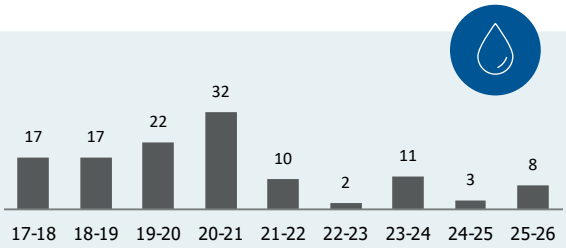
RIPARIAN LAND FENCED: **225 HA**

Grazing is now well managed along frontages of most river and stream reaches. While significant lengths of waterways remain to be protected from stock, maintenance of previous grazing protection work and connecting existing riparian vegetation are increasing investment priorities.



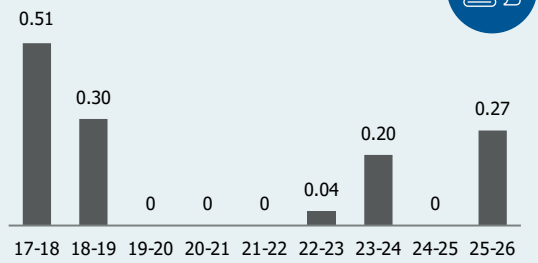
ENVIRONMENTAL WATER USE: **770,719 ML**

Annual environmental water use is influenced by seasonal conditions and environmental water availability. See Appendix 3 for detailed breakdown of environmental water use in waterways.



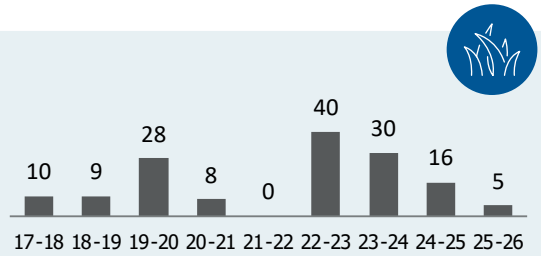
OFF-STREAM WATERING: **8 SYSTEMS**

Earlier investment in off-streaming watering systems by many landholders is influencing current uptake. While remaining lower than historical levels, update has increased slightly due to dry conditions and fire impacts.



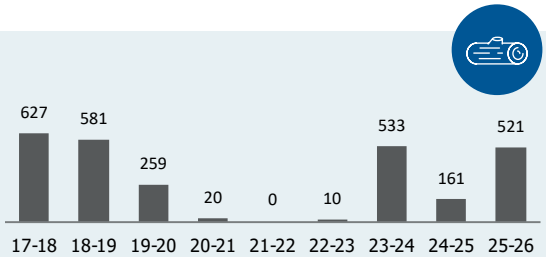
RIVER & STREAM BED AND BANK PROTECTION ACTIONS: **270 M**

Best practice tends to focus on establishing native vegetation to help protect riverbanks. Recent waterway recovery programs have seen some hard engineering employed where flood and bushfire impacts have increased threats to public assets like bridges.



AQUATIC WEEDS CONTROLLED: **5 KM**

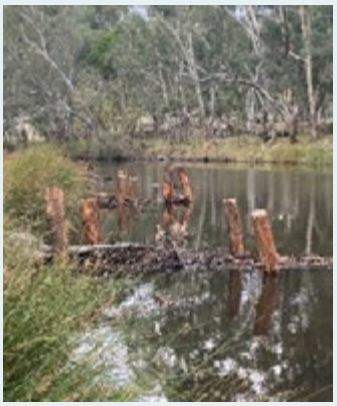
Recent floods caused a proliferation of some aquatic weeds, so control was needed over more waterway reaches. The success of initial control efforts and drier conditions have lessened the areas requiring treatment.



IN-STREAM HABITAT: **521 PIECES OF TIMBER**

Operating conditions for installing habitat timber in rivers continued to be favourable following the flood-impacted years, and enabled areas of in-stream habitat affected by floods to be restored.

CASE STUDY







Examples of large wood structures installed to create instream habitat diversity and refuge





Volunteers assisting with planting for the fringing vegetation trials

Hughes Creek Macquarie Perch population resilience and recovery project

Hughes Creek, near Avenel, supports one of Victoria's most important remaining populations of the nationally endangered Macquarie Perch. Once widespread across south-eastern Australia, the species has declined severely because of habitat degradation, sedimentation, altered flows and competition from introduced fish. The Hughes Creek population has unique genetic value and is a critical source population for broader recovery, translocation and captive-breeding programs.

The Hughes Creek Macquarie Perch Population Resilience and Recovery Project is helping secure this population by improving the quality, complexity and connectivity of instream habitat. Led by Goulburn Broken CMA with funding support from the VFA, the project builds on earlier Strathbogie Streams Flagship Waterway investment and responds to ongoing habitat pressures, including the major 2022 flood event that displaced large woody habitat and redistributed sand through the creek.

The project has used a three-pronged approach:

- Large wood structures are being reinstated to create deeper pools, shelter, hydraulic diversity and movement pathways through a key stronghold reach.
- Straight plantation logs supplied by GVW have been used as pinning posts to secure the structures and reduce the risk of future flood displacement.
- In partnership with the ARI, instream and fringing vegetation trials are also being used to stabilise mobile sediments, encourage sandbar formation and improve habitat diversity.

A further component involves installing small timber stakes to trap leaves and twigs, increasing detritus retention and supporting aquatic food webs. The project's work sites were not directly impacted by the January 2026 bushfires, however, will be contributing to sediment and woody debris capture post event. With diminished available habitat for wildlife in the largely burnt Hughes Creek catchment, this work may also provide crucial refuge while upstream riparian areas regenerate. Winter rains and resulting high stream flows will be the real test of success for site works, as monitoring continues to assess flood resilience and recovery.

Partnerships have been central to the project's success. Native Fish Australia volunteers have supported instream planting and detritus-trapping works, while adjoining landholders have facilitated delivery through riparian management agreements. The project also complements work by the ARI, DEECA, the VFA and university researchers to monitor fish populations, understand genetic enrichment outcomes and guide whole-of-species recovery.

By combining practical habitat restoration, monitoring and strong partnerships, the project is strengthening the resilience of a critical Macquarie Perch population. It is also generating knowledge that can guide future habitat works on Hughes Creek and other waterways supporting threatened native fish.

What's next for water?

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT

- **Regional Water Strategy renewal**

  Refine, test and consult on a new draft Regional Waterway Strategy. Significant partner and community engagement will occur, culminating in submitting the draft strategy for approval.

- **Elevate Traditional Owner strategic partnerships and collaboration opportunities**

  Collaboration with Traditional Owners remained a key priority, with efforts focused on respecting Traditional Owner knowledge, culture and authority, finalising the Regional Waterway Strategy to strengthen waterway outcomes on Country, supporting the co-design and leadership of the Barmah National Park, Waring and Corop Cultural Waterscape projects, and enabling greater self-determined waterway management opportunities.

- **Diversify and expand community involvement and engagement**

  Keep actively building community involvement in waterway care and species conservation through projects with anglers, citizen science programs like WaterWatch, platypus conservation through the Platy Patch project, and activities run by RiverConnect.

- **Maximise environmental water benefits**

  Working with partners and the community, Goulburn Broken CMA seeks to maximise environmental water outcomes across the region while balancing local and downstream water requirements. Climate change impacts and seasonal conditions will inform water management decisions and environmental watering priorities, with lower available water resources looking more likely in 2026-27.

  Collaboration with DEECA and other partners will support the ongoing refinement of water transfers to the Murray River via the Goulburn River and Broken Creek, improving environmental outcomes under the amended lower Goulburn River operating rules.

- **Harness strategic opportunities**

  Build on opportunities, such as those from stemming from the Broken Reconfiguration Project Business Case and Lower Goulburn flow delivery and constraints investigations, to bring about better connectivity and improved flow management across outcomes.

- **Third year of EC6**

  Advance the delivery of on-ground works funded under Environmental Contributions Levy Tranche 6.

- **Monitoring and research**

  Keep contributing to and evolving programs like the Environmental Water Monitoring and Evaluation Program and Flow-MER 2.0 to track river and wetland health and continue to monitor native fish and habitat in waterways including the Seven, Hughes and King Parrot creeks.

- **Refine streamside programs**

  Keep targeting works on stream frontages, improving native vegetation health, extent and connectivity along waterways and addressing weeds. Increase co-delivery with Traditional Owners.

- **Continue fire recovery program**

  Collaborate with partners and community on waterway restoration following the January 2026 fires. Focus strongly on replacement riparian fencing, weed management. Closely monitor water quality impacts post fires.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

- **Expand the flood portal**

  Further develop the Goulburn Broken Community Flood Intelligence Portal by incorporating the outcomes of current studies.

- **Update planning rules**

  Collaborate with local councils to update planning schemes, incorporating new flood maps and enhanced assessment guidelines.

- **Apply for funding**

  Partner with others to seek funding for new flood studies and projects in the region.

- **Put strategies into action**

  Progress actions under the Victorian and regional floodplain management strategies.



Nest box for native animals

CASE STUDY

Reaching more communities through Flood Intelligence Portal

Goulburn Broken CMA partners with six councils to share flood-risk information and strengthen community flood resilience.

A review of recorded floor levels in Shepparton, Mooroopna and Kialla increased the number of surveyed homes and businesses in the Flood Intelligence Portal from fewer than 10,000 properties in 2000 to more than 22,500.

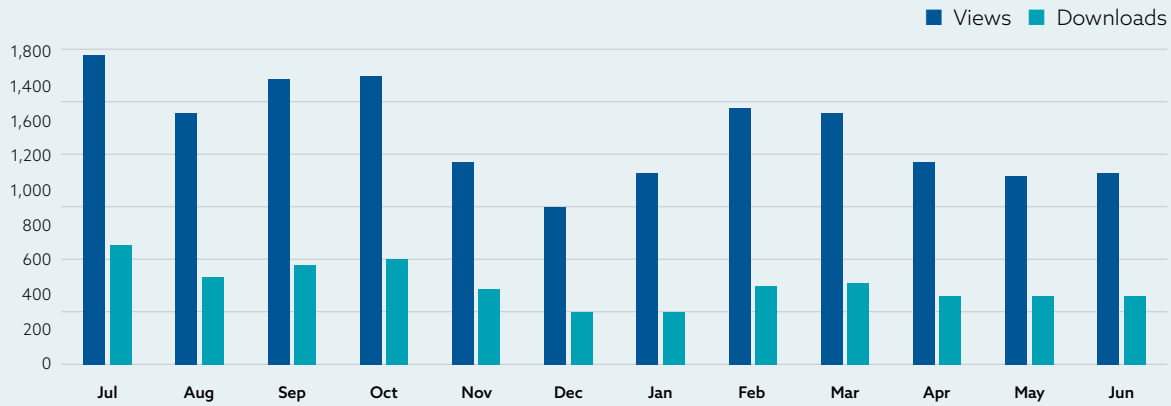
Floor levels are survey measurements that record the height of a building's floor relative to surrounding land and flood levels, providing critical information to assess potential flood impacts on individual properties. This information improves flood intelligence, supports emergency planning and response, and enables more accurate flood risk assessments for communities.

Further work in Avenel, Baddaginnie, Nagambie and Tatura is expected to add around 4,500 additional property floor levels to the portal. Updated data for Shepparton, Mooroopna and Kialla has recently been incorporated into the portal, with the remaining townships to follow.

Communities across most urban and some rural parts of the Goulburn Broken Catchment can obtain fit-for-purpose property reports to support flood preparedness, insurance, building and planning considerations from the Flood Intelligence Portal.

Monitoring the number of visits on the portal show strong use averaging some 1,310 visits and with 446 reports downloaded per month. Last financial year indicated consistent use of the portal (see Figure 18).

FIGURE 18: MONTHLY SITE VISITS AND DOWNLOADED PROPERTY REPORTS FOR LAST FINANCIAL YEAR

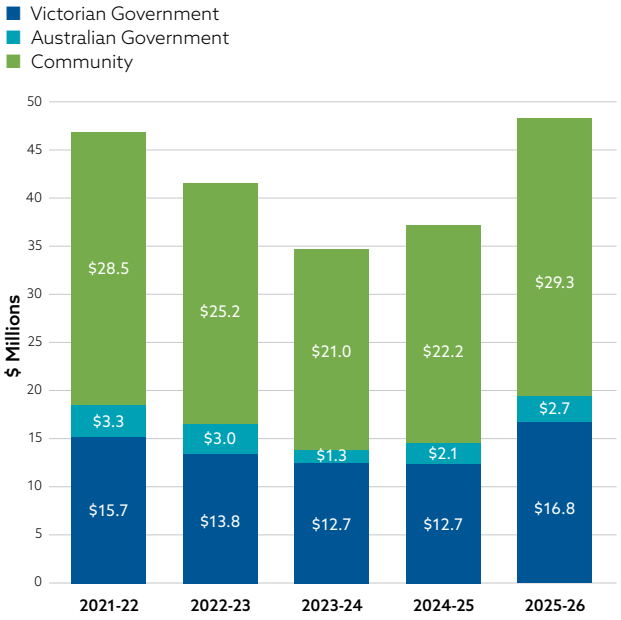


Community theme

The future health of the Goulburn Broken catchment depends on the people who live there. For every dollar the government spends, the local community usually adds $1.50 of their own money (see Figure 19). That's why it's important for Goulburn Broken CMA to help guide how others invest in the environment.

Goulburn Broken CMA works together with landowners, Traditional Owners, community and environmental groups, partner organisations and individuals. Together, they run programs that protect and improve the natural environment across the catchment.

FIGURE 19: MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, $MILLION



Catchment condition for community[4]

In the late 1980s, the community faced serious environmental and economic challenges. In response, local leaders realised these problems were complex and needed a coordinated effort across the whole region. Governments gave more power to local communities, allowing them to take charge of their future.

During the 1990s, movements like Landcare grew, encouraging people to share knowledge and work together beyond their own properties. A key part of this was managing the land and water in a connected way, with strong partnerships between communities and governments. Communities showed they could organise themselves and adapt, leading to the creation of many different local groups.

Now, with growing pressure to protect and improve natural resources and limited public funding, communities need to find new ways to attract investment. This becomes increasingly difficult with emergencies increasing pressures such as fire, flood and drought. Also, as landholders and their connections to nature become more diverse, there's a need to rethink how to keep local involvement strong while also welcoming short-term volunteers.

Thanks to supportive policies and teamwork in the Goulburn Broken catchment, Traditional Owners – the Yorta Yorta and Taungurung peoples – are playing a much bigger role in managing biodiversity, land and water resources. People from many different backgrounds – including farmers, Traditional Owners, local councils, Landcare groups and recreational groups – are actively involved in important Natural Resource Management (NRM) discussions at both regional and local levels. These groups work well together and have strong connections.

Figure 20 shows the trajectories of critical attributes of community since 1990 and their indicative futures.

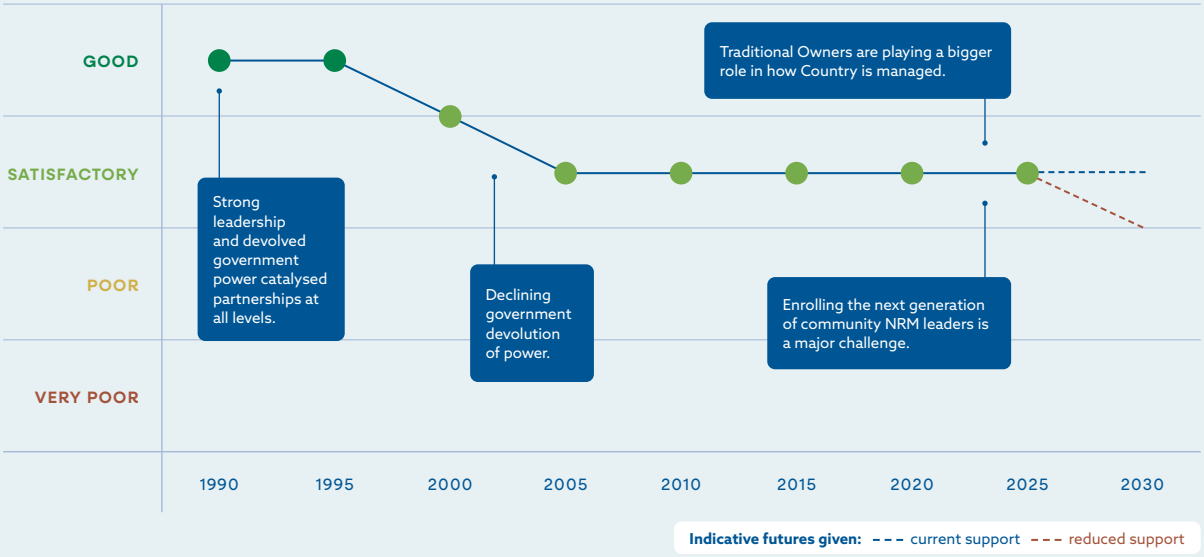
4. *The condition of the catchment is reviewed through a deliberative process led by Goulburn Broken CMA senior managers, using a wide range of evidence to understand how resilient the catchment is. More details about this process can be found in Appendixes 1 and 3.*

FIGURE 20: TRAJECTORIES IN CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES OF COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

When communities have the power and ability to lead, get involved and take action on the ground, they are better equipped to care for their local environment in the long term. One of the main roles of Goulburn Broken CMA is to help individuals, groups and partner organisations build these skills and strengths.

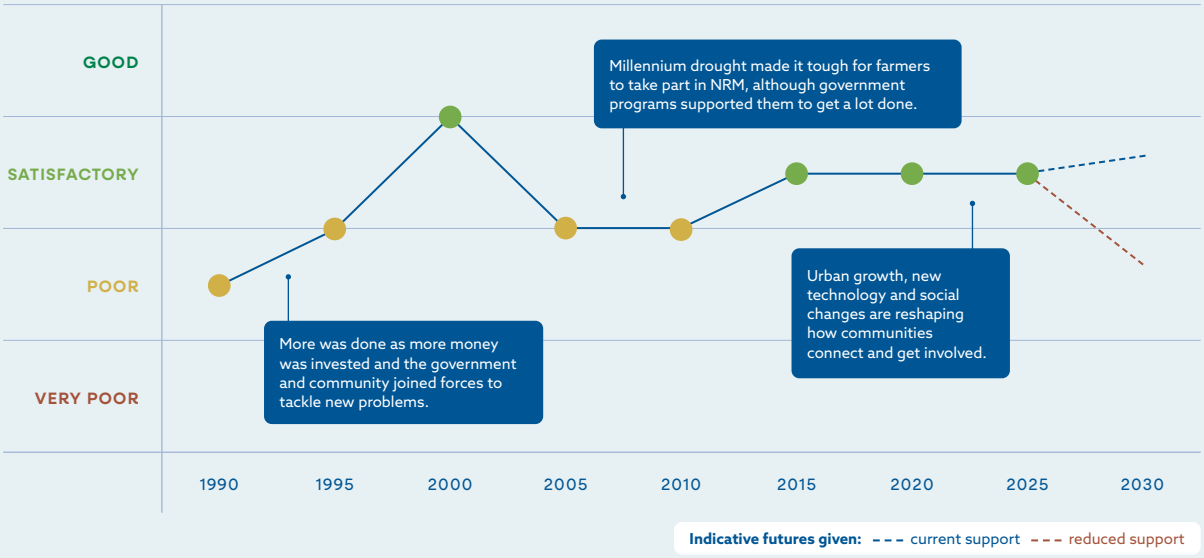
2040 Intent: Strengthen community leadership and influence on decision-making.



COMMUNITY ACTION AND INVOLVEMENT

By making the catchment more resilient through on-ground actions, the land can be more environmentally and economically productive. This helps ensure that local communities can thrive, even as things continue to change.

2040 Intent: Activate community interest and stewardship in NRM. Increase community capacity to be involved and act on-ground.



Local communities, partner groups and landowners have made real improvements on the ground, as described in the other theme sections in this annual report, and are helping to shape how people think about and manage natural resources. As businesses and industries face more pressure to be environmentally responsible, new opportunities are opening up for NRM.

The Goulburn Broken catchment is adjusting to how volunteering is changing. More people using natural resources now live outside the area. Urban growth, new technology and social changes are reshaping how communities connect and get involved, which brings both new opportunities and challenges for NRM.

Although many volunteers are getting older and fewer, people are joining government programs due to their complexity, more people are reconnecting with nature (Barr 2020). There's growing awareness of how nature supports human wellbeing and many organisations are updating their programs to reflect this. People are feeling more pride in their local environment, but funding to support community groups like Landcare is uncertain. Programs like Victorian Landcare Grants are very popular, showing strong community interest in making a difference.

Community theme actions 2025-26

Community actions were delivered in line with expectations.

LANDCARE

The Goulburn Broken Regional Landcare Coordinator, funded by the Victorian Government, continued to support local environmental groups, including Landcare. Four Network Chair meetings and 12 Coordinator and Facilitator meetings were held to discuss challenges and plan Landcare activities across the catchment.

The Regional Landcare Coordinator continued as a member of the statewide Victorian Landcare team, which includes Regional Landcare Coordinators from across Victoria, DEECA and Landcare Victoria employees.

More than $290,000 of funding through the Victorian Government Landcare Grants were announced, to assist Landcare groups and networks to help support volunteer-led environmental actions and community learning in their communities.

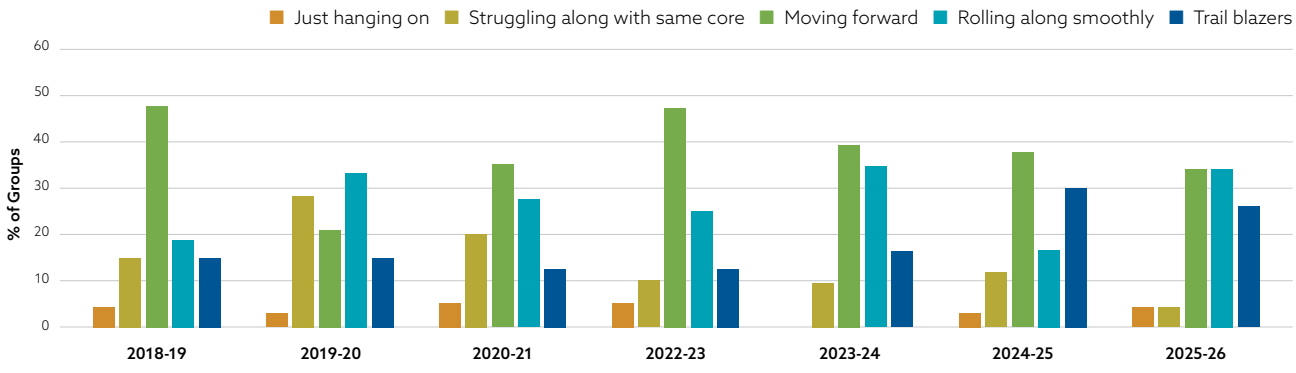
Community NRM groups had the chance to participate in succession planning workshops held across the catchment. These workshops aimed to help groups to learn about and plan for succession planning.

An interactive NRM report card on Goulburn Broken CMA's website shows what each network has done and how they support their local communities. Information and case studies for each network are updated annually.

Community groups continue to make a big impact, contributing thousands of volunteer hours to environmental work, education, communication and administrative tasks. As well as time spent leading, such as chairing conservation network facilitator meetings or other behind-the-scenes work, and planning.

A yearly survey showed that most groups are doing well: 33 per cent said they're 'rolling along smoothly'(strong), and 26 per cent described themselves as 'trailblazing'(thriving) (see Figure 21).

FIGURE 21: LANDCARE GROUP HEALTH STATUS, PER CENT OF GROUPS



COMMUNITY NETWORKS AND AWARENESS

Goulburn Broken CMA partners with Community NRM groups to deliver land and biodiversity projects. Community NRM groups support the involvement of their local community in natural resource management. Community NRM groups engaged to deliver projects by Goulburn Broken CMA in 2025-26 include:

- Goulburn Murray Landcare Network
- Longwood Plains Conservation Management Network
- South West Goulburn Landcare Network
- Gecko CLaN
- Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative
- Up2Us Landcare Alliance
- Strathbogie Ranges Conservation Management Network
- Upper Goulburn Landcare Network
- Euroa Arboretum
- Regent Honeyeater Project Inc.

RiverConnect continued to promote the Goulburn and Broken rivers as central to the Shepparton-Mooroopna community, connecting with a diverse group of the local community to make a change.

Goulburn Broken CMA continues to advocate for protection of biodiversity through the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Advocacy Group. This group includes representatives from the Goulburn Valley Environment Group, Superb Parrot Group, Longwood Plains Conservation Management Network, and the Euroa Environment Group Inc.

COMMUNITY GROUPS INVOLVED IN FISH CONSERVATION

Working with landholders, Goulburn Broken CMA supported the release of small-bodied native fish into farm dams to establish refuge populations and reduce extinction risk. This included the threatened Flathead Galaxias near Merrijig and Olive Perchlet near Benalla. In partnership with the ARI, Middle Creek Farm, YYNAC and North Central CMA, a further 900 Olive Perchlet and 1,600 Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon was released into wetlands within Barmah National Park.

With support from SEA LIFE Melbourne Aquarium, North Central CMA and GVW, Goulburn Broken CMA also coordinated the release of 160 Southern Pygmy Perch and 400 Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon into Dunyak Moira, a community fishing and recreation area in Merrigum. The event was attended by students and employees from Merrigum Primary School and representatives from the Burnanga Indigenous Fishing Club.

ONLINE AND MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

- Goulburn Broken CMA website had more than 84,322 page views in 2025-26.
- Social media followers grew. Total followers: Facebook (6,537), Instagram (872), LinkedIn (949).
- The monthly Goulburn Broken CMA e-newsletter reached more than 1,500 subscribers per edition.
- More than 30 media releases were distributed.
- The 2026 Goulburn Broken CMA catchment calendar was released with 4,000 copies distributed throughout the catchment, showcasing local photographers' images of biodiversity.
- The most popular pages on the website were the Flood Intelligence Portal and the Traditional Owners page.

GOVERNMENT GRANTS FOR COMMUNITY AND PARTNER PROJECTS

Community groups in the Goulburn Broken catchment received funding from the Victorian and Australian Governments (see Table 9). These grants helped with:

- Weed and pest animal control.
- Building the community's skills and knowledge.
- Running education and awareness programs.
- Restoring native plants and habitats.

TABLE 9: GRANTS TO LOCAL GROUPS AND OTHER PARTNERS (SUMMARY UNDER VARIOUS PROGRAMS)

PROJECT	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT PAID $ (EX GST)
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT		
Natural Heritage Trust	9	625,243
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT		
Victorian Landcare Grants	58	297,671
Victorian Water Programs Investment Framework	6	278,476
Other	4	99,021
Total	**77**	**1,300,411**

WORKING WITH TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Goulburn Broken CMA has strong partnerships with YYNAC and TLaWC. These partnerships are supported by government policies that recognise First Nations rights and promote self-determination but importantly is driven by our genuine desire to work alongside Traditional Owners to care for Country. Partnership activities include:

- Implementation of Goulburn Broken CMA on-ground works projects in-line with cultural heritage procedures and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Land Management Agreements between Goulburn Broken CMA and the Registered Aboriginal Parties.
- Regular meetings to plan and deliver projects together that care for Country, culture and community.
- Early co-development of the next RWS.
- Exploration of opportunities to support YYNAC's interest in acquiring the decommissioned Dhurringile prison site for cultural, educational and land management purposes.
- Assisted Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative through a partnership with Outback Academy Australia's Follow the Flowers project to design and install the first stage of a commercial scale irrigated vegetable garden, supplying fresh vegetables to Rumbalara's aged care facility.
- Traditional Owners help plan, design and implement projects, such as:
  - Corop Wetlands Cultural Waterscape Program, designed to heal Country, strengthen Traditional Owner stewardship, and enhance the ecological, cultural, and community values of the Corop Lakes wetland system. This vision and project is led by TLaWC and involves several partners and working groups to achieve institutional and on-ground change aligned to Traditional Owner aspirations.
  - The Victorian Government Our Catchments Our Communities-funded 'Connecting Culture and Country' project protects and enhances significant and unique sandhills on Yorta Yorta Country near Shepparton, and on Taungurung Country at Reedy Lake Wildlife Reserve, as well as the broader 'cultural and biodiverse significant landscape' (public and private land), to connect people, culture and the environment (see Biodiversity section page 40).
  - The Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust-funded Barmah Country and Landscape Legacies (Grey Box Woodlands) projects (2024-2028) including on-ground implementation such as pest plant and animal control, revegetation and enhancement work on Country (see Biodiversity section page 40).
  - Various river health and environmental water programs. The CMA has continued to partner with TLaWC to deliver projects to heal Country, including supporting the delivery of environmental water to Molesworth lagoon and co-delivering ecological restoration works at off-stream wetlands along Waring/mid Goulburn River (Walking Together with Waring Flagship Project). (See Water theme section page 52).

Implementation of Goulburn Broken CMA's third RAP has progressed well throughout the year with an array of actions being driven in the areas of respect, partnerships, opportunities for First Nations peoples and governance. See case study on page 66.

A renewed MoU between Goulburn Broken CMA and YYNAC was developed and signed in August 2025, reaffirming the long-standing partnership, marking over two decades of collaboration in caring for Country.

Goulburn Broken CMA employees participated in cultural heritage training delivered by YYNAC (in Barmah National Park) and TLaWC (Gaynor Swamp area) and took part in cultural smoking ceremonies during Welcome to Country sessions for important catchment events.

A Goulburn Broken CMA Cultural Learning Strategy and Guide was also completed in December 2025.

What's next for community?

Goulburn Broken CMA will continue to monitor changes that might affect local communities and their ability to help care for the environment. Working with the community and building partnerships will remain a key focus as the RCS and various plans are implemented. Areas of emphasis will include:

- **Traditional Owners**

  Ongoing engagement with TLaWC and YYNAC by continuing to implement Goulburn Broken CMA's 2025-27 RAP, co-development of the next RWS, reviewing progress against the MoU with YYNAC, and continuing to partner with TLaWC on their priorities, such as the Corop Wetlands Cultural Waterscape Program. Projects will be delivered on Country with Traditional Owners with funds from programs like the NHT and EC6.

- **Emergency Management**

  Continue to advocate for our communities in preparedness, response and recovery to events/issues such as fire, drought, floods, and biosecurity.

- **Landcare Network facilitators**

  Advocating for continued funding and support of Landcare Network facilitators through the Regional Landcare Coordinator role. Celebrations for 40 years of Landcare will continue throughout 2026.

- **Local planning**

  Continue to advocate for improved ways to involve the community in local planning, and support succession planning.

- **Review and update**

  Review and update the Communication, Community Engagement and Partnership Strategy 2022-27 and Community NRM Action Plan (2020-25).

- **Natural Capital**

  Develop a Natural Capital planning approach to create new market exchange opportunities to improve catchment condition.

CASE STUDY

Goulburn Broken CMA Reconciliation Action Plan implementation progress

In 2025, Goulburn Broken CMA launched its third RAP, aimed at fostering stronger relationships with First Nations communities and further embedding reconciliation approaches within the organisation. Building on over two decades of Traditional Owner partnerships, this RAP reinforces the CMA's commitment to reconciliation through respect, recognition, relationships, and opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Implementation is progressing well against the 2025-27 plan with most actions on-track or completed.

Highlights in 2025-26 included:

- Renewing a MoU with YYNAC in August 2025 (see photo below).
- Finalising an internal Cultural Learning Strategy and Guide in December 2025.
- Forming a cross-sector Reconciliation Collective with regional organisations to amplify collective learning and impact.
- Undertaking cultural heritage training with YYNAC in the Barmah area, and with TLaWC in the Gaynor Swamp and Corop Lakes area.
- Hosting an inaugural cultural walk through Shepparton during National Reconciliation Week.
- Being an active champion of the Goulburn Murray Regional Prosperity and Productivity Plan.



Sustainable irrigation program

Over the past 40 years, the Shepparton Irrigation Region (SIR) community has led the way in managing salinity and water quality, protecting nature, and building strong partnerships. The Sustainable Irrigation Program puts the SIRLWMP into action on the ground. The SIR community and partner organisations update the plan roughly every six years, with the most recent update in 2024.

The SIR is transforming, with growing pressure on people and the environment, the region has a strong future in agriculture, lifestyle living and diverse industries. The SIRLWMP will build on strengths in regional networks, natural assets, regional and farm infrastructure, and proximity to markets. Recent challenging events like floods, COVID-19, and droughts show how closely connected we are to nature and the imperative of sustainable food production and working together. Other drivers of change that the SIR must respond to are the Murray Darling Basin Plan implementation, disruptive global events and technological advances.

Catchment condition of the Shepparton Irrigation Region[5]

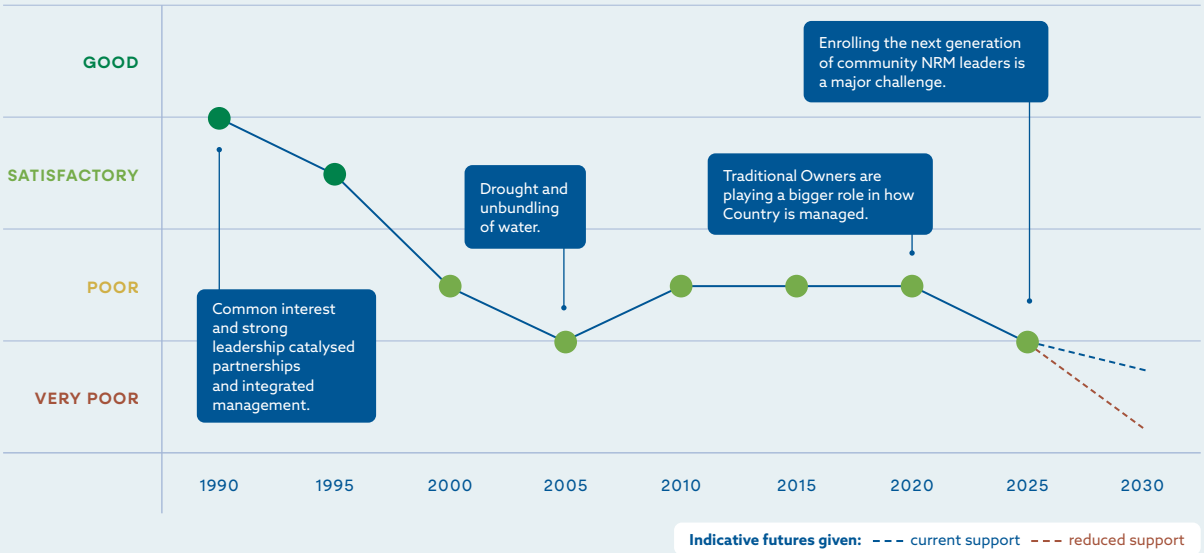
Since 1990, the SIRLWMP has grown from just dealing with salinity problems to managing several critical attributes that are important for how the region works as a whole, both for people and the environment. Figure 22 shows the trajectories of six critical attributes of the SIR since 1990 and their indicative futures, with further details in the SIRLWMP 2050.

FIGURE 22: TRAJECTORIES IN CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE SHEPPARTON IRRIGATION REGION

RESILIENT COMMUNITY

Many small towns are feeling the pressure. Urban communities are increasingly involved in NRM. New technology has transformed how people connect with each other. Climate events have impacted how our local caretakers respond and manage change.

2050 Intent: A resilient and capable SIR community is forging its own future in a changing landscape.

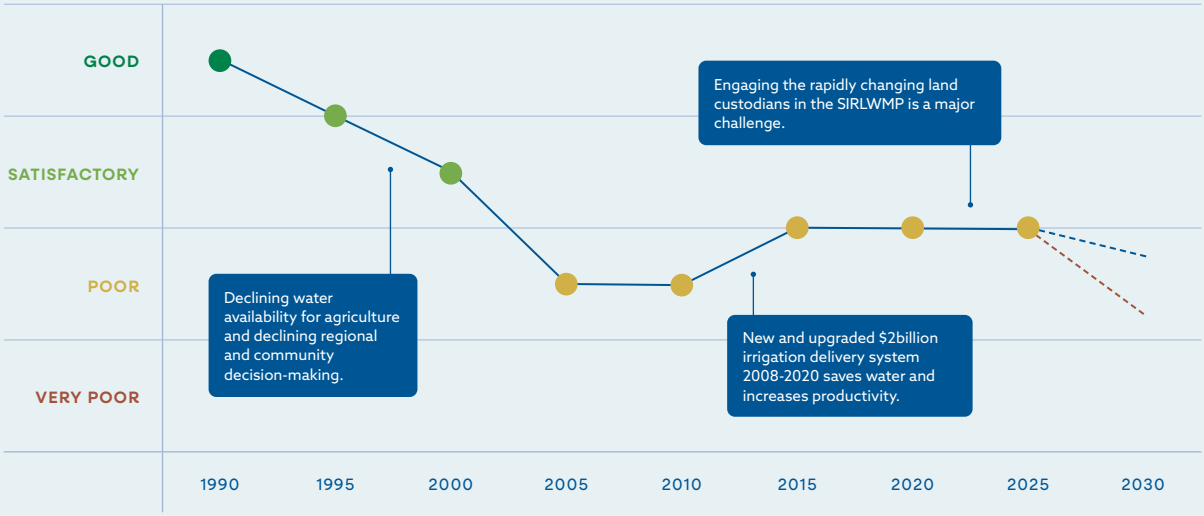


5. *The condition of the catchment is reviewed through a deliberative process led by Goulburn Broken CMA senior managers, using a wide range of evidence to understand how resilient the catchment is. More details about this process can be found in Appendixes 1 and 3.*

FARM AND REGIONAL PROSPERITY

Irrigation farming and the industries that rely on it have kept improving, changing, and producing more. At the same time, the types of farmers and how the land is used are changing quickly.

2050 Intent: Farms and other enterprises are adaptive, growing and contributing to the environment and the community.



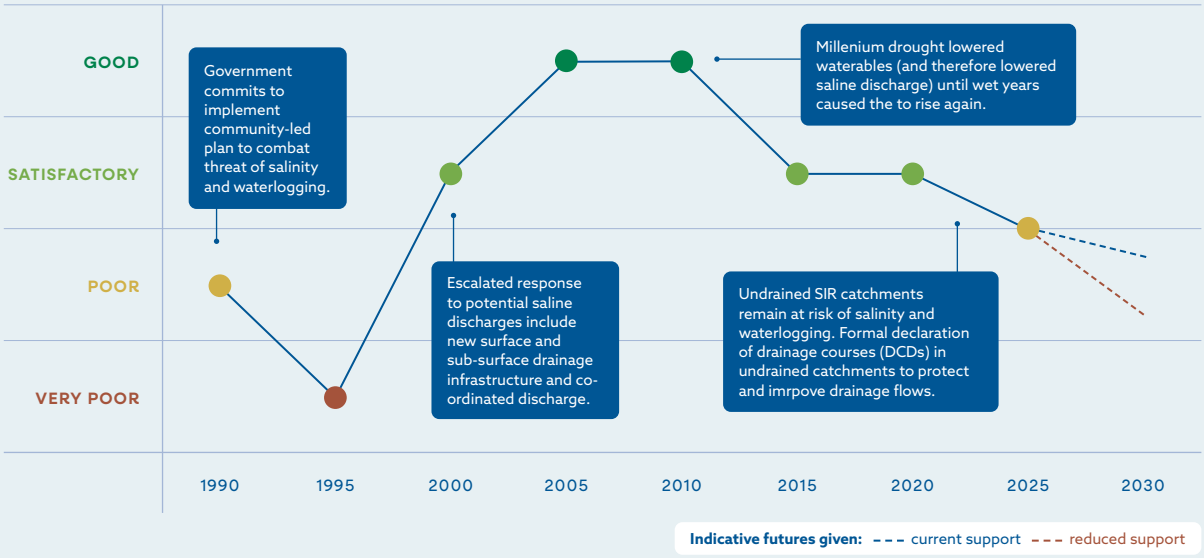
BIODIVERSITY (SIR)

Terrestrial, riparian and aquatic biodiversity are closely connected and often overlapping forms of biodiversity, and together they are a critical attribute of the SIR. The big changes over the past 35 years for both types are essentially the same for the SIR as they are for the whole Goulburn Broken Catchment. See pages 40 to 45 for details.

DRAINAGE

Saline discharge sites remain present and active, especially in wet years. Large drainage improvements since 1990 have supported widespread gains for agriculture, the environment, community and water quality.

2050 Intent: Water is managed and drained adaptively in all SIR catchments while protecting natural and built assets.



WATER AVAILABILITY (SIR)

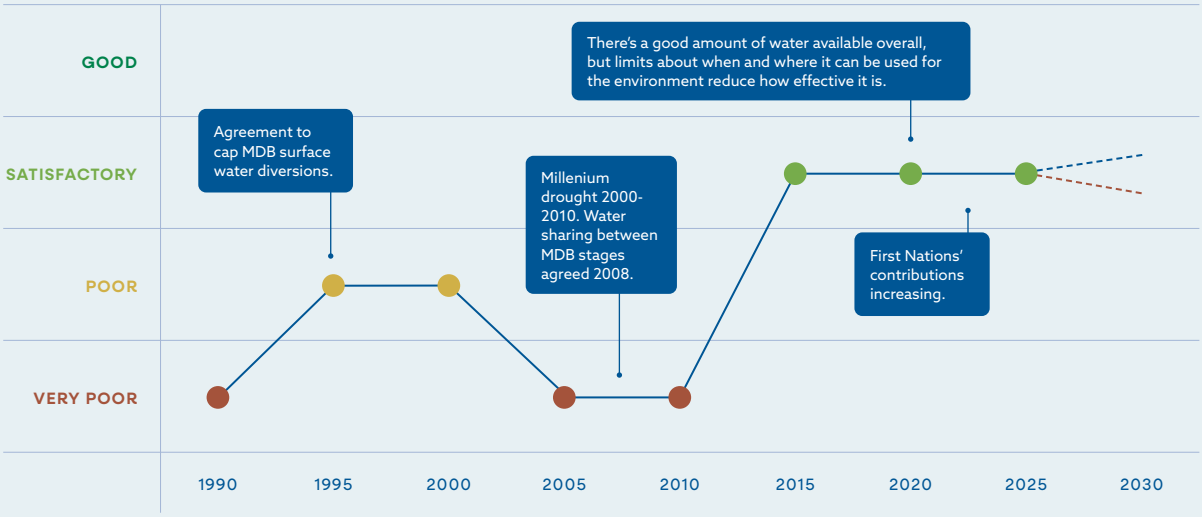
Over 11 per cent of the Murray-Darling Basin's water comes from the Goulburn Broken Catchment and flows through the SIR.

The Goulburn Basin has a lot more water available than the Broken. Both basins, along with Murray River contributions, are regulated. Climate change is causing longer dry periods and reducing water inflows, while demand for water is rising for both the environment and food production.

Water is also being moved out of the SIR to other areas. Intervalley transfers (e.g. from the Goulburn to the Murray River systems), have led to high off-season flows, which are damaging riverbanks along the Murray and lower Goulburn Rivers.

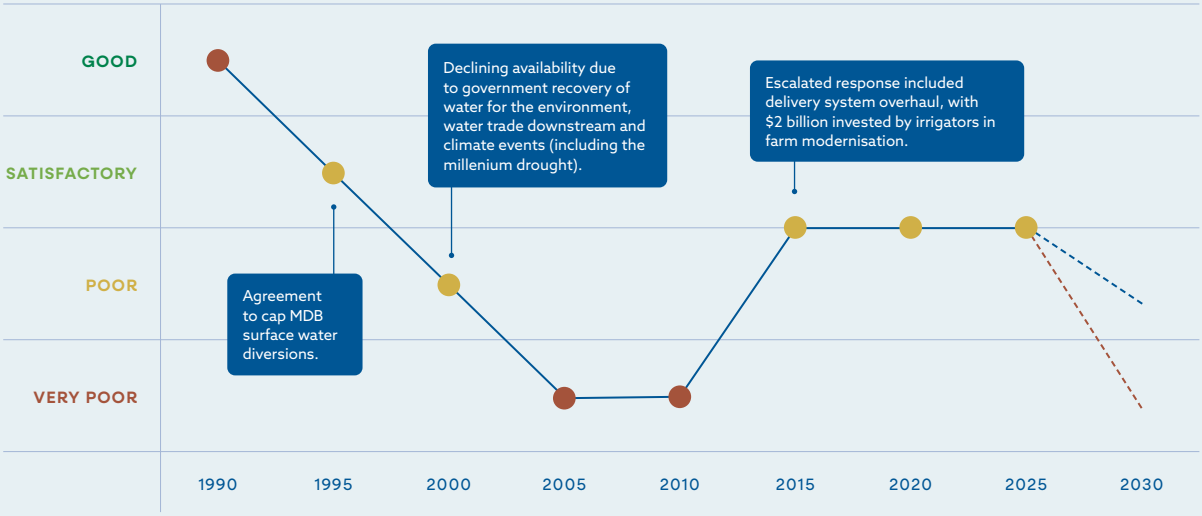
ENVIRONMENT (REGULATED STREAMS IN THE SIR)

2050 Intent: Water is shared collaboratively between the environment, agriculture and other community needs.



AGRICULTURE

2050 Intent: Water is shared collaboratively between the environment, agriculture and other community needs.



Indicative futures given: current support reduced support

SIRLWMP 2050 actions in 2025-26

The SIRLWMP 2050 transitioned from launch into implementation during 2025-26. The plan continues to guide regional action across the critical attributes of resilient community, farm and regional prosperity, biodiversity, water availability and drainage, with progress tracked through the annual workplan and review of critical attributes. During 2025-26, the annual work plan was reviewed and updated to monitor progress, identify areas requiring further attention, and guide priorities for 2026-27. EC6 funding remained a key enabler of delivery, complemented by efforts to secure additional investment through the Disaster Ready Fund and other state and Commonwealth funding initiatives.

RESILIENT COMMUNITY

Implementation of the SIRLWMP 2050 strengthened community and partner involvement during 2025-26. The Shepparton Irrigation Region Forum (SIRF) representation was confirmed, terms of reference were developed, and early meetings provided a platform to brief members on drainage, farm and regional prosperity, water policy and broader landscape change issues.

The review of previous support structures also led to clearer links between SIRF, the Drainage Working Group and the emerging Farm and Regional Prosperity Technical Group. SIRF members were involved in Basin Plan discussions, helping ensure the needs and goals of the SIRLWMP 2050 were reflected in regional feedback.

Cultural awareness training was delivered for SIRF members in March 2026, supporting stronger understanding of First Nations' connection to Country and opportunities for future involvement in plan delivery.

FARM AND REGIONAL PROSPERITY

Whole farm planning, irrigation extension and land and water use information continued to support farm adaptation and regional prosperity. Whole farm plan incentive delivery continued under EC6, with a mid-cycle review considering incentive rates, outputs, local government approval processes, barriers to adoption and seasonal conditions.

Revised whole farm plan guidelines and earthworks controls continued to support a more consistent approach across Campaspe Shire, Greater Shepparton City Council and Moira Shire. Irrigation system assessments and extension also continued to support landholders to improve water and energy efficiency.

Land and water use mapping continued to provide important evidence for understanding change across the GMID and surrounding catchments. Unregulated diversions were mapped and fact sheets were completed, while the GMID land use update progressed with GMW. A new Farm and Regional Prosperity Technical Group was also established to help interpret this evidence, test emerging issues and inform future program design and discussions with agencies and community partners.

BIODIVERSITY

The review of the SIRLWMP 2050 critical attributes confirmed biodiversity as a key component of a healthy and resilient irrigation region, highlighting the importance of protecting native vegetation, paddock trees, wetlands and other ecological values within a changing landscape. Biodiversity-related work continued through broader Goulburn Broken CMA programs, partnerships with Traditional Owners and engagement with local government.

Projects including Connecting Culture and Country, the Natural Heritage Trust and other funded initiatives contributed to habitat protection and restoration, revegetation, pest plant and animal control, and improved cultural and biodiversity outcomes across priority landscapes.

Through the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Advocacy Group, the Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group and municipal catchment coordination processes, Goulburn Broken CMA advocated for stronger native vegetation protection and greater consideration of biodiversity in planning and development decisions (see page 40).

WATER AVAILABILITY

Water availability remained a central focus for the SIRLWMP 2050 during 2025-26. The program supported regional engagement on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan review, including feedback to DEECA and opportunities for SIRF members and regional partners to discuss water security, water recovery, downstream demands and impacts on the SIR.

Land and water use mapping supported a better understanding of water use trends, irrigation footprint change, and potential adaptation needs. The program contributed to collaborative discussions with GMW, DEECA and other partners on sustainable footprint challenges, water delivery efficiency, and emerging land and water use trends.

The program also maintained links with research and policy initiatives, including One Basin CRC projects, the Goulburn Murray Resilience Strategy, water leadership discussions and adaptive capacity work. These activities support the SIRLWMP 2050 objective of helping the regional community remain informed, adaptive and influential in water decisions.

DRAINAGE

Planning for the remaining obstruction removal works in the Murray Valley West DCD area progressed during 2025-26, supported by Disaster Ready Fund approval. Preliminary project coordination and tender preparation were completed, positioning the project for on-ground delivery in 2026-27, subject to seasonal conditions.

In the Deakin Top Creek DCD catchment, investigations into drainage issues and potential solutions advanced through hydrological and hydraulic modelling, refined obstruction mapping and ongoing engagement with landowners. This work has improved understanding of the scope of a potential future DCD and associated obstruction treatment works, with funding opportunities being explored to support future implementation.

Groundwater monitoring and salinity management activities were maintained, including delivery of the 2025 watertable map (see Figure 23) and progression of the SIR Salinity Threat Status and Drivers project. The project is assessing contemporary salinity risks and the influence of changing irrigation practices, land use, climate and drainage arrangements on future salinity outcomes.

Progress was also made on the SIRLWMP Register Entry Review, with updated modelling and scenario testing supporting Victoria's Murray-Darling Basin salinity accountability obligations and ensuring the use of contemporary data and reporting methods.

The transition of Drainage and Salinity program delivery from GMW to Goulburn Broken CMA also advanced during 2025-26, with new arrangements scheduled to commence from late July 2026. This transition will strengthen the integration of drainage, salinity, land and water planning within the Sustainable Irrigation Program.

FIGURE 23: SHEPPARTON IRRIGATION REGION WATER TABLE MAP, AUGUST 2025

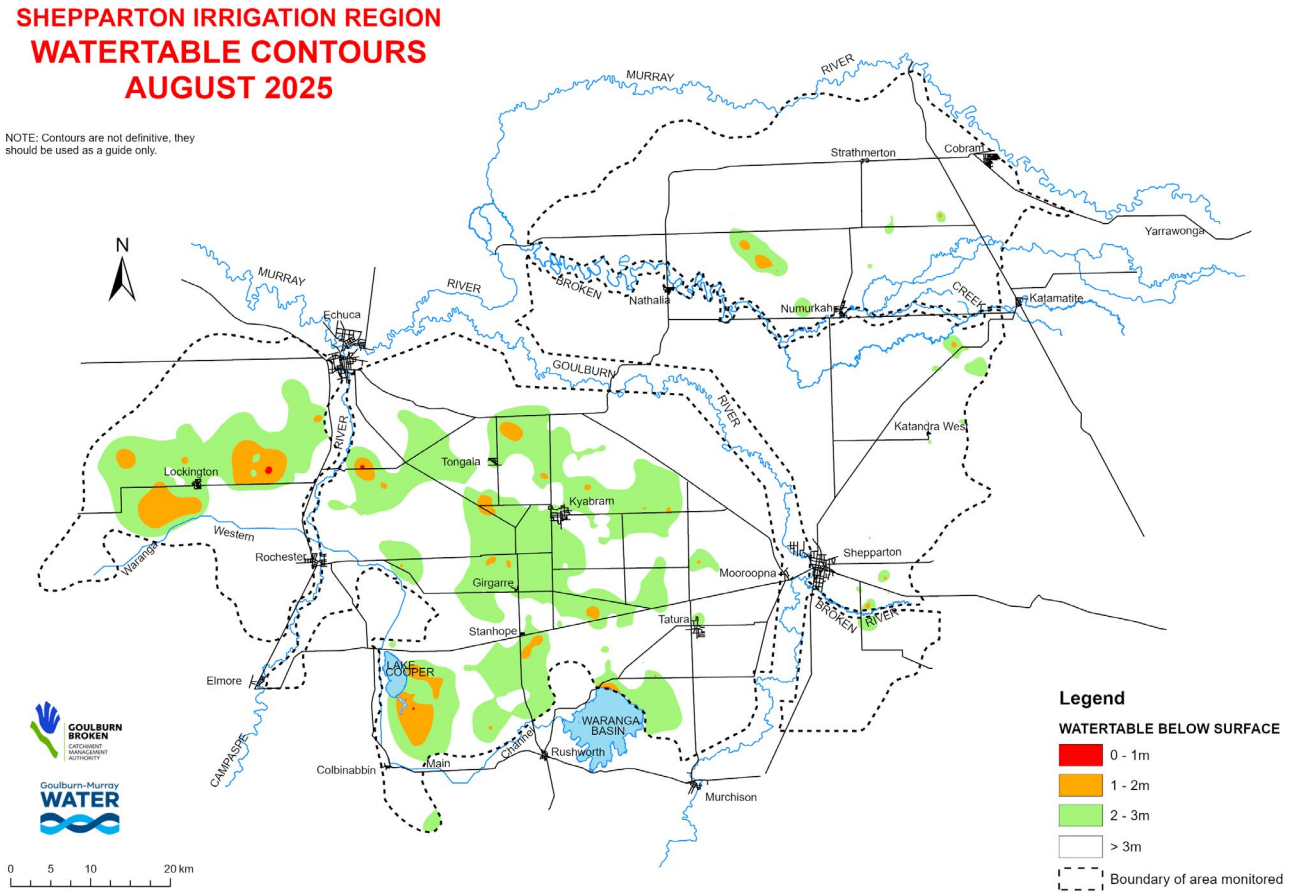
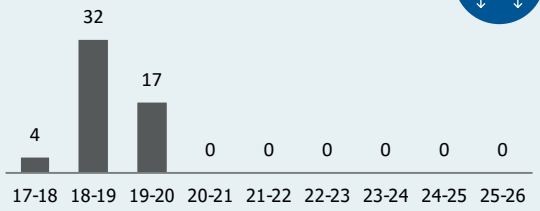
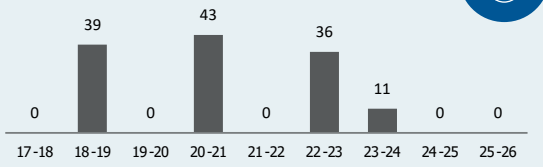


FIGURE 24: KEY IRRIGATION INDICATORS BY YEAR



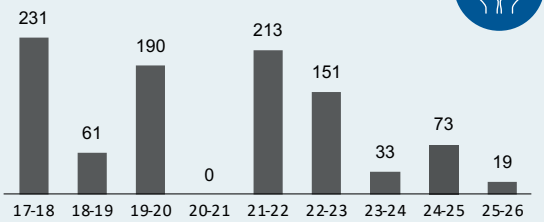
IRRIGATION SURFACE DRAINAGE: **0 KM**

Construction of traditional surface drains has not been funded since 2020, with the GMID Drainage Management Strategy supporting the lower cost Drainage Course Declaration implementation in undrained catchments.



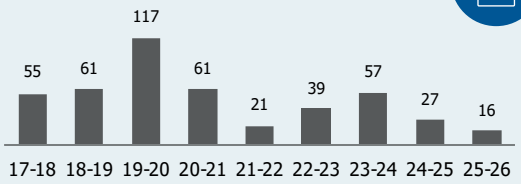
DRAINAGE COURSE DECLARED: **0 KM**

Since 2017, standalone Drainage Course Declarations with associated obstruction removal have been implemented as a whole of catchment drainage solution that maximises social, environmental and economic outcomes.



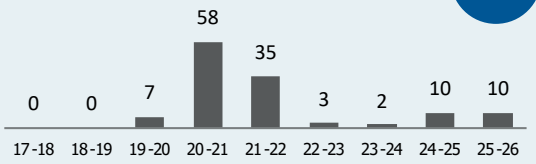
NATIVE VEGETATION INCREASED: **19 HA**

People are still keen to protect patches of native vegetation, but many large old paddock trees have been lost due to new agricultural developments. Figures include measured and assumed gains and losses.



WHOLE FARM PLANS PREPARED: **16**

In the last half of 2025, 12 plans were completed, but the pace of completed plans slowed in 2026 because of soaring diesel, fertiliser and other input costs, restricting landholder cash flow.



DRAINAGE COURSE OBSTRUCTIONS TREATED: **10**

Works associated with treatment of identified obstructions along the declared waterway. This can range from upgrading major road culverts to minor earthworks to clear blockages in existing infrastructure.

SALT DISPOSAL ENTITLEMENTS USED: **5.5EC**

(long-term credit allocated 8.9)

What's next for the SIR?

Looking ahead to 2026-27, the critical attribute review and annual work plan will provide a clear basis for setting priorities, strengthening partnerships and delivery arrangements, and addressing emerging regional needs and risks.

RESILIENT COMMUNITY

- Enhance SIRF's role in bringing together community and partner perspectives to review progress, test priorities and inform future SIRLWMP 2050 delivery.
- Strengthen links between SIRF, the Drainage Working Group and the Farm and Regional Prosperity Technical Group so community and technical advice can better inform decisions.
- Foster broader community participation in plan delivery, with a focus on engaging younger leaders, new farming communities and First Nations peoples.

FARM AND REGIONAL PROSPERITY

- Use land and water use mapping, whole farm planning information and partner knowledge to better understand changes in the irrigation footprint and inform future program design.
- Adapt whole farm planning and irrigation extension services to reflect changing farm enterprises, seasonal conditions, water availability and local government planning requirements.
- Progress work on natural capital, carbon farming, circular economy opportunities and regional adaptive capacity where funding and partnerships allow.

BIODIVERSITY

- Advance the protection and improvement of native vegetation, paddock trees, wetlands and ecological values through collaborative biodiversity programs, local government engagement and Traditional Owner partnerships.
- Support stronger links between biodiversity outcomes and irrigation-area planning, including whole farm planning, drainage investigations, native vegetation advocacy and natural capital opportunities.
- Strengthen advocacy for funding and policy settings that enable habitat protection, revegetation, permanent protection and landscape-scale biodiversity outcomes.

WATER AVAILABILITY

- Contribute to Basin Plan implementation and water policy processes, advocating for the needs of the SIR community, agricultural sector, environment and regional economy.
- Use land and water use mapping and the proposed GMID Story of Change Report to inform discussions on water use trends, future irrigation footprint, system efficiency and adaptive landscape transition.
- Maintain links with research and policy initiatives, including One Basin CRC, Goulburn Murray resilience work and adaptive capacity planning.

DRAINAGE

- Use Disaster Ready Fund support to progress the remaining obstruction treatment works in the Murray Valley West DCD project.
- Seek funding to progress the Deakin Top Creek DCD investigation, design and implementation pathway.
- Complete the transition of Drainage and Salinity program delivery from GMW to Goulburn Broken CMA and continue to strengthen drainage, salinity and monitoring capability.
- Use the Salinity Threat Status and Drivers project, Register Entry Review and watertable mapping to inform future salinity risk management and monitoring priorities.

CASE STUDY

Murray Valley West Drainage Course Declaration (DCD): Restoring natural flow paths to reduce flood risk in northern Victoria

10,570 HA	48.3 KM	40	95% +	$5.1M
PRODUCTIVE CATCHMENT	DECLARED NATURAL FLOW PATH	SITES TREATED	LANDHOLDER SUPPORT	ESTIMATED BENEFIT

The Murray Valley West catchment stretches from Waaia-Bearii Road to Barmah National Park in northern Victoria, covering around 10,570 hectares of highly productive irrigated farmland. Over many decades, banks, tracks, channel crossings and undersized culverts have been built across the catchment's natural depressions. Individually small, together these artificial obstructions can hold water back during heavy rainfall, prolonging waterlogging on farms, damaging roads, and disrupting the natural wetting and drying cycles that local wetlands depend on. The October 2022 floods highlighted the vulnerability of this landscape and the importance of keeping natural flow paths open.

A key response is the Murray Valley West DCD, a low-cost 'hybrid' approach to drainage established under Victoria's *Water Act 1989*. Rather than constructing new drains, a DCD formally recognises the catchment's natural flow path, which extends 48.3 kilometres through Murray Valley West, and gives GMW the authority to remove or modify obstructions interfering with it and keep it clear into the future. The DCD was declared in October 2022 after extensive community engagement. Approximately 97 landowners were consulted, with more than 95 per cent supporting the project, and YYNAC has been involved throughout to help protect cultural heritage.

Goulburn Broken CMA is leading the Obstruction Removal Program in partnership with GMW, translating the declaration into practical works on the ground. Around 40 sites are being treated across the catchment, replacing undersized road culverts and farm crossings, installing channel siphons, and removing earthen banks back to natural surface level. Each structure is designed to pass the flow from 50 millimetres of rainfall over 24 hours, helping water move through the landscape to its natural outfalls at Green Swamp and, ultimately, Goose Swamp in Barmah National Park.

Works at Green Swamp and on the Murray Valley Highway are already complete, with remaining sites packaged into staged construction tenders through to 2029. An independent cost-benefit analysis estimates the program will return around $5.1 million in benefits over 30 years through improved agricultural productivity, reduced road damage, healthier wetlands and stronger community resilience during high rainfall events. The program is a practical example of regionally led adaptation, working with landholders, Traditional Owners, government and delivery partners to reduce flood impacts while protecting the productive and environmental values of the irrigation landscape.



Green Swamp in flood — water held back across farmland by artificial obstructions. Reducing the impact of flood events like this is exactly what the Disaster Ready Fund targets.



The treated structure at Green Swamp Site 5 — new culverts and rock beaching keep the natural flow path open through the catchment.

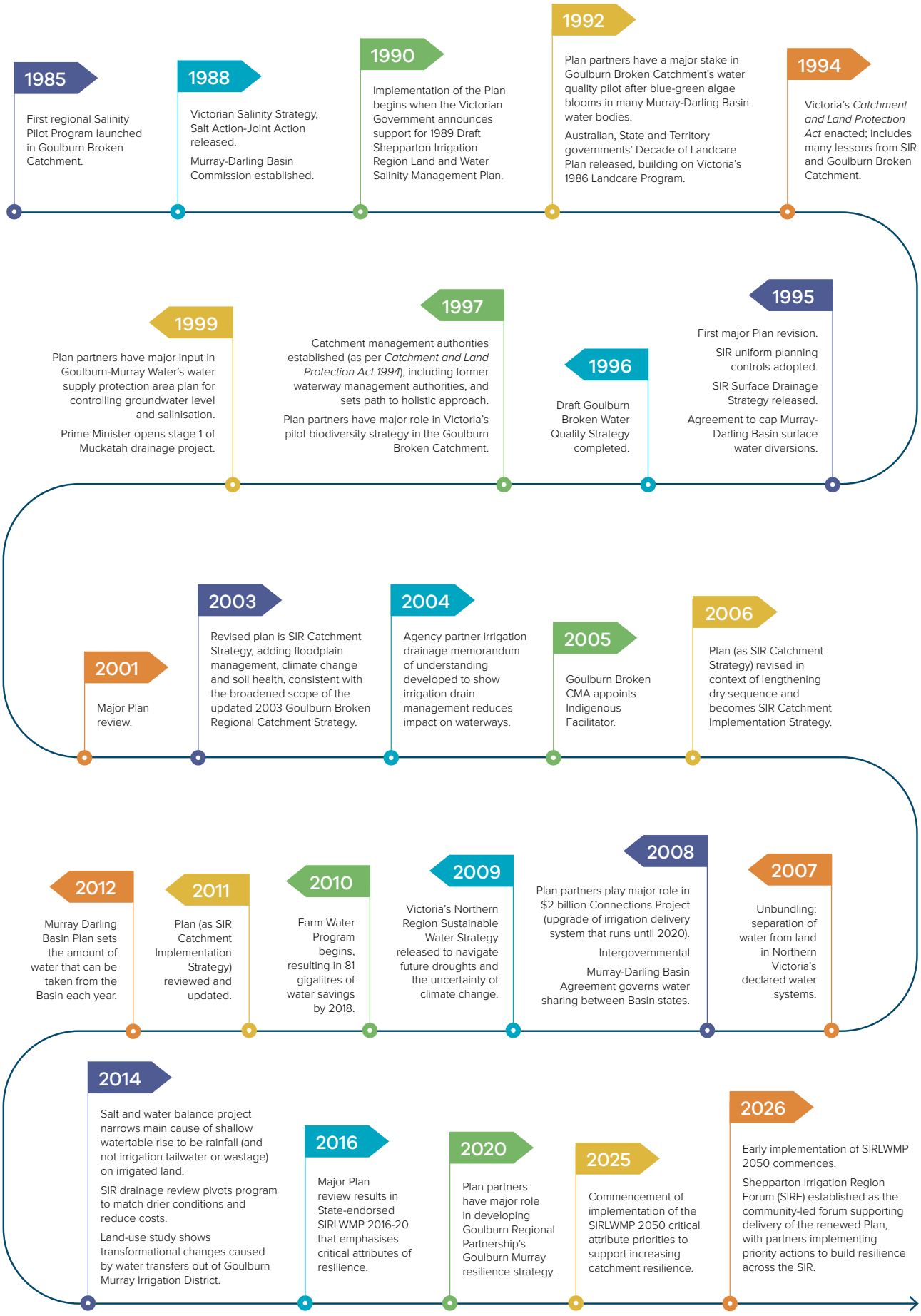


Before: water banked up behind an artificial bank at Green Swamp. Obstructions like this hold water back on productive farmland and starve wetlands downstream of natural flows.



After: the same site following works under the Obstruction Removal Program. The undersized structure has been replaced with appropriately sized culverts and rock protection, allowing water to flow naturally through the catchment.

FIGURE 25: TIMELINE OF THE SHEPPARTON IRRIGATION REGION LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN



4. Our organisation

Board Observer Program



SAM MUIR

Serving as an Indigenous Delegate for on Goulburn Broken CMA's Board over the past couple of years has been an incredibly meaningful and enriching experience. It has allowed me to play an active role in advocating for the integration of First Nations knowledge and perspectives in the management of our natural resources as well as contribute to the development of key strategic frameworks. I have been able to contribute to more culturally inclusive and sustainable practices and apply the knowledge and skills I gained through the program in a board setting. Through my experience, I have also built connections with other Aboriginal delegates across the state and am a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Goulburn Broken CMA Board

Goulburn Broken CMA's Board comprises members drawn from across the region who collectively bring extensive expertise in land, waterway and natural resource management, the water industry, primary production, strategic planning, governance and financial management. The Board provides strategic direction and oversight of the organisation in accordance with its Board Charter, ensuring Goulburn Broken CMA fulfils its functions and responsibilities effectively.

Under the direction of the Board, Goulburn Broken CMA develops detailed environmental management strategies under the umbrella of the overarching RCS.



Juvenile Kookaburras



SARAH PARKER (CHAIR)

1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Sarah Parker is a committed leader with over 20 years' experience in executive and senior management roles spanning sustainable agriculture, education, and community advocacy. Postgraduate qualifications in agriculture and community development support the deep insight Sarah brings to the challenges and opportunities facing regional communities. Since 2004, Sarah and her husband have operated an irrigated dairy farm in Victoria's Goulburn Valley, applying a practical and values-driven approach to land and resource management.

Sarah is director of NRM Regions Australia Secretary/Treasurer of the Australian Dairy Collective and a member of the National Farmers Federation (NFF) Telecommunications and Social Policy Committee. As Executive Officer of the Victorian Farmers Market Association, she also works within the World Farmers Market Coalition, advocating for sustainable local food systems globally.

A graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, NFF Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program, and the Victorian Climate Smart Agriculture Fellowship. Sarah is passionate about the future of agriculture and committed to encouraging the next generation to lead with purpose, innovation, and care for the environment.



ADRIAN WESTON (DEPUTY CHAIR)

1 JULY 2025 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Adrian, who previously ran a dairy farm, owns and operates an irrigated prime lamb and cropping farm enterprise at Rushworth. He is also a Campaspe Shire councillor.

Adrian has a long-standing interest in natural resource management and believes the greatest challenge facing the catchment community is balancing the demand for the increased productive use of land (soil) and water resources with protecting and improving the condition of the region's unique natural environment.

He says the key to building the catchment's environmental and social resilience relies on the willingness of business, industry and communities to embrace and adapt to change.



LEANNE MILLER AM

1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Leanne is a Dhulanyagen Ulupna woman of the Yorta Yorta people. She is an experienced director with a history of working in government, non-government and social organisations.

She is skilled in governance and leadership in non-profit organisations, corporate social responsibility, program evaluation, conflict resolution and culture change. Leanne is a Senior Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity and is Manager, First Peoples Workforce Development Team, Organisational Design and Strategic Management at RMIT University.

She has extensive experience advocating for and building opportunities with women in business including in environmental management and tourism.

Leanne is Chair of the Outback Academy Australia, a Victorian Women's Trust board member, a Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust – Dugdale Trust for Women and Girls trustee, member of Koorie Women Mean Business and a Self Determination Fund trustee. She was the inaugural elected North East member of the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria (2019-2023).



LES MCLEAN

1 JULY 2025 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Les is an experienced board director and executive with a strong financial background as Chief Financial Officer with more than 20 years management and leadership experience in the Victorian water industry and health sector.

Les holds particular expertise in finance, governance, strategic planning, risk management and stakeholder engagement. He is a Fellow Certified Practising Accountant (FCPA) and graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

He was previously a board director of the Port Phillip and Westernport CMA and currently holds the position of Executive Officer of the Natural Resources Conservation League of Victoria and its associated environmental philanthropic trust.



AMANDA MCCLAREN

1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Amanda McClaren is a passionate advocate for sustainable land management, regenerative agriculture and agricultural education. She brings extensive experience in governance, regional development and natural resource management, with a strong understanding of the environmental, economic and social challenges facing the Goulburn Broken region.

Amanda teaches agriculture at Seymour College, where she has established an innovative, hands-on food and fibre education program.

She is president of the Victorian Association of Agricultural and Horticultural Educators, and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, the Australian Rural Leadership Program – LARC Rivers to Plains, and the National Farmers' Federation Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program.

Together with her husband and two sons, Amanda operates Yapunyah Farm at Graytown, a regenerative farming enterprise demonstrating practical approaches to sustainable food production, biodiversity, and soil health.



JODIE SMITH

1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Jodie is the manager of the Best Practice Program for CPA Australia and previously worked as an accountant in public practice for the past 16 years. She holds qualifications in economics, accounting, agriculture and animal science, is a Fellow Certified Practising Accountant (FCPA) and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Jodie maintains an affinity to rural communities, having been a board director of Rochester and Elmore District Health Service for eight years. Jodie has an interest in how we can better maintain our environment and the role that agriculture plays in ensuring our natural resources are maintained for future generations.



JOHN MERRITT

1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

John has led large and complex government organisations for more than 25 years. He has been the chair of the WorkSafe Victoria board, a non-executive director of the Transport Accident Commission, the chief executive of VicRoads and the chief executive of the Environment Protection Authority. John was also the executive director of WorkSafe Victoria, the chief executive of the National Safety Council of Australia and held senior management roles in the Fletcher Challenge organisation.

Today, John is a non-executive director and an advisor and public speaker on leadership, culture and strategy. He is the chair of the Building Industry Consultative Council, a member of the advisory council for the Monash Sustainable Development Institute and a supporter of the St Kilda Football Club, as a member of the club's Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee and chair of the Danny Frawley Centre. He was a lead evaluator for Victoria's Biodiversity 2037 Strategy and conducted the independent review of SafeWork SA for the South Australian Government.



DAMIEN GERRANS (DEPUTY CHAIR)

1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Damien was raised in the upper Goulburn catchment where his family farmed beef cattle. He gained experience in environmental regulation and major project delivery before returning to the Goulburn Broken catchment in 2013. With his wife Jess and sons Arthur and Toby, he runs a farm at Lima East working to improve the ecological health of the property.

Recently Damien has worked in local government and Landcare. He also holds a degree in Environmental Engineering and a Masters in Sustainable Agriculture.



JEFF ODGERS

1 OCTOBER 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Jeff is a farmer based in Mooroopna North, where he manages irrigated cropping and beef cattle on his family property.

With over 35 years of experience in Australian agribusiness, including large-scale dairy operations, Jeff brings deep industry insight and leadership to the boardroom. He holds a Bachelor of Business (Agricultural Management) and is a seasoned non-executive director.

Jeff has played a pivotal role in regional dairy processing and farm systems innovation, serving as a director of Tatura Milk, Murray Dairy and Bega Cheese.

TABLE 10: BOARD MEMBERS AND MEETING ATTENDANCE 2025-26

NAME	POSITION	TERM	ATTENDED	ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND
Sarah Parker	Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	7	7
Adrian Weston	Deputy Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025	1	1
Leanne Miller		1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	6	7
Les McLean		1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025	0	1
Amanda McClaren		1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	5	7
Jodie Smith		1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	7	7
Damien Gerrans	Deputy Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	7	7
John Merritt		1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	6	7
Sam Muir	Indigenous Board Delegate	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	4	7
Jeff Odgers		1 October 2025 to 30 June 2026	5	6

Board committees

The Audit Risk and Compliance Committee and the People, Culture and Remuneration Committee provide governance oversight in accordance with the terms of their respective Charters.

AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

The responsibilities of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee are set out in Standing Direction 3.2.1.1. Its overarching function is to monitor and evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the corporate governance and risk management frameworks. Members are appointed by the Board for a three-year term and are subject to the committee's charter.

Meetings are held quarterly and at any other time on request of a committee member or the internal or external auditor. In 2025-26, the Committee met four times. Attendance of committee members is detailed in Table 11.

TABLE 11: AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING ATTENDANCE 2025-26

NAME	POSITION	TERM	ATTENDED	ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND
Jodie Smith	Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	4	4
Adrian Weston	Member	1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025	1	1
Les McLean	Member	1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025	1	1
Damien Gerrans	Alternate member (if required for quorum)	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	2	4
Jeff Odgers	Member	1 October 2025 to 30 June 2026	2	2
John Merritt	Alternate member (if required for quorum)	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	1	1
Amanda McClaren	Member (required for quorum)	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	1	1
Sarah Parker (ex-officio)	Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	3	4
Sam Muir	Non-voting member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	1	4

PEOPLE, CULTURE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The People, Culture and Remuneration Committee provides oversight of executive remuneration, workforce arrangements, and organisational culture and safety performance. During 2025-26, the Committee met four times. Details of member attendance are provided in Table 12.

TABLE 12: PEOPLE, CULTURE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING ATTENDANCE 2025-26

NAME	POSITION	TERM	ATTENDED	ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND
Amanda McClaren	Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	3	4
Leanne Miller	Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	4	4
John Merritt	Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	3	4
Damien Gerrans	Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	3	4
Sarah Parker (ex-officio)	Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026	2	4

Executive team

Chief Executive Officer
Carl Walters

Corporate and Business Services Program Manager
Kylie Miriantini-Mele

Sustainable Irrigation Program Manager
Carolyn Nigro

Biodiversity and Land Health Program Manager
Rebecca Caldwell

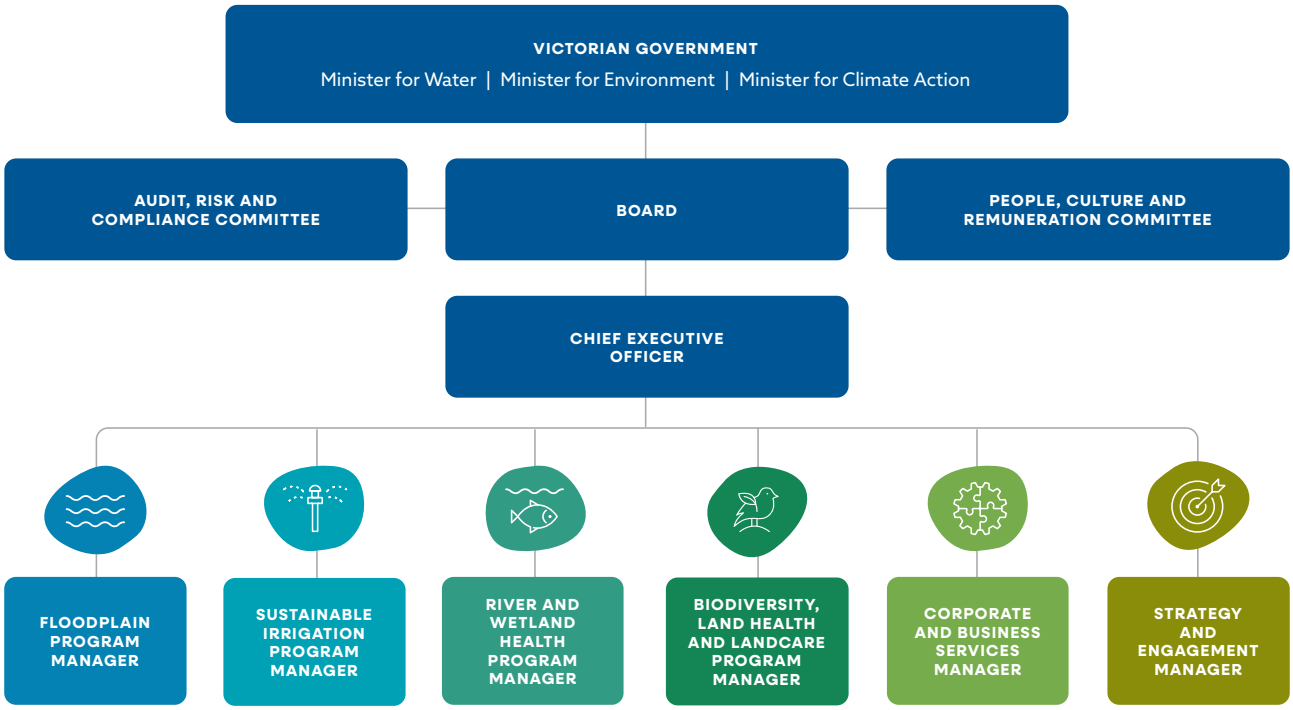
River and Wetland Health Program Manager
Simon Cowan

Statutory Planning and Floodplain Manager
Guy Tierney

Strategy and Engagement Manager
Joshua Chikuse (until April 2026)
Carla Miles (acting from April 2026)
Jen Pagon (acting from April 2026)

Organisational structure

FIGURE 26: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



Human resources and Occupational Health and Safety

2025-26 people and culture

Goulburn Broken CMA is dedicated to fostering a high-performing workforce and constructive organisational culture, underpinned by strong leadership, customer focus, expertise and innovation. Ongoing investment in employee development supports adaptability, engagement, flexibility and continuous improvement across the organisation.

The organisation maintains a strong focus on workplace health, safety and wellbeing through proactive employee-led initiatives that support both the physical and psychological health of employees. Workforce capability remains aligned with organisational priorities to deliver positive outcomes for our people, communities and the environment.

Employment and conduct principles

The *Public Administration Act 2004* established the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) to strengthen public sector capability, effectiveness and integrity. Goulburn Broken CMA's policies and practices align with VPSC employment standards, supporting fair treatment, career development opportunities and the timely resolution of workplace issues. Employees are provided with guidance on managing conflicts of interest, responding to gifts, and addressing misconduct and inappropriate workplace behaviour.

In 2025, the Fair Work Commission approved Goulburn Broken CMA's four-year Enterprise Agreement. The Agreement aligns with updated National Employment Standards, supports flexible work practices and introduces a more streamlined performance development and review process.



Releasing Southern Purple Spotted Gudgeons at Dunyak Moira at Merrigum



Goulburn River

Organisation condition

Goulburn Broken CMA's 2026 Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI) highlighted ongoing improvements in organisational culture, leadership and customer focus. People Matter Survey results showed employee engagement increased to 85 (up from 77 in 2025), with improvements in leadership clarity, manageable workloads and workplace wellbeing. Flexible work arrangements remained widely used, with 93 per cent of employees accessing flexible work options. The appointment of additional women to senior leadership roles during 2025-26 also contributed to a significant reduction in the gender pay gap.

Modern ways of working

Flexible work remains a core part of Goulburn Broken CMA's workplace culture and is highly valued by employees. The People Matter Survey found that 100 per cent of respondents were confident requests for flexible work arrangements would be given due consideration. Hybrid working arrangements continue to support collaboration across offices, reduce travel requirements and promote work-life balance.

Capability building

In 2025, Goulburn Broken CMA invested in leadership development through the OCI process, including one-on-one coaching to strengthen leadership effectiveness and culture. Improvements were also made to key systems and processes, including the Safety Culture incident reporting platform and expense reimbursement process. A follow-up OCI in 2026 showed a significant improvement in culture alignment, supported by insights from the People Matter Survey, which was also conducted in early 2026.

Supporting our community

Through the Ken Sampson Scholarship program, Goulburn Broken CMA supported a First Nations community leader to participate in the 2025 Fairley Leadership Program. During the 2026 Longwood bushfires, three employees also contributed to emergency response efforts as volunteers, supporting frontline firefighting and Incident Control Centre operations.

Workforce data

The following tables outline the workforce data for Goulburn Broken CMA. Employees have been correctly classified in its collection.

TABLE 13: ANNUALISED SALARY BY $20,000 BANDS FOR EXECUTIVES AND OTHER SENIOR NON-EXECUTIVE EMPLOYEES

INCOME BAND (SALARY) [i] [ii]	NO. (HEADCOUNT)
< $160,000	–
$160,000 - $179,999	6
$180,000 - $199,999	1
$200,000 - $219,999	–
$220,000 - $239,999	1

(i) Income bands in this table differ from Note 8.4 in the Financial Statements as $ values are based on salary only, not total remuneration package.

(ii) Nil executives working part-time.

TABLE 14: OTHER WORKFORCE DATA FOR THE PERIODS 2022-23, 2023-24 AND 2025-26

	2023-24 NO.	2023-24 %	2024-25 NO.	2024-25 %	2025-26 NO.	2025-26 %	COMMENTS
YEARS OF SERVICE [i]							
12 months or less	2	4	9	16	5	9	Average length of service has remained stable over the past few years, however with ongoing recruitment to new and existing positions, it is expected this number will reduce over the next few years.
1-3 years	13	27	10	18	11	19	
3-5 years	2	4	5	10	13	22	
5+ years	32	65	29	56	29	50	
Average length of service, years	10.1		9.4		10.5		
SALARY DISTRIBUTION [i, ii]							
<$40,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	A competitive labour market and 3 per cent annual increase in the new Goulburn Broken CMA Enterprise Agreement has largely driven these increases.
$40,000 - 59,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	
$60,000 - 79,999	5	11	1	2	0	0	
$80,000 - 99,999	26	53	19	36	17	31	
$100,000+	18	36	33	62	38	69	
Average Salary [iii]	$101,692		$119,150		$119,877		
QUALIFICATIONS [i]							
Year 12 or less	1	2	1	2	0	0	This has remained relatively consistent.
Certificate	0	0	1	2	2	4	
Advanced Diploma/ Diploma	8	16	9	17	9	17	
Degree	29	59	26	49	28	49	
Postgraduate Degree/ Graduate Diploma	11	22	9	17	9	17	
Turnover (total)	13	27	4	7.5	4	7.5	Turn over has remained relatively stable, however with an aging workforce, the higher number this year represents the retirements that have occurred.
Turnover (ongoing staff only, % of total turnover)	9	69	2	5	4	6.5	
Absenteeism		2.6		4		4	

(i) All employees (excluding terminations and board / committee members)
(ii) Based on 1.0 FTE full year salary
(iii) Actual average salary paid including terminations



Goulburn Broken CMA staff with CEO Carl Walters

COMPARATIVE WORKFORCE DATA [i, ii]

Table 15 below discloses the headcount and full-time equivalent (FTE) of all active employees of Goulburn Broken CMA employed at the last full pay period in June of the current reporting period (2026) and in the last full pay period in June of the previous reporting period (2025).

TABLE 15: COMPARATIVE WORKFORCE DATA

	JUNE 2025							JUNE 2026						
	ALL EMPLOYEES		ONGOING [iii]			FIXED TERM [iv] AND CASUAL		ALL EMPLOYEES		ONGOING [iii]			FIXED TERM [iv] AND CASUAL	
	NO.	FTE	FULL TIME NO.	PART TIME NO.	FTE	NO.	FTE	NO.	FTE	FULL TIME NO.	PART TIME NO.	FTE	NO.	FTE
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA														
GENDER [v]														
Male	20	19.9	15	1	15.9	4	4	22	21.9	18	1	18.9	3	3
Female	33	29.2	16	12	28.2	1	1	36	32	18	14	28	4	4
AGE														
15-24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
25-34	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	3	2.8	1	1	1.8	1	1
35-44	11	10.4	6	5	10.4	1	1	10	9.4	5	3	7.4	2	2
45-54	23	21.3	19	4	21.3	2	2	26	24.4	21	4	23.4	1	1
55-64	12	10.4	7	5	10.4	0	0	16	14.5	7	6	11.5	3	3
65+	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	1.8	1	1	1.8	0	0
CLASSIFICATION DATA [vi]														
BANDS														
Band 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Band 6	3	2.6	1	2	2.6	0	0	3	2.6	1	2	2.6	0	0
Band 7	6	3.9	0	6	3.9	0	0	6	3.9	0	6	3.9	0	0
Band 8	22	20.8	16	5	20.8	3	3	22	20.8	14	5	20.8	3	3
SEO	9	8.8	9	0	8.8	0	0	9	8.8	9	0	8.8	0	0
Program Managers	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	2
2PEER	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1

(i) All figures reflect employment levels during the last full pay period in June of each year
(ii) Excluded are external contractors/consultants, and temporary employees employed by employment agencies.
(iii) Ongoing employees includes people engaged on an open-ended contract of employment who were active in the last full pay period of June.
(iv) Fixed Term employees include people engaged on a fixed term contract of employment who were active in the last full pay period of June.
(v) Non-binary data around gender (self-described) has not yet been collected.
(vi) Employees are classified as a Band (1 to SEO) under the EBA. Program managers refer to employees not employed under the EBA.

2025-26 Occupational Health and Safety performance

The Key Performance Indicators for OHS continues to be included in the quarterly reporting of OHS to the Board and Senior Management team.

Key areas of focus for Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing during 2025-26 included:

- Vehicle and driver safety.
- Promoting Safe Work Month in October 2025 which included cross functional depot inspections, seminars and a focus on hazard identification and risk management.
- Psychological safety and wellbeing initiatives – RUOK Day, mindfulness, and expansion and promotion of our mental health resources through our Employee Assistance Provider.
- Wellbeing and health screening initiatives offered during 2025-26 included:
  - Influenza vaccination program
  - Skin cancer check program
  - Skin cancer education program
  - Social engagement activities such as A Taste of Harmony, One Foot Forward – step challenge, and a Goulburn Broken CMA shared recipe book.

TABLE 16: 2025-26 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE TABLE

		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Hazards	Hazards reported, no.	1	3	3
	Rate per 100 FTE	2	5	5
Incidents	Total incidents, no.	10	12	7
	Rate per 100 FTE	22	22	13
	Incidents requiring first aid and/or further medical treatment, no.	1	1	1
Claims	No. of Standard claims	0	0	0
	Rate per 100 FTE	0	0	0
	No. of lost time Standard claims	0	0	0
	Rate per 100 FTE	0	0	0
	No. claims exceeding 13 weeks	0	0	0
	Rate per 100 FTE	0	0	0
Fatalities	Fatality claims	0	0	0
Claim costs	Average cost per Standard claim	0	0	0
Return to work	Percentage of claims with RTW plan <30 days	0	0	0
Management commitment	Evidence of OHS policy statement, OHS objectives, regular reporting to senior management of OHS, and OHS plans (signed by CEO or equivalent).	Completed	Completed	Completed
	Evidence of OHS criteria(s) in purchasing guidelines (including goods, services and personnel).	Completed	Completed	Completed
Consultation and participation	Evidence of agreed structure of designated workgroups (DWGs), health and safety representatives (HSRs), and issue resolution procedures (IRPs)	Completed	Completed	Completed
	Compliance with agreed structure on DWGs, HSRs, and IRPs.	Completed	Completed	Completed
	Number of OHS Committee meetings	5	6	5
Risk management	Percentage of internal audits/inspections conducted as planned.	75	100	100
	Percentage of reported incidents investigated	100	100	100
	Improvement Notices issued across the Authority by WorkSafe	0	0	0
	Percentage of issues identified actioned arising from: • internal audits • HSR provisional improvement notices • WorkSafe notices	 100 N/A N/A	 100 0 0	 100 0 0
Training	Percentage of managers and staff that have received OHS training: • induction • management training • contractors, temps, and visitors	 100 100 100	 100 100 100	 100 100 100
	Percentage of HSRs trained: • acceptance of role • re-training (refresher) • reporting of incidents and injuries	 N/A 2 100	 100 100 100	 100 100 100

Compliance and disclosures

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE ATTESTATION STATEMENT

I, Sarah Parker, Chair of the board of Goulburn Broken CMA, on behalf of the Responsible Body, certify that Goulburn Broken CMA has no Material Compliance Deficiency with respect to the applicable Standing Directions under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Instructions.

D A Parker

Sarah Parker
Chair, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
22 September 2026

Corporate governance practices

Sound and ethical corporate governance practices underpin Goulburn Broken CMA's overall performance including compliance with what is required and expected of it. This is codified in Goulburn Broken CMA's Financial Code of Practice which all employees are obligated to comply with.

Goulburn Broken CMA manages its legislative compliance in accordance with its Legislative Compliance Framework Policy and legislative compliance register.

Disclosure index

An index identifying Goulburn Broken CMA's compliance with statutory disclosure requirements is contained in the Disclosure Index (see page 140).

Building Act 1993

The Goulburn Broken CMA does not own or control any government buildings and consequently is exempt from notifying its compliance with the building and maintenance provisions of the *Building Act 1993*.

DataVic Access Policy 2012

Goulburn Broken CMA regularly utilises data from DataVic to support it Geospatial mapping for the purposes of supporting flood management and NRM planning. In the reporting period, Goulburn Broken CMA has not supplied any data directly to DataVic. Goulburn Broken CMA has been consistent with the DataVic Access Policy by accessing the data, using it for day-to-day operations, and giving appropriate recognition to DataVic on all published maps.

Competitive neutrality policy

Competitive neutrality requires government businesses to ensure that where services compete, or potentially compete, with the private sector, any net advantage arising from government ownership is accounted for if it is not in the public interest. Government businesses that undertake significant business activities are required to implement competitive neutrality measures (such as setting competitive neutral prices), which accounts for any net advantage that comes from public ownership. Competitive neutrality policy supports fair competition between public and private businesses and provides government businesses with a tool to enhance decisions on resource allocation. This policy does not override other policy objectives of government and focuses on removing resource allocation distortions.

Goulburn Broken CMA continues to comply with the requirements of the Competitive Neutrality Policy.

Gender Equality Act 2020

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires certain organisations with more than 50 employees (defined entities) to complete 5 key tasks to meet their obligations under the Act:

- Promote gender equality
- Conduct gender impact assessments
- Undertake a workplace gender audit
- Create a Gender Equality Action Plan
- Report on progress

Goulburn Broken CMA has completed all requirements to ensure compliance with its obligations under the Act with the Commissioner formally approving Goulburn Broken CMA's Gender Equality Action Plan.

Statement of availability of other information

Goulburn Broken CMA's Annual Reports and Corporate Plans are available on the website www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

Additional information available on request

In compliance with the requirements of the Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, details in respect of the items listed below have been retained by the Authority and are available on request, subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*:

- details of publications produced by the entity about itself and how these can be obtained.
- details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged by the entity.
- details of any major external reviews carried out on the entity.
- details of major research and development activities undertaken by the entity.
- details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by the entity to develop community awareness of the entity and its services.
- details of all consultancies and contractors.

The information is available on request from:

FOI Officer, Goulburn Broken CMA
PO Box 1752, Shepparton VIC 3630
Email foi@gbcma.vic.gov.au or phone (03) 5822 7700.

Additional information included in annual report

Details in respect of the following items have been included in the Goulburn Broken CMA's annual report, on the pages indicated below:

- assessments and measures undertaken to improve the occupational health and safety of employees (see Table 16).
- a list of Goulburn Broken CMA's major committees; the purposes of each committee; and the extent to which the purposes have been achieved (on page 80).

Information that is not applicable to the Goulburn Broken CMA

The following information is not relevant to the Goulburn Broken CMA for the reasons set out below:

- a declaration of shares held by senior officers (no shares have ever been issued by Goulburn Broken CMA)
- a statement on industrial relations within Goulburn Broken CMA and details of time lost through industrial accidents and disputes (no industrial relations issues occurred during 2025-26).

Freedom of Information (FOI)

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) provides the community with a legal right to access documents held by government agencies, including Goulburn Broken CMA. The FOI Act promotes transparency and accountability by enabling access to information held by the Authority, subject to certain exemptions that protect considerations such as privacy, confidentiality, legal privilege and public interest.

Information about the documents and information held by Goulburn Broken CMA is available through the Authority's Part II Information Statement on its website. Applications for access to documents are managed in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.

The FOI Act generally requires applications to be processed within 30 days, with extensions available in specified circumstances, including where consultation with third parties is required. Applicants who are dissatisfied with a decision have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC).



Native fish education day

Making a request

FOI requests can be lodged online through OVIC or submitted in writing to Goulburn Broken CMA's FOI Officer. An application fee applies, and access charges may be payable where extensive document searches are required. To be valid, requests must be made in writing, clearly describe the documents sought and include the prescribed application fee.

Requests can be emailed to foi@gbcma.vic.gov.au or mailed to:

Freedom of Information Officer
PO Box 1752, Shepparton VIC 3632

FOI statistics/timeliness

During 2025-26, the Authority received two applications. Of these requests, both were made from the general public.

The Authority made two FOI decisions during the 12-month period ended 30 June 2026. These decisions were made within the extended statutory 30-45 day period, with both being granted access in part.

During 2025-26, two requests were reviewed by OVIC and no requests were progressed to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Further information

Further information regarding the operation and scope of FOI can be obtained from the Act; regulations made under the Act; and www.ovic.vic.gov.au.

Compliance with the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* enables people to make a disclosure about corrupt or improper conduct by a public officer or a public body. Goulburn Broken CMA is a 'public body' for the purposes of the Act.

What is a public interest disclosure?

A public interest disclosure is a complaint of corrupt or improper conduct or detrimental action by a public officer or a public body.

'Improper or corrupt conduct' involves substantial mismanagement of public resources, risk to public health or safety or the environment, or corruption. 'Detrimental action' is action taken against a person in reprisal for making a public interest disclosure.

How do I make a 'Public Interest Disclosure'?

You can make a public interest disclosure about Goulburn Broken CMA or its board members, officers or employees by contacting the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (details below). Goulburn Broken CMA is not able to receive public interest disclosures.

How can I access the Goulburn Broken CMA's policy and procedure for the protection of persons from detrimental action?

Goulburn Broken CMA has established procedures for the protection of persons from detrimental action in reprisal for making a protected disclosure about Goulburn Broken CMA or its employees.

Access to Goulburn Broken CMA's Public Interest Disclosure policy and procedure can be be found on the website at: www.gbcma.vic.gov.au.

Contacts

Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) Victoria

Address: Level 1, North Tower, 459 Collins Street, Melbourne Victoria 3000.
Mail: IBAC, GPO Box 24234, Melbourne Victoria 3001.

Internet: www.ibac.vic.gov.au

Phone: 1300 735 135
Email: see the website above for the secure email disclosure process, which also provides for anonymous disclosures.

Local Jobs First - Victorian Industry Participation Policy

The *Local Jobs First Act 2003* requires Victorian Government departments and public bodies to report on their compliance with the Local Jobs First Policy, which includes the Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPP) and the Major Projects Skills Guarantee (MPSG). Under the policy, VIPP applies to construction projects valued at more than $1 million in regional Victoria and more than $3 million in metropolitan or state-wide locations, unless otherwise determined by the Minister. The MPSG applies to Local Jobs First construction projects valued at more than $20 million and requires a proportion of labour hours to be undertaken by apprentices, trainees and cadets.

During 2025-26, Goulburn Broken CMA did not commence any construction contracts valued at over $1m where a VIPP Plan or Local Industry Development Plan was required.

Government advertising expenditure

No advertising campaigns with a media spend of $100,000 or greater were entered into during the year.

Disclosure of major contracts

Goulburn Broken CMA did not award any major contracts (valued at $10 million or more) during 2025-26.

Consultancy expenditure

Table 17 outlines the number and dollar value of consultancies for 2025-26 above and below $10,000 compared to previous years.

Details of individual consultancies valued at $10,000 or greater are outlined on Goulburn Broken CMA's website, at www.gbcma.vic.gov.au.

Community grants

Appendix 5 details a list of grants paid to community groups and organisations for projects during the 2025-26 financial year. Payments made to Traditional owner groups are done on a works basis and may be across more than one funding source.

Major contracts

Goulburn Broken CMA did not manage any major contracts of Total Estimated Investment of $10 million or more.

Disclosure of emergency procurement

During 2025-26, Goulburn Broken CMA did not undertake Emergency Procurement as defined under the requirements of government policy and accompanying guidelines, resulting in nil spending for emergency procurements.

Disclosure of procurement complaints

During 2025-26, Goulburn Broken CMA did not have any complaints in relation to the procurement of goods and services by entities within the scope of the Victorian Government Purchasing Board framework.

Disclosure of review and study expenses

During 2025-26, there were 7 material reviews and studies currently underway with the total cost of $349,447. Details of individual reviews and studies are outlined in Table 18.

TABLE 17: CONSULTANCY EXPENDITURE BY YEAR

	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
	NO.	$ (EX GST)	NO.	$ (EX GST)	NO.	$ (EX GST)	NO.	$ (EX GST)	NO.	$ (EX GST)
Consultancies valued at $10,000 or greater	17	445,745	9	205,997	8	215,638	11	378,434	19	783,708
Consultancies valued at less than $10,000	16	58,651	21	121,916	18	59,266	12	43,786	13	69,011

TABLE 18: REVIEWS AND STUDIES

CONSULTANT ENGAGED	TIMELINE	REASONS FOR REVIEW/STUDY	TERMS OF REFERENCE/ SCOPE	ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES	ESTIMATED COST FOR THE YEAR (EXCL. GST)	FINAL COST IF COMPLETED (EXCL. GST)	PUBLICLY AVAILABLE (Y/N)
Hydrology & Hydraulic Analysis, Flood Behaviour Mapping & Intelligence for the Goulburn and Broken Rivers							
Hydrology and Risk Consulting	2017 – June 2027	Analysis and mapping of flood behaviour	Mapping and Intelligence for the Goulburn and Broken Rivers	More informed decision making for flood events	$54,789		N, not yet complete
Goulburn River Off-Stream Habitat Assessment							
HARC Services Pty Ltd	September 2025 – May 2026	Assess the commence to fill/ flow thresholds of off-channel habitats along the Goulburn River.	Identify flow thresholds and habitat connectivity potential for off-channel habitats along the Goulburn River under current and relaxed flow constraints.	Increased capacity to assess and quantify the ecological benefits from environmental water management.	$95,270	$95,270	N, part of a larger study
Strategic Levee Category Project							
Confluence Group Pty Ltd	August 2024 - December 2026	Categorise managed and unmanaged levees across the Goulburn Broken catchment	Mapping of levees, updating of intelligence documentation and categorisation for ongoing management	More informed decisions around levees for future flood events.	$50,605		N, not yet complete
Adaptive Management of Urban and Rural Drainage After Extreme Rainfall Events							
DG Consulting (Aus) Pty Ltd	December 2025 – December 2026	Discharge of storm water in new urban developments into rural drainage systems	Develop updated discharge conditions and an adaptive framework for managing urban stormwater discharges to rural drainage systems.	Better drainage in urban areas from land use change.	$19,679		N, not yet complete
Hydrologic and Hydraulic Assessment, Design Analysis and Reporting							
Water Technology Pty Ltd	February 2026 – June 2026	Investigating erosion on Rellimeiggam Creek	Survey and hydraulic assessments of Reach 5, with design analysis and topographical surveys	Report including detailed rock chute design and modelling with management options and recommendations	$25,618	$25,618	N, part of a larger study
Lower Rubicon River Geomorphic Investigation							
Water Technology Pty Ltd	January 2025 – August 2025	Investigate channel change processes and provide recommendations for managing the Lower Rubicon River channel and adjacent Goulburn River floodplain.	Hydraulic assessments, spatial analysis and geomorphic data mapped and analysed.	Report on findings with management options and recommendations	$14,690	$23.990	N, part of a larger study
Investigation into Flow Variability in the Lower Broken Creek							
Streamology Pty Ltd	March 2025 – March 2026	Investigate variable water level regimes to improve Lower Broken Creek bank condition.	Stage 1 - Quantify flow targets, develop and apply an initial hydraulic model.	Reduction of erosion in Lower Broken Creek	$39,310	$39,310	N, part of a larger study
Baddaginnie Flood Study							
Water Technology Pty Ltd	December 2025 – December 2027	Produce flood intelligence and mapping products.	Community engagement, hydrologic and hydraulic analysis, mapping of flood behaviour	Flood mapping, mitigation recommendations, and updates to hydraulic models and the Municipal Flood Emergency Plan.	$49,486		N, not yet complete

Note: Table does not include reviews or studies that may be Commercial-in-Confidence or commercially sensitive, or where the release may be detrimental to Government operations (e.g. by pre empting the finalisation of policy decisions prior to their announcement by Government). All reviews are not publicly available, due to being part of a larger project.

Subsequent events

There were no events occurring after balance date which may significantly affect the Goulburn Broken CMA's operations in subsequent reporting periods.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) expenditure

For the 2025-26 reporting period, Goulburn Broken CMA had a total Information and Communication Technology (ICT) expenditure of $1,215,378 with the details shown in Table 19.

ICT expenditure refers to Goulburn Broken CMA's costs in providing business enabling ICT services within the current reporting period. It comprises Business as usual ICT expenditure and Non-business as usual ICT expenditure.

Non-business as usual expenditure relates to extending or enhancing Goulburn Broken CMA's current ICT capabilities.

Business as usual ICT expenditure is all remaining ICT expenditure which primarily relates to ongoing activities to operate and maintain the current ICT capability.

Excludes expenditure on shared systems and security services including Dynamics 365 system management that has been recharged to CMAs.

Social Procurement Framework

Through its Social Procurement Strategy, Goulburn Broken CMA aligns with the Victorian Government's Social Procurement Framework, using procurement as a tool to generate social, economic and environmental value alongside financial outcomes. This approach supports stronger communities, resilient local economies and environmental stewardship.

During 2025-26, the CMA prioritised four social and three sustainable procurement objectives consistent with the Framework and our strategic priorities. Together, these objectives support positive outcomes for the catchment, with progress measured and reported against the key metrics detailed right.

A key focus during the year has been strengthening engagement with local suppliers across the catchment, resulting in a significant increase in the number of local businesses participating in social and sustainable procurement initiatives compared to the previous financial year. Goulburn Broken CMA remains committed to supporting local businesses and Traditional Owner organisations, particularly those demonstrating environmentally sustainable practices, to help build resilient communities and protect the region's landscapes, biodiversity, and water resources.

Through our procurement activities, we prioritise local suppliers, environmentally responsible products and services, and organisations with sustainable business practices. This approach supports the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, promotes circular economy outcomes, and reinforces our commitment to sustainable development and long-term environmental stewardship.

TABLE 19: ICT EXPENDITURE

ALL OPERATIONAL ICT EXPENDITURE	ICT EXPENDITURE RELATED TO PROJECTS TO CREATE OR ENHANCE ICT CAPABILITIES		
BUSINESS AS USUAL ICT EXPENDITURE	NON-BUSINESS AS USUAL ICT EXPENDITURE	OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE (OPEX)	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (CAPEX)
TOTAL $	TOTAL $ = OPEX + CAPEX)	$	$
1,040,243	175,135	105,053	70,082

Number of
social benefit suppliers

3

Spend (ex. gst)

$444,828.47

Number of Victorian
Aboriginal businesses

3

Spend (ex. gst)

$444,828.47

TABLE 20: SOCIAL PROCUREMENT PERFORMANCE

OBJECTIVE PRIORITISED	OUTCOME SOUGHT	SPF REPORTING METRIC	2025-26 (ACTUAL)
Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people	Employment of Victorian Aboriginal people by suppliers to the Victorian Government	Number of Victorian Aboriginal businesses engaged (certified Aboriginal Business with Supply Nation and/or Kinaway)	3
	Purchasing from Victorian Aboriginal businesses	Total expenditure with Certified Victorian Aboriginal businesses	$444,828
		Number as a proportion of the suppliers used by the CMA	0.7%
		Total number of Victorian Aboriginal businesses engaged	5
		Total expenditure with Victorian Aboriginal businesses	$445,328
Opportunities for Victorians with a disability	Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises and Australian Disability Enterprises	Number of Victorian social enterprises led by a mission for people with disability and Australian Disability Enterprises engaged	0
		Total expenditure with Victorian social enterprises led by a mission for people with disability and Australian Disability Enterprises (excl. GST)	$0
Women's Equality and Safety	Gender equality within Victorian Government Suppliers	Adoption of Family Violence leave by Victorian Government suppliers	10%
Sustainable Victorian Social Enterprise and Aboriginal Business Sectors	Purchasing from Victorian Social Enterprises and Aboriginal businesses	4% of procurement spend with Aboriginal owned businesses by 2026	5%
		10% of total procurement spend within Taungurung Land	3%
Environmentally sustainable business practices	Adoption of sustainable business practices by suppliers to the Victorian Government	Total number of contracts entered with Victorian Government suppliers that have clauses for environmentally sustainable business practices	47
		Total expenditure with contracted Victorian Government suppliers which include clauses for environmentally sustainable business practices	$914,574
Use of local suppliers	Supporting local communities and Subject Matter Experts	Percentage of total expenditure with local suppliers	85%

Environmental reporting

The data reported in this section is in line with the reporting requirements under Financial Reporting Direction 24 Reporting of environmental data by government entities. The environmental data captured in 2006-07 is used as a baseline for reporting.

The operational boundary for this reporting period includes a fleet of 34 vehicles plus its 2 offices as outlined below:

- 168 Welsford Street, Shepparton (leased)
- Shop 5/10 High Street, Yea (leased)

Goulburn Broken CMA offices at 89 Sydney Road, Benalla are part of the DEECA and the environmental indicators associated with this building are included in the Departments' report.

As per the Board endorsed Organisational Environment Policy, Goulburn Broken CMA is committed to maximising ecological and natural resource management outcomes, as well as mitigating and adapting to climate change through its activities. It recognises that it has the capability to improve the natural environment as well as reduce impacts from climate change from an organisational and regional/ catchment perspective.

Having achieved carbon neutrality for Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions in 2025 through carbon offsets, we aim to maintain this target through offsets or other abatement initiatives. We will also seek to broaden our understanding of our Scope 3 emissions as we pursue net zero by the end of 2030.

Electricity production and consumption

The period from 2006-07 to 2025-26, electricity consumption reduced significantly with more efficient lighting installed, more efficient ICT equipment (including move to cloud servers) and an increase in flexible working arrangements have likewise reduced electricity usage in the offices.

The installation of a 39 kW solar system at the Shepparton Office has significantly reduced reliance on grid-sourced electricity, while increasing the proportion of electricity generated from on-site solar PV. As Goulburn Broken CMA progressively transitions its fleet to electric vehicles, overall electricity demand is expected to increase in coming years.

TABLE 21: ENERGY USAGE

INDICATOR	2006-07	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Not directly purchased but from outside the organisation (MWh)				
Goulburn Broken CMA Offices [i]	148	64	58	58
On-site electricity generated (MWh)				
Solar PV [ii] - Exports	0	25	24	23
Total electricity offsets (MWh)				
Greenpower [iii]	0	60	46	53

(i) Shepparton and Yea offices. Data is taken directly from energy supplier invoices.
(ii) Rooftop solar located at Shepparton Office.
(iii) 100% Green Power at Shepparton and Yea Offices.



Regional Water Strategy Community meeting at Benalla

Greenhouse gas emissions

Goulburn Broken CMA reports its greenhouse gas emissions broken down into emissions 'scopes' consistent with National and International standards:

- Scope 1 emissions are from sources that Goulburn Broken CMA owns or controls such as fleet vehicles,
- Scope 2 emissions are from indirect emissions from use of electricity from the grid (where buildings owned - Nil for Goulburn Broken CMA), and
- Scope 3 emissions are from indirect emissions from sources Goulburn Broken CMA does not control but does influence (list of reported items in the Table 22).

In 2024-25 Goulburn Broken CMA increased the scope of its reporting of Scope 3 emissions to include material emissions in working from home emissions, employee commute, and accommodation whilst travelling. It has also added an uplift factor of 5 per cent to account for multiple, difficult to calculate activities to assist in ensuring it is fully recognising its scope 3 emissions. This increased the emissions in scope 3 in 2024-25 by 60 tonnes CO2 and represents the commitment of Goulburn Broken CMA of including its full scope 3 emissions and an expanded 2030 emissions reduction target.

As per the Table 22, emissions have continued to drop significantly from 2006-07 levels in line with the transition to more efficient vehicles and increased use of videoconferencing. Emissions from electricity usage likewise have significantly reduced with the switch to 100 per cent Greenpower at its offices and the installation of solar panels on its Shepparton Office. Flexible working arrangements have lowered office electricity usage, but this reduction is partially offset by increased scope 3 emissions from employees working at home.

Emissions from flights increased for the year from 2025-26 in line with increased conference attendance. Emissions from waste increased significantly in line with utilising a new calculation in line with the National Greenhouse Gas Emission Factors methodology and the hiring of 2 skips for the year to dispose of hard rubbish. Emissions from accommodation also increased in line with attendance at conferences, regional workshops, board events and onsite training.

Goulburn Broken CMA purchased 150 Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCU) carbon offsets to be carbon neutral for Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

TABLE 22: ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT[i]	CONSUMPTION	2006-07 GHG EMISSIONS (t CO2-e) [i]	CONSUMPTION	2024-25 GHG EMISSIONS (t CO2-e) [i]	CONSUMPTION	2025-26 GHG EMISSIONS (t CO2-e) [i]
DIRECT EMISSIONS (SCOPE 1)						
Petrol for vehicles (L)	74,711	171.0	49,253	113.9	46,262	107.0
Diesel for vehicles (L)	66,127	178.0	15,651	42.5	15,808	43.0
LPG for vehicles (L)	8,936	14.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Distance travelled by fleet vehicles (km)	N/A		1,015,344		943,895	
Total Scope 1		**363.0**		**156.4**		**149.9**
INDIRECT EMISSIONS (SCOPE 2)						
Nil Owned Facilities	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0
Total Scope 2		**0.0**		**0.0**		**0.0**
EMISSIONS NOT CONTROLLED BUT INFLUENCES (SCOPE 3) [ii]						
Electricity (kWh) [ii]	147,930	179.0	57,817	44.5	57,632	45.0
Electricity offsets (Green power purchased)	0	0	45,581	-35.1	52,802	-41.2
Solar electricity exported to grid (kWh)	0	0	23,708	-18.3	22,526	-17.6
Electricity (transmission & distribution losses) (kWh)	147,930	22.0	57,817	5.2	57,632	5.2
Flights (km) [iii]	N/A		8,405	1.8	37,120	3.6
Accommodation (nights)	0	0.0	120	0.2	225	6.8
Waste - landfill (kg)	8,680	9.0	328	0.5	11,523	14.7
Water consumption (kL)	N/A		248	0.1	326	0.4
Paper consumption (reams)	514	2.0	117	0.7	72	0.5
Petrol (extraction, production, etc.) (litres)	74,711	14.0	49,253	29.0	46,262	27.2
Diesel (extraction, production, etc.) (litres)	66,127	13.0	15,651	10.5	15,808	10.6
LPG (extraction, production, etc.) (litres)	8,936	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Employees (WFH) (Days)	0	0.0	4,223	6.0	3,818	5.6
Employee Commute (Diesel/Unleaded) - (L)	0	0.0	17,426	49.1	10,758	30.2
Uplift Factor - (5% Scope 3)	0	0.0		4.7		4.5
Total Scope 3		**61.0**		**99.0**		**95.1**
Total Scope 1 + 2		**542.0**		**156.4**		**149.9**
Total Scope 1 + 2 + 3		**603.0**		**255.4**		**245.4**
Offsets purchased - Travel				1.8		0.0
ACCU Carbon Offsets purchased				180		150
Net Emissions		**603.0**		**73.6**		**95.4**

(i) Emissions (t CO2-e) for electricity, waste and vehicles were calculated using the National Greenhouse Accounts factors: 2025 issued by Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Emissions (t CO2-e) for working from home are calculated utilising Anthesis Remote Worker Emission factors (2021) (Table 4 and 5 Australia). Water is calculated in line with the GVW Annual Report emissions per KL. Flights and Accommodation Emissions (t CO2-e) are calculated in line the published Department of Finance (Cmth) Emission Reporting Framework 2025-2026. Paper usage is calculated utilised the VIC EPA GHG Management Plan 2020-2021 factors.

(ii) Shepparton and Yea Offices are leased and as such electricity is classified as Scope 3 emissions

(iii) Offset in arrears as per section 2.5 of Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations

TABLE 23: VEHICLE BREAKDOWN

INDICATOR	2006-07	%	2023-24	%	2024-25	%	2025-26	%
Number and proportion of vehicles								
Passenger vehicles [i]	45	100%	36	100%	35	100%	34	100%
Petrol	35	78%	27	75%	28	80%	25	74%
Diesel/ Biodiesel	10	22%	9	25%	7	20%	7	21%
Battery Electric Vehicle	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%

(i) Passenger vehicles include all Goulburn Broken CMA vehicles used for its operations.

Transportation

Goulburn Broken CMA's fleet comprises 34 vehicles. The vehicles are used for the purpose of employees commuting between offices, to meetings with other stakeholders and going out into the field for site inspections and meeting landholders. As such it needs a mixture of vehicles suited to main road and offroad driving that can carry equipment.

22 vehicles are for private and work-related use, through Goulburn Broken CMA's private vehicle usage scheme.

Goulburn Broken CMA, via its vehicle policy, has been proactive in the purchase of hybrid vehicles with 23 petrol hybrids currently within its fleet. This has contributed to significant reductions in fuel use and emissions. Goulburn Broken CMA commenced its planned staged approach to the transition of its full fleet to hybrid and/or electric vehicles in 2025-26 with the inclusion of two electric vehicles for the first time.

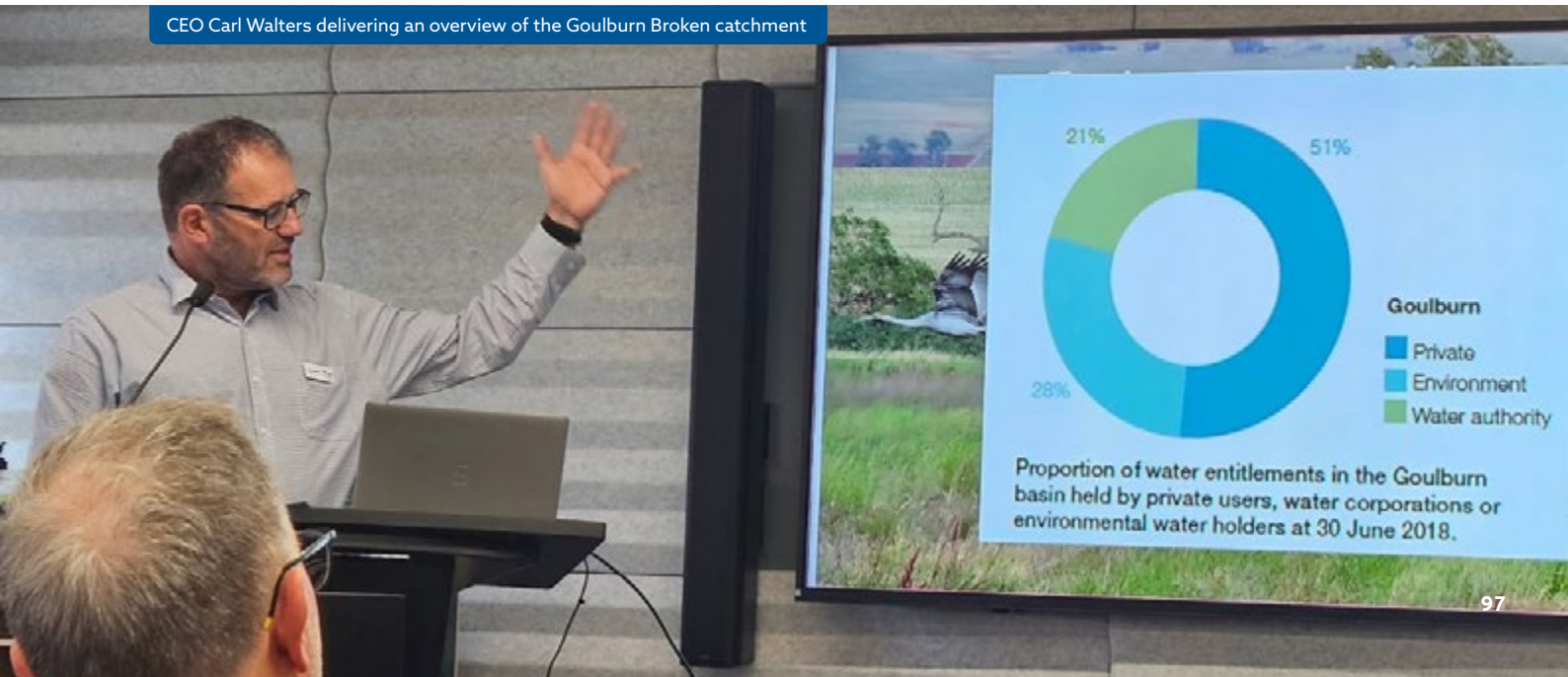
The number of vehicles at Goulburn Broken CMA remained relatively steady at 34 for this reporting period.

Sustainable procurement

Goulburn Broken CMA considers sustainable procurement objectives through its implementation of the Social Procurement Framework, which establishes requirements that apply to Victorian Government departments and agencies when they procure goods, services and construction. Goulburn Broken CMA's purchasing and procurement policies promote sustainable procurement through its inclusion in evaluation criteria and in work's specifications.

Waste and recycling

Waste management and recycling are key priorities for Goulburn Broken CMA. Focus areas include efforts to eliminate single-use plastics, as well as maximise recycling and minimise waste sent to landfill. A new method for collection of waste data was implemented in 2025-26 that reflects the types of bins and waste collected. This will be supported going forward by ad hoc internal waste audits to identify further opportunities.



CEO Carl Walters delivering an overview of the Goulburn Broken catchment

Performance indicators

TABLE 24: 2025-26 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR PROGRESS

PERFORMANCE AREA	PERFORMANCE TARGET	PROGRESS 2025-26
Business management and governance	Submit annually, a board performance assessment report according to any guidelines issued.	The board performance assessment report and action plan was submitted to The Minister on 25 August 2025, in accordance with the issued guidelines.
	A risk management framework in place and approved by the board.	Risk Management Framework consists of Risk Management Policy, Strategic Risk Register, Incident Management Plan, Business Continuity Management Plan, NRM Incident Management Procedure and Risk & Business Continuity Management Procedure. Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement is reviewed by the Audit Risk and Compliance Committtee and approved by the Board annually (30 June 2026).
	One hundred per cent of the CMA's policies and procedures reviewed every three financial years.	99 per cent of policies and procedures were updated within the three-year target. No material non-compliance with Standing Directions.
Regional planning and coordination	A RCS approved by the Minister.	Goulburn Broken RCS was approved by the Minister in 2022.
	A stakeholder and community engagement framework / plan approved by the board.	The Communications, Community Engagement and Partnership Strategy 2022-27 was by Board and its being with forums and grants programs supporting partners and community to address catchment priorities and pilot transformational projects.
	A regional Landcare support plan approved by the board.	Goulburn Broken Community NRM Action Plan 2020-2025 was approved by the Board and is being implemented. A review of the plan has commenced.
	A regional waterways strategy approved by the minister.	Goulburn Broken RWS 2014-2022 was endorsed by the Minister in 2014 and is being implemented. A RWS review was completed in mid-2022. Renewal of the RWS continued, with a new strategy required by June 2027.
	A regional floodplain strategy approved by the board.	Goulburn Broken Regional Floodplain Management Strategy 2018-2028 was completed and endorsed by the board in December 2017 and is being implemented.
	Land and water management plans (LWMP) in designated irrigation areas (or equivalent) approved by the board.	The SIRLWMP 2050 was approved by the Board in June 2024 and launched late 2024. Plan is being implemented.
	The regional contribution to the annual report on salinity management activities and the allocation and update of salt disposal entitlements is submitted to the department by 31 July or as otherwise directed by the department.	The relevant information was provided to the State's reporting and presented to the Independent Audit Group of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority in November 2025.
Regional delivery	Progress with implementation of the RCS (and its major sub-strategies) is reviewed by the board annually.	The Board receives updates on the RCS implementation and more detailed review annually. A mid-term report was prepared.
	Projects / activities to implement the RCS are delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.	Planned projects for 2025-26 were delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.
	Project activities to implement the regional waterways strategy and the regional floodplain management strategy delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.	Planned projects for 2025-26 were delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.
	Projects / activities to implement the LWMP are delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.	Planned projects for 2025-26 were delivered and reported according to associated funding agreements.

Business objective indicators

Goulburn Broken CMA's Business Objectives outline the key objectives as determined by the Board to support the meeting of its mission, purpose and delivery of the RCS and sub strategies. Each objective has been assigned indicators to assist in monitoring performance. Table 25 represents Business Objective performance for the 2025-26 year.

TABLE 25: 2025-26 BUSINESS OBJECTIVE PROGRESS

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR	MEASURE	TARGET	ACTUAL JUNE 2026
Governance We have effective governance structures and practices in place that comply with all laws and regulations and satisfy community expectations.	Compliance with applicable Standing Directions under the Financial Management Compliance Framework Checklist	% Compliance against Standing directions	100%	100%
	Medium and High Risk Audit Recommendations	% Medium and High Risk audit recommendations actioned by due date	100%	100%
	Training in Integrity Policies and Procedures	% of employees trained in anti-corruption and integrity policies and procedures	100%	69%
Leadership and Strategy We provide strategic and enabling leadership in resilience focused Integrated Catchment Management, through planning, influence and partnerships. Our Strategy development and deliver reflects innovation, adaptivity and continuous improvement.	RCS Implementation Plan Status	# and % of actions completed of RCS Implementation Plan	100% of the agreed actions for the next 12 months as per Goulburn Broken CMA RCS Implementation Plan	87%
Financial Sustainability We seek to increase funding to deliver on requirements and priorities. We meet all of our financial obligations.	Total Revenue as per financial statements	Total Revenue	100% of Corporate Plan Revenue	Exceeded 100%
	New Projects / Investments (beyond Corporate Plan)	No. and $ of New Projects outside of those listed within approved Corporate Plan	100% of "new funding" revenue $ included within the Corporate Plan	Exceeded 100%
	Financial Solvency	Cash balance as percentage of committed costs	100%	Exceeded 100%
Service Delivery We deliver our Services, Programs and Projects to achieve planned deliverables on time, on budget and to a high quality.	Investor contracted projects are delivered on time and budget as agreed	% of projects delivered on time and budget as agreed	100%	100%
	Employees participation in project management training	% of Project Managers trained in project management	100%	0% Training not scheduled for 2025-26

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR	MEASURE	TARGET	ACTUAL JUNE 2026
Community and Partnerships Our community, and other partners value our contribution. Our commitment to partnerships and community led approaches supports organisations and communities to thrive.	Project delivered events and participants	No. of project delivered events and participants	100% Investor targets	82 events, 12,401 participants
	# of Media (including Social) releases	Social Media followers and number of Goulburn Broken CMA website visitors	5% improvement on prior year results.	9,858 followers
	Partnership Health	The partnership health score equal to or > 4 on the partnership health goal attainment survey	Greater than 4	3.95
	No. of Partners on Projects	No. of Partners on Projects	100% Investor Targets	66 Partners (target of 64)
Our People We have capable and motivated people who can fulfil their potential in line with our values and behaviours including *"The Goulburn Broken CMA way"*. Our people are safe, and we provide a healthy environment to support their wellbeing.	Positive safety climate / culture score	% of employees agree the organisation has a strong safety climate	80% (Stretch)	84%
	Employee Job Satisfaction	Overall workplace satisfaction and employee engagement score from People Matter Survey	80% (Stretch)	85% employee engagement 100% workplace satisfaction
	Employees Training	% of employee training costs (excluding hours) to employment costs	1.48%	0.23%
	Employees Injuries	Lost Time Injuries	Nil	Nil
Climate Change Response We lead in climate change adaptation and mitigation in our internal and external operations.	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory	CO_2 Tonnes (Scope 1, 2 and 3)	Net Zero by end of 2030 (Scope 1, 2 and 3)	245.4
	Climate Change integration into project delivery	% projects that have incorporated directly Climate Change adaptation and mitigation into program delivery (measure under review)	90%	100%
Traditional Owners We partner with Traditional Owners to care for Country and support self-determination	Reconciliation Action Plan implementation status	% of actions completed of RAP	>90% of all RAP actions (due by date of assessment) on track, BAU or completed	91%
	Evidence of co-design and co-implementation of projects	No. of joint meetings to progress projects that heal country No. joint initiatives in place	4 joint meeting/ yr 4 joint initiatives/ yr	20 joint meetings 15 joint initiatives

5. Financial Report

How this report is structured

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority has presented its audited general-purpose financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 in the following structure, to provide users with information about the Authority's stewardship of resources entrusted to it.

Financial statements

Declaration in the Financial statements

Independent Auditor's Report

Comprehensive operating statement

Balance sheet

Cash flow statement

Statement of changes in equity

Notes to the financial statements

1. About this report
The basis on which the financial statements have been prepared and compliance with reporting requirements.

2. Funding delivery of our services
Income and Revenue recognised in respect of Government contributions and other income sources
- 2.1 Income from transactions

3. The cost of delivering services
Operating expenses of the Authority
- 3.1 Employee expenses
- 3.2 Materials, grants and consultancies
- 3.3 Contractors
- 3.4 Information Technology and Communication expenses
- 3.5 Other operating expenses

4. Key assets available to support service delivery

Land, buildings, plant and equipment, office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, and intangible assets
- 4.1 Total property, plant and equipment

5. Other assets and liabilities
Other key assets and liabilities
- 5.1 Receivables
- 5.2 Other liabilities

6. Financing our operations
Cash flow information, commitments for expenditure and carry forward project funding
- 6.1 Leases
- 6.2 Cash flow information and balances
- 6.3 Commitments for expenditure

7. Financial instruments, contingencies and valuation judgements

Financial risk management, contingent assets and liabilities as well as fair value determination

- 7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures
- 7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities
- 7.3 Fair value determination

8. Other disclosures

Additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report

- 8.1 Ex-gratia expenses
- 8.2 Other economic flows included in net result
- 8.3 Changes in accounting policy
- 8.4 Responsible persons
- 8.5 Remuneration of executive officers
- 8.6 Related parties
- 8.7 Remuneration of auditors
- 8.8 Subsequent events

DECLARATION IN THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The attached financial statements for the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority have been prepared in accordance with Direction 5.2 of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian Accounting Standards including interpretations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, cash flow statement, statement of changes in equity and accompanying notes, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2026 and financial position of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority at 30 June 2026.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 22nd September 2026.



Sarah Parker
Chairperson
Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Shepparton
22nd September 2026



Carl Walters
CEO and Accountable Officer

Shepparton
22nd September 2026



Sarah Williams
Chief Finance Officer

Shepparton
22nd September 2026

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Board of Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (the authority) which comprises the: • balance sheet as at 30 June 2026 • comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • cashflow statement for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • declaration in the financial statements. In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the authority as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 7 of the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures.
Basis for opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975.* My staff and I are independent of the authority in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Board's responsibilities for the financial report	The Board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Financial Management Act 1994,* and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Level 31 / 35 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
T 03 8601 7000 enquiries@audit.vic.gov.au www.audit.vic.gov.au

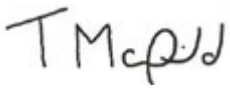
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

As required by the *Audit Act 1994,* my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the authority's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the authority to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
28 September 2026

Timothy Maxfield
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

OFFICIAL

COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT

for the financial year ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 $000	2025 $000
Income from transactions			
Government contributions	2.1.1	19,506	13,238
Interest	2.1.2	728	750
Other income	2.1.3	2,025	1,637
Total income from transactions		**22,259**	**15,625**
Expenses from transactions			
Employee expenses	3.1.1	(7,526)	(7,024)
Depreciation and amortisation	4.1.3	(486)	(498)
Materials, grants and consultancies	3.2	(1,677)	(1,580)
Contractors	3.3	(5,738)	(6,313)
Information technology and communication expenses	3.4	(838)	(881)
Other operating expenses	3.5	(981)	(740)
Total expenses from transactions		**(17,246)**	**(17,036)**
Net result from transactions (net operating balance)		**5,013**	**(1,411)**
Other economic flows included in net result			
Net gain on non-financial assets (i)		154	189
Total other economic flows included in net result		**154**	**189**
Net result from continuing operations		**5,167**	**(1,222)**
Net result		**5,167**	**(1,222)**
Comprehensive result		**5,167**	**(1,222)**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Note:

(i) Net gain on non-financial assets includes impairments, and disposals of all physical assets and intangible assets.

BALANCE SHEET
as at 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 $000	2025 $000
Assets			
Financial assets			
Cash and deposits	6.2	21,054	16,721
Receivables	5.1	1,529	1,527
Prepayments		363	393
Total financial assets		**22,946**	**18,641**
Non-financial assets			
Property, plant and equipment	4.1	2,302	1,360
Intangible assets		7	7
Total non-financial assets		**2,309**	**1,367**
Total assets		**25,255**	**20,008**
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Payables	5.2	1,229	2,082
Contract Liabilities		-	7
Interest bearing Liabilities	6.1.2	778	845
Employee related provisions	3.1.2	1,994	1,934
Total current Liabilities		**4,001**	**4,868**
Non-Current Liabilities			
Interest bearing Liabilities	6.1.2	1,366	401
Employee related provisions	3.1.2	61	79
Total non-current Liabilities		**1,427**	**480**
Total liabilities		**5,428**	**5,348**
Net assets		**19,827**	**14,660**
Equity			
Reserves		15,618	10,451
Contributed capital		4,209	4,209
Net worth		**19,827**	**14,660**

OFFICIAL

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 $000	2025 $000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Receipts from government		20,786	14,264
Interest received		728	751
Goods and services tax received from the ATO (i)		450	476
Other receipts		1,459	1,651
Total receipts		**23,423**	**17,142**
Payments			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(18,307)	(17,254)
Interest and other costs of finance paid		(105)	(99)
Total payments		**(18,412)**	**(17,353)**
Net cash flows from / (used in) operating activities		**5,011**	**(211)**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		359	406
Payment for property, plant and equipment		(607)	(285)
Net cash inflow from / (used in) investing activities		**(248)**	**121**
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
Repayment of principal portion of lease liabilities (ii)		(430)	(441)
Net cash used in financing activities		**(430)**	**(441)**
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		**4,333**	**(531)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		16,721	17,252
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	6.2	**21,054**	**16,721**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes:
(i) GST received from the Australian Taxation Office is presented on a net basis.
(ii) The Authority has recognised cash payments for the principal portion of lease payments as financing activities; cash payments for interest portion as operating activities consistent with the presentation of interest payments and short-term lease payments for leases and low-value assets as operating activities.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

for the financial year ended 30 June 2026

	Contribution by owners $000	Reserves $000	Accumulated funds $000	Total $000
Balance at 1 July 2024	4,209	11,673	-	15,882
Net result for the year	-	-	(1,222)	(1,222)
Transfers to/(from) reserves (i)	-	(1,222)	1,222	-
Balance at 30 June 2025	**4,209**	**10,451**	**-**	**14,660**
Net result for the year	-	-	5,167	5,167
Transfers to/(from) reserves (i)	-	5,167	(5,167)	-
Balance at 30 June 2026	**4,209**	**15,618**	**-**	**19,827**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Note:
(i) The amounts transferred from accumulated surplus to committed funds reserve consists of carry forward project funding that has been set aside for the purpose of funding specific projects.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

1. ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority is a government authority of the State of Victoria, established on 1 July 1997 by the state government.

Its principal address is: Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
168 Welsford St
Shepparton VIC 3630

Basis of preparation

These financial statements are Tier 2 general purpose financial statements prepared in accordance with AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* (AASB 1060) and Financial Reporting Direction 101 *Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards* (FRD 101).

These financial statements are in Australian dollars and the historical cost convention is used unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the note associated with the item measured on a different basis.

The accrual basis of accounting has been applied in preparing these financial statements, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Capital grants which have been designated as contributions by owners are recognised as contributed capital. Other transfers that are in the nature of distributions to or contributions by owners have also been designated as contributions by owners.

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies applied are consistent with those of the prior year.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about financial information being presented. The significant judgements made in the preparation of these financial statements are disclosed in the notes where amounts affected by those judgements are disclosed. Estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision.

Rounding

Unless otherwise stated, amounts in the report have been rounded to the nearest $1,000. Figures in the financial report may not equate due to rounding.

Compliance Information

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994 (*FMA) and applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AASs) which include Interpretations, issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). In particular, they are presented in a manner consistent with the requirements of AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting.*

Where appropriate, those AASs paragraphs applicable to not-for-profit entities have been applied. Accounting policies selected and applied in these financial statements ensure that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported.

2. FUNDING DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES

Introduction

The Authority's overall objective is for the co-ordinated control of natural resource management within the broader catchments of Goulburn Broken. The role of the Authority is to ensure effective implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategy. Associated with this role, the Authority carries out strategic planning and advises Government.

To enable the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority to deliver on its objectives, it receives income predominantly through State and Commonwealth Government Contributions.

2.1 Income from transactions

2.1.1 Government contributions

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Income recognised as income of not-for-profit entities under AASB 1058		
State Government		
Corporate and Statewide	1,078	738
Sustainable Irrigation	4,768	3,289
River Health	7,790	3,462
Floodplain Management	2,090	2,334
Land and Biodiversity	1,111	1,270
Total State	**16,837**	**11,093**
Commonwealth Government		
River Health	251	
Total Commonwealth	**251**	**-**
Income recognised as revenue from contracts with customers under AASB 15		
Commonwealth Government		
Natural Heritage Trust	2,418	2,145
Total Commonwealth	**2,418**	**2,145**
Total Government contributions	**19,506**	**13,238**

Grants recognised under AASB 1058

The Authority has determined that the grant income included in the table above under AASB 1058 has been earned under arrangements that are either not enforceable and/or linked to sufficiently specific performance obligations.

Income from grants without any sufficiently specific performance obligations, or that are not enforceable, is recognised when the Authority has unconditional right to receive cash which usually coincides with receipt of cash. On initial recognition of the assets, the Authority recognises any increase in liabilities, decrease in assets, and revenue ('related amount') in accordance with other Australian Accounting Standards. Related amounts may take the form of:

- revenue or a contract liability arising from a contract with a customer, in accordance with
- a lease liability in accordance with AASB 16 *Leases*;
- a financial instrument, in accordance with AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*; or
- a provision, in accordance with AASB 137 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets.*

Grants recognised under AASB 15

Income from grants that are enforceable and with sufficiently specific performance obligations are accounted for as revenue from contracts with customers under AASB 15. As at the 30 June 2026 the Authority has recognised $2.418m as revenue under AASB 15 (2025: $2.145m). Revenue is recognised when the Authority satisfies the performance obligation by providing the relevant services. This is recognised based on the consideration specified in the funding agreement and to the extent that it is highly probable a significant reversal of the revenue will not occur. The funding payments are normally received in advance or shortly after the relevant obligation is satisfied.

2.1.2 Interest income

Interest income inludes interest received on cash and deposits. Refer to 7.1.1 for information on interest income.

2.1.3 Other income

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Partnership Contributions - Government entities	1,183	995
Recoverable costs	544	537
Partnership Contributions - non- Government entities	168	1
Application fees	130	104
Total other income	**2,025**	**1,637**

Partnership contributions and recoverable costs consists of funds received from organisations as partners in projects, and are recognised as income on receipt in accordance with AASB 1058 as they do not contain sufficiently specific performance obligations, and are disclosed in the comprehensive operating statement as other income.

All other income is recognised when the right to receive payment is established.

3. THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES

Introduction

This section provides an account of the expenses incurred by the Authority in delivering services. In Section 2, the funds that enable the provision of services were disclosed and in this note the cost associated with the provision of services are recorded.

3.1 Employee expenses

3.1.1 Employee expenses in the comprehensive operating statement

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Salaries & wages	5,785	5,319
Annual leave	474	436
Long service leave	171	269
Superannuation	720	623
FBT	211	208
Other - payroll tax and workcover	166	169
Total employee benefit expenses	**7,526**	**7,024**

Employee expenses include all costs related to employment including wages and salaries, payroll tax, fringe benefits tax, leave entitlements, termination payments and WorkCover premiums.

The amount recognised in the comprehensive operating statement in relation to superannuation is employer contributions for members of both defined benefit and defined contribution superannuation plans that are paid or payable during the reporting period.

3.1.2 Employee related provisions

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave (LSL) for services rendered to the reporting date and recorded as an expense during the period the services are delivered.

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Current provisions:		
Annual leave	413	315
Long Service leave	1,273	1,360
On-costs	248	244
Other leave	59	15
Total current provisions for employee benefits	**1,994**	**1,934**
Non-current provisions:		
Long Service leave	54	69
On-costs	8	10
Total non-current provisions	**61**	**79**
Total provisions for employee benefits and on-costs	**2,055**	**2,013**

Wages and salaries and annual leave:

Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and on-costs) are recognised as part of the employee benefit provision as current liabilities, because the Authority does not have an unconditional right to defer settlements of these liabilities.

The liability for salaries and wages are recognised in the balance sheet at the remuneration rates which are current at the reporting date. As the Authority expects the liabilities to be wholly settled within 12 months of reporting date, they are measured at undiscounted amounts.

The annual leave liability is classified as a current liability and measured at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid, as the Authority does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and it is not considered probable that the average sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the benefits accrued in the future. As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income as it is taken.

Employment on-costs such as payroll tax, workers compensation and superannuation are not employee benefits. They are disclosed separately as a component of the provision for employee benefits when the employment to which they relate has occurred.

Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability, even where the Authority does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months because it will not have the unconditional right to defer the settlement should an employee take leave within 12 months.

The components of this current LSL liability are measured at either:

- undiscounted value - if the Authority expects to wholly settle within 12 months
- present value - if the Authority does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months

Conditional LSL is disclosed as a non-current liability. There is a conditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement until the employee has completed the requisite years of service. This non-current LSL in measured at present value.

Any gain or loss following revaluation of the present value of non-current LSL liability is recognised as a transaction, except to the extent that a gain or loss arises due to changes in bond interest rates for which it is then recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the net result.

3.2 Materials, grants and consultancies

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Materials	240	158
Grants paid	1,167	988
Consultants	270	433
Total materials, grants, and consultancies	**1,677**	**1,580**

Grants are recognised in the period in which they are paid or payable.

Materials and consultants are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

3.3 Contractors

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Contractors	5,738	6,313

Contractors are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

3.4 Information Technology and Communication expenses

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Information technology and communication expenses	838	881

Information Technology and Communication expenses includes costs for software, security services and support relating to shared services whereby Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority incurs the costs as lead agency and is shared across seven Catchment Management Authorities with costs recovered recorded in Other income as Recoverable costs (2.1.2).

3.5 Other operating expenses

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Victorian Auditor-General's Office for audit of financial statements	25	24
Internal audit expenses	32	16
Short-term lease expenses	149	115
Events and Publicity	107	65
Motor vehicle operating expenses	236	238
Insurance	89	83
Office expenses	105	86
Printing and stationery	17	14
Other expenses	222	99
Total other operating expenses	**981**	**740**

Other operating expenses generally represent the day-to-day running costs incurred in normal operations and are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

The following lease payments are recognised on a straight-line basis:

- Short-term leases – leases with a term 12 months or less; and
- Low value leases – leases with the underlying asset's fair value (when new, regardless of the age of the asset being leased) is no more than $10,000.

Variable lease payments that are not included in the measurement of the lease liability (i.e. variable lease payments that do not depend on an index or a rate and which are not, in substance fixed) such as those based on performance or usage of the underlying asset, are recognised in the Comprehensive operating statement (except for payments which has been included in the carrying amount of another asset) in the period in which the event or condition that triggers those payments occur. The Authority's variable lease payments during the year ended 30 June 2026 was nil.

4. KEY ASSETS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY

Introduction

The Authority controls property and other investments that are utilised in fulfilling its objectives and conducting its activities. They represent the key resources that have been entrusted to the Authority to be utilised for delivery of those outputs.

4.1 Total property, plant and equipment

	Gross carrying amount		Accumulated Depreciation		Net carrying amount	
	2026 $000	2025 $000	2026 $000	2025 $000	2026 $000	2025 $000
Buildings at cost	1,026	1,209	(17)	(1,054)	1,009	155
Plant and equipment at fair value	1,179	1,090	(1,015)	(940)	164	150
Motor vehicles at cost	1,485	1,438	(355)	(382)	1,130	1,056
Net carrying amount	**3,690**	**3,737**	**(1,387)**	**(2,376)**	**2,302**	**1,361**

Items of property, plant and equipment are measured initially at cost and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Where an asset is acquired for no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value at the date of acquisition.

Items with a cost or value in excess of $1,500, and a useful life of more than one year are recognised as an asset. All other assets acquired are expensed.

Impairment of property, plant and equipment

The recoverable amount of primarily non-cash-generating assets of not-for-profit entities, which are typically specialised in nature and held for continuing use of their service capacity, is expected to be materially the same as fair value determined under AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement,* with the consequence that AASB 136 *Impairment of Assets* does not apply to such assets that are regularly revalued.

4.1.1 Total right-of-use assets: buildings and vehicles

The following table is a subset of buildings and vehicles by right-of-use assets.

	Gross Carrying Amount		Accumulated Depreciation		Net carrying Amount	
	2026 $000	2025 $000	2026 $000	2025 $000	2026 $000	2025 $000
Right of Use Buildings at Cost	1,026	1,171	(17)	(1,016)	1,009	155
Right of Use Vehicles at Cost	1,485	1,437	(355)	(382)	1,130	1,055
Net Carrying Amount	**2,511**	**2,608**	**(372)**	**(1,398)**	**2,139**	**1,210**

Right-of-use asset acquired by lessees - Initial measurement

The Authority recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any incentive received
- any indirect costs incurred
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

Right-of-use asset - Subsequent measurement

Right-of-use assets are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated depreciation (2025: Fair Value), impairment and any adjustments for remeasurement of the lease liability. The Authority depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight-line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. Impairment of right-of-use assets is determined and accounted for in accordance with AASB 136 *Impairement of Assets* .

Impairment of right-of-use assets

The Authority has assessed all right-of-use assets for impairment, and no indicators of impairment are identified as at 30 June 2026.

4.1.2 Depreciation and amortisation

All buildings, plant and equipment and other non-financial physical assets that have finite useful lives are depreciated.

Depreciation is generally calculated on a straight-line basis at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life. Typical estimated useful lives for the different asset classes for current and prior years are included in the table below:

Asset	Useful Life
Buildings: Leased assets	5-7 years
Plant and equipment	6 - 40 years
Motor vehicles	2-3 years

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation method are reviewed at the end of each annual reporting period, and adjustments made where appropriate.

Right-of-use assets are generally depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life and the lease term.

Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful life.

4.1.3 Reconciliation of movements in carrying values of property, plant and equipment

2025-26	Buildings at cost $000	Plant and equipment at fair value $000	Motor vehicles at cost $000	Total $000
Opening balance	155	150	1,055	1,360
Additions	1,026	103	504	1,633
Disposals	-	-	(205)	(205)
Depreciation	(172)	(88)	(225)	(486)
Closing balance	1,009	165	1,129	2,302

5. OTHER ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Introduction
This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from the Authority's operations.

5.1 Receivables

Receivables	2026 $000	2025 $000
Contractual		
Government grants receivables	891	1,105
Trade receivables	390	172
Accrued revenue	81	55
Statutory		
GST input tax credits recoverable	167	195
Total receivables	**1,529**	**1,527**
Represented by:		
Current Receivables	1,529	1,527
Non-Current Receivables	-	-

Receivables consist of:

- Contractual receivables, which are classified as financial instruments and categorised as 'financial assets at amortised cost'. Subsequent to initial measurement they are measured at amortised cost less any impaiment; and
- Statutory receivables do not arise from contracts and are recognised and measured similarly to contractual receivables (except for impairment), but are not classified as financial instruments for disclosure purposes.

There are no material financial assets that are individually determined to be impaired.

Details about the Authority's impairment policies, the Authority's exposure to credit risk, and the calculation of the loss allowance are set out in Note 7.1.1.

5.2 Other liabilities

5.2.1 Payables	2026	2025
Contractual	**$000**	**$000**
Trade payables	932	1,681
Accrued expenses	257	361
Statutory		
FBT payable	34	35
Payroll Tax	7	5
Total payables	**1,229**	**2,082**
Represented by:		
Current Payables	1,229	2,082
Non-Current Payables	-	-

Payables consist of:

- Contractual payables, classified as financial instruments and measured at amortised cost. Accounts payable represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Authority prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid; and
- Statutory payables, that are recognised and measured similarly to contractual payables, but are not classified as financial instruments and not included in the category of financial liabilities at amortised cost, because they do not arise from contracts.

Payables for supplies and services have an average credit period of 30 days. No interest is charged on outstanding balances beyond this period.

6. FINANCING OUR OPERATIONS

Introduction

This section provides information on the sources of finance utilised by the Authority during its operations, along with interest expenses (the cost of borrowings) and other information related to financing activities of the Authority.

This section includes disclosures of balances that are financial instruments, such as cash balances. Note 7.1 provides additional, specific financial instrument disclosures.

6.1 Leases

The Authority leases buildings and motor vehicles. The lease contracts are typically made for fixed periods of 2-7 years with an option to renew the lease after that date. Lease payments for buildings are renegotiated every five years to reflect market rentals.

Leases with a contract term of 1 year or a value of less than $10,000 are either short-term and/or leases of low value and are recognised on a straight-line basis. The Authority has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for these leases.

As at 30 June 2026, the Authority has committed to short term leases and the total commitment at that date was $104K (2025 $139K).

6.1.1 Expense recognised for short-term leases

The following amounts are recognised as expense relating to short-term leases.

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Expenses relating to short term leases	149	115
Total Amount recognised as an expense	**149**	**115**

The authority has elected to account for short-term leases using the practical expedients. Instead of recognising a right-of-use asset and lease and liability, the payments in realtion to these are recognised as an expense in profit or loss included in "other operating expenses (see note 3.5) on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

6.1.2 Recognition and measurement of leases as a lessee

For any new contracts entered into, the Authority considers whether a contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as ‘a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration’. To apply this definition the Authority assesses whether the contract meets three key evaluations:

- Whether the contract contains an identified asset, which is either explicitly identified in the contract or implicitly specified by being identified at the time the asset is made available to the Authority and for which the supplier does not have substantive substitution rights;
- Whether the authority has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the identified asset throughout the period of use, considering its rights within the defined scope of the contract and the Authority has the right to direct the use of the identified asset throughout the period of use; and
- Whether the authority has the right to take decisions in respect of ‘how and for what purpose’ the asset is used throughout the period of use.

Lease Liability - Initial Measurement

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments) less any lease incentive receivable;
- Variable payments based on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- Payments arising from purchase and termination options reasonably certain to be exercised.

Lease Liability - Subsequent Measurement

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification, or if there are changes in-substance to fixed payments.

When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset, or net result if the right-of-use asset is already reduced to zero.

Presentation of right-of-use assets and lease liabilities

The Authority presents right-of-use assets as 'buildings' and 'motor vehicles' (refer to note 4.1).

Future Lease Payments

	Minimum future lease payments [(a)]	
	2026	2025
	$000	$000
Not longer than 1 year	778	845
Longer than 1 year but not longer than 5 years	1,366	401
Longer than 5 years	-	-
Minimum further lease payments	**2,145**	**1,246**
Less future finance charges	(164)	(50)
Present value of minimum lease payments	**1,981**	**1,196**

Note:
(a) Minimum future lease payments include the aggregate of all base payments and any guaranteed residual.

6.2 Cash flow information and balances

Cash and deposits, including cash equivalents, comprise cash on hand and cash at bank, deposits at call and those highly liquid investments with an original maturity of three months or less, which are held for the purpose of meeting short term cash commitments rather than for investment purposes, and which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. The Authority's bank accounts are held in the Central Banking System (CBS) as required by the *Standing Directions 2018* issued under the *Financial Management Act 1994.*

	2026	2025
Cash and deposits disclosed in the balance sheet (a):	**$000**	**$000**
Cash at bank	21,054	16,721
Balance as per cash flow statement	**21,054**	**16,721**

Note:
(a) Cash and deposits bear variable interest rate with a weighted-average interest rate of 4.0% during the 2025-26 year.

6.3 Commitments for expenditure

Commitments for future expenditure include operating commitments arising from contracts. These commitments are recorded at their nominal value and inclusive of GST. Where it is considered appropriate and provides additional relevant information to users, the net present values of significant individual projects are stated. For 2026, the Authority does not have any significant individual projects. These future expenditures cease to be disclosed as commitments once the related liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet.

6.3.1 Total commitments payable

The 2026 operating lease commitments relate to an office lease with a term of 12 months. The contract does not allow the Authority to purchase the facilities after the lease ends, but the Authority has the option to renew the lease at the end of the lease term. Current operating committments payable are nil. Short-term operating lease payments are recognised as an expense in the comprehensive operating statement on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The leased asset is not recognised in the balance sheet.

7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, CONTINGENCIES AND VALUATION JUDGEMENTS

Introduction

It is often necessary for the Authority to make judgements and estimates associated with recognition and measurement of items in the financial statements. This section sets out financial instrument specific information, as well as those items that are contingent in nature or require a higher level of judgement to be applied, which for the Authority relate mainly to fair value determination.

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

Introduction

Financial instruments arise out of contractual agreements that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Due to the nature of the Authority's activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statute rather than a contract (for example FBT, GST.) Such assets and liabilites do not meet the definition of financial instruments in AASB 132 *Financial Instruments: Presentation* .

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial Assets are measured at amortised cost if both of the following criteria are met and the assets are not designated as fair value through profit or loss:

- The assets are held by the Authority to collect contractual cash flows
- The assets' contractual terms give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest

These assets are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less any impairement.

The authority recognises the following assets in this category:

- Cash and deposits
- Receivables (excluding statutory receivables)

Derecognition of financial assets

A financial asset (or, where applicable, a part of a financial asset or part of a group of similar financial assets) is derecognised when:

- The rights to receive cash flows from the asset have expired
- The Authority retains the right to receive cash flows from the asset, but has assumed an obligation to pay them in full without material delay to a third party under a 'pass through' arrangement

- The Authority has transferred its rights to receive cash flows from the asset and either:
  - has transferred substantially all the risk and rewards of the asset
  - has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risk and rewards of the asset but has transferred control of the asset.

Where the Authority has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards or transferred control, the asset is recognised to the extent of the Authority's continuing involvement in the asset.

Financial liabilities at amortised cost

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost are initially recognised on the date they originated. They are intially measured at fair value plus an directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial recognition, these financial insturements are measured at amortised cost with any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value being recognised in profit and loss over the period of the interest-bearing liability, using the effect interest rate method. The Authority recognises the following liabilities in this category:

- Payables (excluding statutory payables)
- Borrowings (including lease liabilities)

Derecognition of financial liabilities

A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation under the liability is discharged, cancelled or expires.

When an existing financial liability is replaced by another from the same lender on substantially different terms, or the terms of an existing liability are substantially modified, such an exchange or modification is treated as a derecognition of the original liability and the recognition of a new liability. The difference in the respective carrying amounts is recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the Comprehensive Operating Statement.

7.1.1 Financial instruments - Net gain/(loss) on financial instruments by category

$000

	Carrying Amount	Net gain/loss	Total interest income/(expense)	Fee income/(expense)	Impairment loss
2026					
Financial assets at amortised cost					
Cash and Deposits	21,054	-	728	-	-
Trade receivables [(a)]	1,362	-	-	-	-
Total financial assets at amortised cost	**22,416**	**-**	**728**	**-**	**-**
Trade Payables [(a)]	1,188	-	-	-	-
Borrowings					
Lease Liabilities	2,145	-	(102)	-	-
Total contractual financial liabilities	**3,333**	**-**	**(102)**	**-**	**-**

Note:
(a) The total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts (e.g. amounts owing from Victorian Government and GST input tax credit recoverable and taxes payable).

$000

	Carrying Amount	Net gain/loss	Total interest income/(expense)	Fee income/(expense)	Impairment loss
2025					
Financial assets at amortised cost					
Cash and Deposits	16,721	-	750	-	-
Trade receivables [(a)]	1,333	-	-	-	-
Total financial assets at amortised cost	**18,054**	**-**	**750**	**-**	**-**
Trade Payables [(a)]	2,042	-	-	-	-
Borrowings					
Lease Liabilities	1,246	-	(47)	-	-
Total contractual financial liabilities	**3,288**	**-**	**(47)**	**-**	**-**

Note:
(a) The total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts (e.g. amounts owing from Victorian Government and GST input tax credit recoverable and taxes payable).

7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the balance sheet but are disclosed and, if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. There are no contingent assets or liabilities at 30 June 2026 (2025: nil).

7.3 Fair value determination

This section sets out information on how the Authority determines fair value for financial reporting purposes. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell and asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

The Authority's property, plant and equipment are carried at fair value.

7.3.1 Fair value hierarchy

In determining fair values, a number of inputs are used. To increase consistency and comparability in the financial statements, these inputs are categorised into three levels, also known as the fair value hierarchy. The levels are as follows:

- Level 1 – quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2 – valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and
- Level 3 – valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

The Authority determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by reassessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

7.3.2 Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities

The Authority currently holds a range of financial instruments that are recorded in the financial statements where the carrying amounts are a reasonable approximation of fair value, either due to their short-term nature or with the expectation that they will be paid in full by the end of the 2025-26 reporting period.

7.3.3 Fair value determination: Non-financial physical assets

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is held at fair value and classified as Level 3. When plant and equipment is specialised in use, such that it is rarely sold, fair value is determined using the current replacement cost method.

Description of significant assumptions applied to fair value measurement

2025 and 2026	Valuation technique	Significant assumption	Range (weighted average)
Plant and equipment	Current replacement cost	Cost per unit	$3,800
		Useful life of plant and equipment	6-40 years (23 years)

8. OTHER DISCLOSURES

Introduction

This section provides additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report.

8.1 Ex gratia expenses

Ex gratia expenses are the voluntary payments of money or other non-monetary benefit (e.g. a write-off) that is not made either to acquire goods, services or other benefits for the entity to meet a legal liability, or to settle or resolve a possible legal liability of or claim against the entity.

The Authority had no ex gratia expenses for the year ending 30 June 2026 (2025: $0).

8.2 Other economic flows included in net result

Other economic flows measure the change in volume or value of assets or liabilities that do not result from transactions.

	$000 2026	$000 2025
Net gain on disposal of non-financial assets		
Proceeds from sale of non-financial assets	359	407
Less written down value	(205)	(218)
Total net gain on disposal of non-financial assets	**154**	**189**

8.3 Changes in accounting policy

8.3.1 Right-of-use assets

The authority has made a change in accounting policy to change the measurement basis from the revaluation model to the cost model for subsequent measurement of right-of-use assets arising from market leases, in accordance with the updated requirements from FRD 104.

Previously, the authority had measured all right-of-use assets arising from market leases using the revaluation model under AASB 13. Following the change in accounting policy, the authority will measure all right-of-use assets using the cost model. Right-of-use assets measured using the cost model are held at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment and any adjustments for remeasurement of lease liability. Periodic revaulations are not required; however the cost model requires annual impairment assessments in accordance with AASB 136.

Upon adoption of the cost model, the authority has applied a modified retrospective approach. The approach takes the right-of-use asset's carrying amounts recorded under the revaluation model as at the 30 June 2025 as the right-of-use asset's opening balances on application of the cost model.

Accordingly, the comparitive information presented is not restated and is reported at the previously determined fair value.

Impacts on financial statements

On transition to the cost model, there was no impact on the authorities financial statements. No impairment was identified by the authority for the right-of-use asset held as at 30 June 2026.

8.4 Responsible persons

In accordance with the Ministerial Directions issued by the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994* (FMA), tl following disclosures are made regarding responsible persons for the reporting period.

The names of the persons who were responsible persons of the Authority at any time during the financial year were:

The Hon. Gail Tierney	Minister for Water	1 July 2025 to 16 April 2026
The Hon. Harriet Shing	Minister for Water	17 April 2026 to 30 June 2026
The Hon. Steve Dimopoulos	Minister for Environment	1 July 2025 to 16 April 2026
The Hon. Enver Erdogan	Minister for Environment	17 April 2026 to 30 June 2026
Sarah Parker	Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Adrian Weston	Board Member & Deputy Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025
Damien Gerrans	Board Member & Deputy Chair	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Amanda McClaren	Board Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Jodie Smith	Board Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Leanne Miller	Board Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Les McLean	Board Member	1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025
John Merritt	Board Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Sam Muir	Associate Board Member	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Jeff Odgers	Board Member	1 October to 30 June 2026
Anne Maree Docking-Cehun	Board Member	1 October to 7 November 2025
Carl Walters	CEO	1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

Remuneration

Remuneration received or receivable by the Accountable Officer (CEO) in connection with the management of the Authority during t reporting period was in the range: $320,000 - $330,000 (2025: $470,000 - $480,000)

8.5 Remuneration of executives

The Authority did not have any executive officers other than the CEO, to whom the Victorian Government's Public Entity Executive Remuneration (PEER) Policy applies. The CEO is an accountable officer and therefore disclosed under Note 8.4.

8.6 Related parties

The Authority is a wholly owned and controlled entity of the State of Victoria. Related parties of the Authority include:

- all key management personnel and their close family members and personal business interests (controlled entities, joint ventures and entities they have significant influence over);
- all cabinet ministers and their close family members; and
- all departments and public sector entities that are controlled and consolidated into the whole of state consolidated financial statements.

All related party transactions have been entered into on an arm's length basis.

Significant transactions with government-related entities

During the 2026 year, income received from government-related entities for grants and reimbursements that enable the Authority to deliver on the Regional Catchment Strategy, statutory obligations and manage IT platform across the sector. The Authority received funding from the following government-related entities under normal commercial terms and conditions (a materiality threshold of $100K has been applied):

Entity	2026 Funding received	2025 Funding received	2026 Funding receivable	2025 Funding receivable
	$000	$000	$000	$000
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	16,221	12,406	-	-
Department of Justice and Community Safety	1,005	-	-	-
Victorian Environmental Water Holder	417	-	-	-
Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority	299	115	-	-
Wimmera Catchment Management Authority	248	315	-	-
North East Catchment Management Authority	118	-	-	-
Victorian Fisheries Authority	-	188	-	-
Corangamite Catchment Management Authority	-	106	-	-
East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	-	147	-	-
West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	-	139	-	-
Department of Treasury and Finance (VicFleet Lease Mgt)	-	266	-	-

OFFICIAL

During the 2025 year, payments to government-related entities were made for contract services relating to the delivery of Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority's programs. The Authority made significant payments to the following government-related entities under normal commercial terms and conditions (a materiality threshold of $100K has been applied):

Entity	2026 Payments Made	2025 Payments Made	2026 Payable	2025 Payable
	$000	$000	$000	$000
Goulburn Murray Water	2,174	937	-	1,118
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	506	1,406	132	105
Department of Treasury and Finance (VicFleet	261	318	-	-
Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA)	143	135	-	143
Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority	-	165	-	-
North East Catchment Management Authority	-	275	-	-
Wimmera Catchment Management Authority	-	220	-	-
Parks Victoria	310	383	-	-
Mallee Catchment Management Authority	-	121	-	-

Remuneration of key management personnel

The compensation detailed below excludes the salaries and benefits the Portfolio Minister receives. The Minister's remuneration and allowances is set by the *Parliamentary Salaries and Superannuation Act 1968* and is reported within the State's Annual Financial Report.

Compensation of KMPs	2026 $000	2025 $000
Total	481	642

Transactions with key management personnel and other related parties

Given the breadth and depth of Authority activities, related parties transact with the Victorian public sector in a manner consistent with other members of the public e.g. stamp duty and other government fees and charges. Further employment of processes within the Victorian public sector occur on terms and conditions consistent with the Public Administration Act 2004 and Codes of Conduct and Standards issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. Procurement processes occur on terms and conditions consistent with the Victorian Government Procurement Board requirements.

Outside of normal citizen type transactions with the Authority, there were no significant related party transactions that involved key management personnel, their close family members and their personal business interest.

No provision has been required, nor any expense recognised, for impairement of receivables from related parties.

8.7 Remuneration of auditors

	2026 $000	2025 $000
Victorian Auditor-General's Office for audit of financial statements	25	24
Total auditors' remuneration	25	24

8.8 Subsequent events

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the reporting period which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the authority, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the authority in future financial years.

6. Appendices

APPENDIX 1

How to interpret catchment condition and management assessment

Appendix 1A. Statewide template

This information is consistent with a statewide template.

The assessment (refer Table 6 and Table 8) is based on a set of statewide indicators outlined in the RCS outcomes framework, augmented with regionally specific indicators that have been selected based on criteria including availability and quality of data, and the linkages back to regional and policy outcomes.

As much as possible, the reporting format attempts to provide a transparent path between the evidence and the assessment. Ratings of catchment condition are not definitive assessments but judgements at a point in time, based on the best available evidence. In 2025-26 reporting has a focus on catchment management ratings. The 2022-23 catchment condition ratings have been adopted and provided here for completeness.

Contextual indicators help to identify how external factors may have influenced program delivery. Some examples of external factors could be environmental (e.g. climate change driver events such as droughts, floods, bushfires), socio-economic (available resourcing/funding) or technological (remote sensing for monitoring). These are described under 'Key factors affecting catchment health and how it's managed' and as appropriate in other places of the Catchment Condition and Delivery Highlights section.

MANAGEMENT

Management indicators, described in the table below, are used to help form a management rating judgement for each theme, based on the delivery of planned activities within CMA programs.

Above expectations
Delivery of activities and programs associated with this indicator is assessed as above expectations for the 12-month period (i.e. majority of activities delivered/targets met or exceeded.

Met expectations
Delivery of activities and programs associated with this indicator is assessed as met expectations for the 12-month period (i.e. targets for some activities were not achieved or the majority were almost achieved).

Below expectations
Delivery of activities and programs associated with this indicator is assessed as below expectations for the 12-month period (i.e. some critical activities/targets not delivered, or the majority of activities/ targets not delivered).

Not applicable
A management rating is not applicable for this indicator.

Unknown
The rating for this indicator is not known and or assessable.

CONDITION

Reporting on condition indicators in detail is undertaken less frequently, reflecting the timeframes to observe changes in the natural environment and the availability of the supporting data.

The annual report includes a summary rating for catchment condition for the themes Water, Land, Biodiversity, Community and Integrated Catchment Management as at 2022-23 and as per the statewide template, which has a three tiered rating category process (see table below). These ratings are also informed by a further four-tiered rating category process that is consistent with the Goulburn Broken RCS (see Appendix 1B). The condition rating of each theme is an overall judgement based on assessments of the assets and pressures on them. These pressures include 'Key factors affecting catchment health and how it's managed' listed on page 36. Judgements are based on best available science and expert advice as well as evidence gained during the preceding year. Possible ratings are: good, moderate, poor, and not applicable.

	**Good** The condition is classified as good.
	**Moderate** The condition is classified as moderate.
	**Poor** The condition is classified as poor.
	Not applicable A condition rating is not applicable for this indicator

Appendix 1B. Goulburn Broken CMA approach to catchment condition and management reporting

CATCHMENT CONDITION

Decisions about managing natural resources are usually made within a complicated and ever-changing system involving both people and nature. Everything is connected, and it's hard to measure resources accurately or track progress.

Goulburn Broken CMA uses a 'resilience approach' to manage natural resources. This method helps people with different backgrounds, including community members, local government agency employees and external technical experts, to share understanding and make decisions together.

Well-designed scorecards and graphics with clear summaries are used to help different groups understand the situation better, make informed decisions together, and stay open and accountable.

The focus for managing resilience is on tipping points, guided by the question, 'What is the risk that the system will not be in the desired state in the long term?' (The benchmark system state is the 'desired state': this varies from many NRM assessments that use 'natural' or 'pre-European settlement' as the benchmark.)

Critical attributes for the long-term resilience of our systems of people and nature have been identified. Critical attributes are:

- critical to how the system functions
- at a level and trajectory that places the delivery of highly valued services at risk in the long term (because the system is at long-term risk of tipping into an undesirable state)
- influenced by actions that can be easily defined
- 'concrete' enough to readily convey an image or concept that is readily shared and not prone to misinterpretation
- measurable over the medium term (about 5 years) or at least enables a sense of progress to be conveyed.

From 2016-17, the CMA has explicitly listed ratings of the condition of critical attributes as indicators of catchment condition (see long-term scorecards in the annual reports). High-level evidence, such as viability of threatened species and gross value of agricultural production, are factored into ratings.

Line charts for critical attributes in this annual report show changes in trajectory of condition since 1990 and indicative future trends and current and reduced levels of support. These charts extend the method used in preparing the Goulburn Broken RCS 2021-27 and use a four-tiered rating category process (very poor, poor, satisfactory, good). The 2026 condition ratings from the line charts inform the overall (rolled up) rating for each theme (Biodiversity, Land, Water, Community and Integrated Catchment Management) (see Table 6).

Checking the condition of the Goulburn Broken catchment is a carefully considered process. It is reviewed by senior managers at Goulburn Broken CMA, with input from technical employees across the organisation and from partner groups. The CMA Board then provides feedback and approves the final version, which is published in the Annual Report.

INDICATORS THAT HELP GUIDE ASSESSMENT OF CATCHMENT CONDITION.

STATEWIDE OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK THEMES	INDICATORS
Water	Total river inflow (mm), Wetlands fenced (ha), Environmental water used (ML), Extent of protected or improved riparian land (ha), Fence river/stream remnant (km), Off-stream watering (no.), Instream habitat (no.), River or stream bed and bank protection actions (km), Irrigation drains built (km), Irrigation systems improved (ha), Annual phosphorous loads from irrigation drains (tonnes/year), Total phosphorus loads exported from GB (tonnes/year), Reuse systems installed (no.), Stock access managed (km) and per cent (%) stream length stock access managed.
Land	Per cent (%) exposed soils, Laser levelling (ha), Whole farm plans prepared (no.) New irrigation referrals dryland zone (no.), Improved irrigation dryland zone (no.), Annual rainfall, Progress in managing salinity impacts in SIR (ha), Soil moisture (mm), Gross value of agricultural commodities ($).
Biodiversity	Extent of Native vegetation (ha), Area of pest herbivore and area of pest predator control (ha), Area of weed control (ha), Area of permanent protection (ha), Percentage of tree cover change, Area of revegetation (planted) (ha), Remnant veg fenced (ha).
Community	Landcare/Community NRM Groups Health Score, Investment share (%), Major contributions to NRM ($ million), Grants to community organisations (no. projects and $), Community volunteer contributions (hours), Traditional owners involved in Goulburn Broken CMA's projects (no.).
Integrated Catchment Management	Reported under Community and Sustainable Irrigation Program sections of this annual report.

MANAGEMENT REPORTING

Goulburn Broken CMA senior managers liaise directly with funders to ensure reporting requirements are met for many projects (see 'Project delivery' page 23). Tallied achievements from all projects are also used to help inform the management achievement rating within each theme (pages 38 and 39).

Achievement of performance targets is evaluated against agreed funding commitments and planned activities established at the start of the financial year. The assessment takes into account external factors that may have affected the delivery of results. Assessments are reviewed by the Management Team and presented to the Board for consideration and approval before being reported in the Annual Report.

APPENDIX 2

Role of catchment partners

CATCHMENT PARTNERS	EXAMPLES	ROLE
Community groups, networks and non-government organisations	Environmental and agricultural groups, networks and organisations such as Landcare, Conservation Management Networks, Friends of Groups, Riverine Plains Inc., Industry groups, Irrigated Cropping Council, Victorian No-Till Farmers Association, Murray Darling Wetland Working Group, Euroa Arboretum, and philanthropic bodies.	The catchment's 100-plus environmental and agricultural groups and non-government organisations mobilise community involvement, attract corporate, philanthropic and government funding and influence the implementation of on-ground works.
Traditional Owners	Taungurung Land and Waters Council and Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.	Traditional Owners are custodians of traditional ecological knowledge and cultural heritage across the catchment. They have a key role in Natural Resource Management and planning, including protection and enhancement of cultural values and integrating perspectives, knowledge and cultural management practices.
Private land managers	Farmers, lifestyle landholders and corporations.	With more than two thirds of the catchment's landscapes owned privately, landholders invest significant resources (time, money and land) into natural resource management and sustainable farm practices.
Victorian Government, agencies and statutory authorities	Parks Victoria, water corporations, Victorian Environmental Water Holder, Environmental Protection Authority, Trust for Nature, Country Fire Authority and State Emergency Service.	The government funds and/or influences many natural resource management activities in the catchment. They are guided by a range of policies and legislation and frequently delivered in partnership with other agencies and statutory authorities.
Australian Government and agencies	Murray-Darling Basin Authority, Commonwealth Environmental Water Office, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Department of Climate Change, Energy and Environment and the Department of Defence (Puckapunyal Military Area).	The government funds a significant number of natural resource management projects in the catchment through the Natural Heritage Trust Program and Future Drought Fund. It also guides efforts around environmental protection and conservation of biodiversity, natural, built and cultural heritage, environmental research, water policy and resources and large-scale natural disaster recovery.
Local Government	Benalla Rural City Council, Campaspe Shire Council, Greater Shepparton City Council, Moira Shire Council, Mansfield Shire Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Murrindindi Shire Council and Strathbogie Shire Council.	In terms of NRM, councils enforce state and local laws relating to land use planning, environmental protection, public health and animal management. They maintain significant infrastructure and play an important role in local NRM engagement, education and delivery (for example, local area plans).
Education and research	Government research institutes (for example, ARI), universities and schools.	Education and research bodies support delivery, monitoring and evaluation of natural resource management.
Industry groups	For example, Fruit Growers Victoria, Dairy Australia - Murray, Grains Research and Development Corporation and Meat and Livestock Australia.	Industry groups strongly influence natural resource management through their networks and advisory roles with land managers and government.
Recreational users	Fishing, birding, four-wheel driving and boating groups.	Recreational users are diverse interest groups which don't necessarily live in the catchment but regularly visit and use the catchment's natural resources. Some groups have significant political influence on government policies and legislation.

APPENDIX 3

Additional data utilised to support catchment condition and management assessment

Regional data trends

INDICATOR	THEME	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total river inflow (mm)	Water	293.21	186.88	198.75	74.431	161.64	89.53
% exposed soils	Land	10.381	8.7221	7.987	8.2079	8.882	10.24
Annual rainfall (mm)	Land	826.84	780.81	1006.6	757.29	686.21	543.24
Soil moisture (mm)	Land	345.66	364.42	373.89	272.91	396.86	343.75
Percentage of tree cover change	Biodiversity	25.693	22.821	25.505	24.053	23.85	21.24

Environmental water use

	VOLUME (ML)									
WATERWAY	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**	**2025-26***
Barmah-Millewa Forest**	254,188	414,010	172,789	361,000	377,603	410,626	204,370	212,156	509,571	273,947
Black Swamp	-	-	80	65	-	80	-	-	-	80
Lower Broken Creek	36,192	41,408	27,633	35,777	33,694	69,915	50,810	75,343	44,822	60,432
Upper Broken Creek	-	-	-	597	1,235	1,247	1,146	1,769	1,486	1,285
Broken River	-	1,000	250	258	23	510	2,502	778	1,684	-
Doctors Swamp	-	-	-	67	-	427	-	-	-	-
Goulburn River (downstream of Goulburn Weir)	193,272	354,832	247,268	373,256	214,625	361,340	222,539	318,961	357,830	382,965
Goulburn River (downstream of Lake Eildon)***	-	-	-	-	-	86,088	913	63,386	106,767	48,338
Kinnairds Wetland	-	-	386	259	-	195	-	-	-	242
Moodie Swamp	-	500	-	-	-	1,006	-	-	-	528
Reedy Swamp	-	-	500	500	-	-	-	-	-	330
Gaynor Swamp	-	500	600	-	994	901	-	-	120	-
Loch Garry	-	-	-	500	-	980	-	-	-	822
Horseshoe Lagoon	-	-	-	121	17	52	70	-	-	88
Kanyapella Basin	-	-	-	-	500	1,000	-	-	-	1,598
Molesworth										65
Total	**483,652**	**812,250**	**449,506**	**772,400**	**628,691**	**934,367**	**482,349**	**672,392**	**1,022,281**	**770,719**

* *Final volumes might vary slightly and are reconciled following publication of this annual report.*

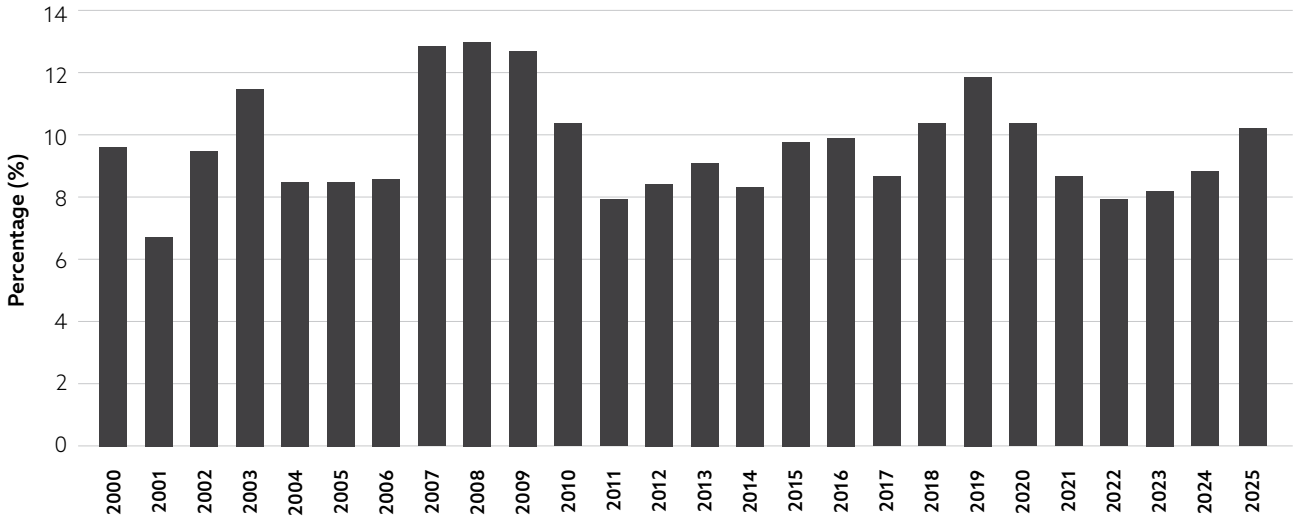
** *Generally, the water is equally shared between the Barmah and Millewa Forests. Greater than 80 per cent of the water delivered to the Barmah-Millewa Forest returns to the Murray River*

*** *The majority of this water is typically diverted to the Waranga Basin for consumptive use. If Waranga Basin fills, the water is debited against environmental water entitlements.*

Goulburn Broken catchment percentage of exposed soil

Ground cover vegetation, specifically the amount covering the soil surface is a key variable for controlling soil erosion. Ground cover can also be an important indicator for erosion risk, drought, biodiversity, soil carbon, land use management, highlighting the importance of understanding practices to manage it particularly in dry times

PERCENTAGE OF EXPOSED SOIL ACROSS GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT



Annual mean percentage of soil unprotected by living vegetation or litter, derived from MODIS imagery and CSIRO mapping by the OzWALD model-data fusion system. Source: Centre for Water and Landscape Dynamics, Australian National University. www.ausenv.online

APPENDIX 4

Outputs – Detailed list of achievements

STANDARD GOULBURN BROKEN THREAT OR IMPACT MANAGED	OUTPUT	2025-26						
		LAND AND BIODIVERSITY PROGRAM			SUSTAINABLE IRRIGATION PROGRAM			
		TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	
THREAT								
Land and water use practices								
Stock grazing (ha = terrestrial; km = riparian)	Fence terrestrial remnant vegetation (ha)	26	34	131				
	Fence wetland remnant (ha)							
	Fence stream/river remnant (ha)							
	Fence stream/river remnant (km)							
	Off-stream watering (no.)							
	Binding Management Agreement (licence, Section 173, covenant) (ha)							
INDUCED THREAT								
Saline water and high watertables								
Surface water [iii]	Laser levelling (ha) [ii]				728	639	88	
	Drain – primary built (km) [iv]							
	Drain – community built (km)							
	Drainage course declarations (km) [iv]							
	Drainage course declarations obstructions treated (no) [iv]				10	10.0	100	
	Weir – replace (no.)							
	Farm reuse systems installed (no.) [v]							
	Drain – additional water diverted from regional drains (ML)							
	Irrigation systems – improved (ha) [vi]				728	639	88	
	Pasture – plant (ha)							
Sub-surface water	Groundwater pumps – public installed (new; no.)							
	Groundwater pumps – private installed (new; no.)							
	Volume water pumped – increase (ML)							
	Tile drains – install (ha)							
	Revegetation – plantation / farm forestry (ha)							
Nutrient-rich & turbid water & suspended solids	Waste water treatment plants – install (no.)							
	Stormwater management projects (no.) [vii]							

	2025-26						TOTAL ACHIEVED				
	RIVER & WETLAND HEALTH AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM			TOTAL CATCHMENT							
	TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
				26	**34**	**131**	45	6	117	157	365
										4	
		225			**225**		68	146	42	90	153
	31	34	109	**31**	**34**	**109**	9	33	21	19	36
	9	8	89	**9**	**8**	**89**	3	11	2	10	32
									76	67	11
				728	**639**	**88**	1,373	2,641	1,453	719	3,676
								11	36		43
				10	**10**	**100**	10	2	3	35	58
				728	**639**	**88**	1,373	2,641	1,453	719	4,947

STANDARD GB THREAT OR IMPACT MANAGED	OUTPUT	2025-26						
		LAND & BIODIVERSITY			SUSTAINABLE IRRIGATION			
		TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	
In-stream and near-stream erosion	Bed and bank protection actions (km) [viii]							
	In-stream and tributary erosion controlled (km)							
Changed flow pattern	Environmental water use (ML) [ix]							
Weed invasion	Weeds – woody weed management (ha)	460	957	208				
	Weeds – aquatic weeds controlled/eradicated (km)							
	Targeted infestations of weeds in high priority areas covered by control programs (ha) [x]	1,029	1,597	155				
Pest animals	Pest animal control (ha) [xi]	14,632	15,232	104				
IMPACT								
Habitat loss – terrestrial	Revegetation - plant natives within or next to remnants (ha) [xii]	200	283	141				
	Revegetation - plant natives away from remnants (ha)							
Habitat loss – in-stream	Fish release (no.)							
	Vertical slot fishway (no.)							
	Rock ramp fishway (no.)							
	Fish barrier removal (no.)							
	In-stream habitat (no.) [xiii]							
Habitat loss – wetlands	Reinstate flood regime (ML) [xiv]							
	Construct new wetland (ha)							
	Threatened Species Recovery Plan and Action Statements (no. projects)							
Planning	Whole farm plans (no.) [xv]				16	16	100	

i Targets are determined by considering levels of government funding as listed in the Corporate Plan and any subsequent adjustments over the financial year. Uncertainties in funding cycles in recent years have made annual target-setting challenging.

ii Assumptions: from 2018-19 is 50 per cent of area put under Whole Farm Plans (not 60). Target = 50 per cent of area to be put under Whole Farm Plans [no. (16) x average area of Whole Farm Plans (91)].

iii Surface water management enables the removal of excess rainfall runoff from irrigated lands, alleviating soil salinity. As part of an overall management plan for nutrients, nutrients loads are managed by collecting and reusing water from drains. Nutrient loads are monitored as part of Goulburn Broken sub-strategies and within EPA tolerance levels.

iv 2024-2025 Drainage Course declarations (DCD) were split into separate line item from Drain - Primary built (km) to represent works completed in DCD and primary drains separately. DCD are implemented in two stages. 1. Declaration of the drainage course (kilometres) including tributaries and meander loops, and 2. implementation of works to treat obstructions along the natural drainage line (number). Data for the DCD declared and obstructions completed has been added retrospectively and where DCD declared (km) have been separated into the Primary Drain Line and DCD Declared line.

v Reuse dams allow for the collection of high nutrient runoff and re-irrigation, reducing the water and nutrient loads leaving the farm. Figures include Farm Water Program installations. From 2014-15 the number of new farm reuse systems installed is assumed to be: 67 per cent of projects install a new system and 33 per cent reconnect the project area to an existing system.

	2025-26						TOTAL ACHIEVED				
	RIVER & WETLAND HEALTH & FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT			TOTAL CATCHMENT							
	TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	TARGET [i]	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVED	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
		0.27							0.04		
		770,719			**770,719**		1,022,281	672,392	482,349	934,367	628,691
	63	79	125	**523**	**1,035**	**198**	2,076	817	4,111	1,821	11,026
		5			**5**		16	30	40		8
	119	185	156	**1,148**	**1,782**	**155**	2,513	1,674	4,494	2,108	11,533
	3,000	29,523		**17,632**	**44,755**	**254**	7,632	7,991	98,458	157,242	124,720
	52	39	76	**253**	**322**	**128**	186	74	526	374	607
		3,060			**3,060**		4,000	2,030	1,523		
	662	521	79	**662**	**521**	**79**	161	533	10		20
		277,612			**277,612**		509,691	212,156	204,440	415,267	379,114
				16	**16**	**100**	27	57	39	21	61

vi Assumptions: 2020-21 included 1,033 ha. 2025-26 - refer to "SIRCIS Targets, Outputs and Charts 2025-26" in SharePoint for breakdown of new and modernised WFP areas.

vii Stormwater management projects are undertaken on a one-to-one funding basis with local government.

viii Target cannot be set with any confidence because achievement is prone to extreme variation, being affected by climatic and seasonal conditions. The NSW component of water delivered to Barmah National Park is included in these figures.

ix This includes 'Weeds woody weed management'. 2021-22 achievements do not include 7,770 hectares for weeds and 1,830 hectares for rabbit control completed by DEECA AgVic Biosecurity & Agriculture Services. 2022-23 achievements do not include 15,049 hectares for weeds and 4,411 hectares for rabbit control completed by DEECA AgVic Biosecurity & Agriculture Services 2023-24 and 2024-25 achievements do not include weeds and pest control hectares by DEECA AgVic Biosecurity & Agricultural Services.

x Figures for total catchment historically include those outside of Sustainable Irrigation Program also, which were for comprehensive Level 2 whole farm plans, equivalent to Shepparton Irrigation Region's whole farm plan. Level 1 is a short course that is a precursor to Level 2 and not included in these figures.

APPENDIX 5

2025-26 community grants

GROUP	PROJECT	AMOUNT PAID $ (EX GST)
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT - NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST		
Broken Catchment Landcare Network-Gecko Clan	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**23,650**
Euroa Arboretum Inc.	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**74,865**
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Inc.	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**40,292**
Longwood Plains Conservation Management Network Inc	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**30,594**
Regent Honeyeater Project Inc.	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**172,000**
South West Goulburn Landcare Inc	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**59,150**
TLaWC	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**132,107**
UP2US Landcare Alliance	Nature Services for Ag (NHT)	**37,850**
YYNAC	Landscape Legacies - Restoring Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (NHT)	**54,735**
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT - VICTORIAN LANDCARE GRANTS		
Balmattum Sheans Creek Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Broken Catchment Landcare Network-Gecko Clan	School Project	**5,688**
Broken River Environment Group T/a Goomalibee Landcare	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Burnt Creek Landcare Group	Enhancing farm dams, understanding erosion impacts and supporting waterways	**700**
Cathedral Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Congupna Tallygaroopna Landcare Group	Field Days	**1,060**
Congupna Tallygaroopna Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Creighton Creek Landcare Inc	Nest Box Inspection Camera	**1,790**
Dabyminga Catchment Cooperative	Dabyminga Blackberry Community Group Works	**2,520**
Dabyminga Catchment Cooperative	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Delatite Landcare Group	Mansfield Local Plant Guide	**1,204**
Delatite Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Euroa Arboretum Inc.	Revegation and Restoration on the Sevens Creek	**1,940**
Euroa Arboretum Inc.	Seed - From Little Things Big Things Grow	**2,000**
Euroa Arboretum Inc.	Observing and Connecting with Nature	**14,130**
Euroa Arboretum Inc.	Restoring Merton's grassland with Taungurung Traditional Owners	**17,078**
Friends of the Great Victorian Rail Trail	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Girgarre Stanhope Land Protection Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Inc.	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Inc.	Biodiversity Environment Aquatic Discovery	**1,250**
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Inc.	Living the Good Life	**16,763**
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Inc.	Native Vegetation Booklet	**3,500**
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Inc.	10 Field days with Schools, kindergartens and community	**7,442**
Harston Community Landcare Group Inc.	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Home Creek Spring Creek Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Howqua Valley Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative Inc.	Weed and Pest animal control	**9,450**
Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative Inc.	Seymour Urban Glideways Project	**600**
Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House Inc.	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House Inc.	Boxes for Birds	**1,142**
Koyuga Kanyapella Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**

GROUP	PROJECT	AMOUNT PAID $ (EX GST)
Kyabram Urban Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Longwood East Landcare Group Inc	Field Days for Primary School, Planting, Construction of tree guards	**16,826**
Longwood Plains Conservation Management Network Inc	CMN Bioblitz Citizen Science Event Series	**17,586**
Molyullah Tatong Land Protection Group	Community Tree Paddock Guards	**7,650**
Muckatah Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Nulla Vale Pyalong West Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Sheep Pen Creek Land Management Group Inc.	Growing landholder expertise to build soil health and reduce soil loss	**10,575**
Sheep Pen Creek Land Management Group Inc.	Revitalising the Grey-Crowned Babbler Conservation Project	**1,940**
South West Goulburn Landcare Inc	FarmBlitz	**16,227**
Strath Creek Landcare Group Inc	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Strathbogie Ranges Conservation Management Network	Under the Microscope	**11,864**
Strathbogie Ranges Conservation Management Network	Fifth Festival of Fungus	**2,000**
Strathbogie Tableland Landcare group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Sunday Creek Dry Creek Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Swanpool & District Land Protection Group Inc.	Showcasing Our Patch	**13,506**
TLaWC	Welcome and smoking ceremony for the Northern Rivers Round Up Event	**850**
UP2US Landcare Alliance	Fire Recovery Admin	**182**
UP2US Landcare Alliance	Mansfield War on Weeds	**18,109**
UP2US Landcare Alliance	VLG Web of Life	**19,934**
Upper Goulburn Intrepid Landcare	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Upper Goulburn Landcare Network	Koala Conservation	**19,891**
Upper Goulburn Landcare Network	Controlling Pest Plants and Animals in the Upper Goulburn	**12,340**
Upper Goulburn Landcare Network	Environmental Education for Schools and Community	**16,035**
Warby Range Landcare Group Inc	Engaging Landholders in Best Practice Land Management	**5,580**
Warrenbayne Boho Land Protection Group Inc	Farm Planning and Social Engagement	**6,819**
Willowmavin Landcare Group	Maintenance Grants	**500**
Yarrawonga Urban Landcare Group Inc	Maintenance Grants	**500**
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT - OTHER		
TLaWC	Green Lake Baseline Ecological Monitoring	**23,997**
TLaWC	Our Catchment, Out Communities	**51,851**
TLaWC	EW delivery to Horseshoe Lagoon	**3,097**
YYNAC	Our Catchment, Out Communities	**20,076**
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT - VICTORIAN WATER PROGRAMS INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK		
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Inc.	Floodplain Ecology Course	**3,121**
Greater Shepparton City Council	RiverConnect	**126,071**
TLaWC	Walking together with Waring	**26,305**
TLaWC	Waterway Investment Southern Uplands	**26,211**
YYNAC	Barmah Ramsar Management Waterway Health	**39,141**
YYNAC	Connecting Culture and Country (OCOC)	**57,627**

Disclosure index

The Annual Report of the Goulburn Broken CMA is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislations and pronouncements. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of the Authority's compliance with statutory disclosure requirements.

Information relevant to the headings listed in Financial Reporting Direction 22 of the *Financial Management Act 1994* is held at the Authority's office and is available on request, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

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Glossary of terms

Community NRM	Community Natural Resource Management is an umbrella term that encompasses the community based environmental groups of the region such as Landcare, Friends of, Conservation Management Network and sustainable farming groups.
Critical attributes	The key areas that will improve the current situation and prevent the catchment condition from reaching tipping points.
Ecosystem	A diverse and changing set of living organisms within a community, interacting with each other and the physical elements of the environment in which they are found.
FLOWS	A method for determining environmental water requirements in Victoria.
Flow-MER	Flow-Monitoring, Evaluation and Research is the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder's (CEWH's) Science Program to inform adaptive management of Commonwealth environmental water in the Murray–Darling Basin. The Flow-MER Program supports the CEWH's work to protect and restore the Basin's water-dependent ecosystems.
GMW Connections	A $2 billion project funded by the Victorian Government, Australian Government and Melbourne Water to develop a water delivery network to match changing needs and support opportunities for irrigated agriculture across Northern Victoria.
Investment area	Key areas to which investment is focussed.
Long-term objectives	Long-term (20-30 year) goals for the system components of the Catchment - people, land, water and biodiversity. These objectives are found in the sub-strategies of Goulburn Broken CMA. Achieving these objectives will contribute to the Vision being realised. In some instances, these objectives may be related to known (or assumed) thresholds and tipping points.
Regional Catchment Strategy	A blueprint for integrated natural resource management across a geographic area.
Registered Aboriginal Parties	Registered Aboriginal Parties are the voice of Aboriginal people in managing and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)*. The Act recognises Aboriginal people as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
Resilience	The ability of the Catchment's people and environment 'to absorb a shock or setback and to flourish in spite of it, maybe even because of it'. It does not mean 'ploughing through' and doing what we have always done.
Resource Condition Target	Relates to the condition of the resource and can be measured over the short term or the long term depending on ease of measurement.
Social-ecological systems (SES)	Linked and generally similar systems of people and nature, taking into account cultural, political, social, economic, ecological and technological components.
Thresholds	A breakpoint between two states of a system that must be exceeded to begin to produce some sort of effect or response.
Tipping points	A point where a small change can have a large effect on the state of a system.

Acronyms

AASB	Australian Accounting Standards Board
AAS	Australian Accounting Standards
ABARE	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics
ABS	Australian Bureau Statistics
ACCU	Australian Carbon Credit Units
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability
AgVic	Agriculture Victoria
ARC	Agricultural Redevelopment Coordinator
ARI	Arthur Rhylah Institute
ACSC	Australian Cyber Security Centre
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
CaLP	*Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*
CAPEX	Capital Expenditure
CBS	Central Banking Service
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIRS	Cyber Incident Response Service
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
CPA	Certified Practicing Accountant
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DCD	Drainage Course Declaration
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DWG	Designated Work Group
EBA	Enterprise Bargaining Agreement
EC6	Environmental Contribution Levy Tranche 6
FBT	Fringe Benefit Tax
FCPA	Fellow Certified Practicing Accountant
Flow-MER	Flow-Monitoring, Evaluation and Research
FOI	Freedom of Information
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
FMA	*Financial Management Act 1994*
FRD	Financial Reporting Direction
GB CMA	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GMCA	Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance
GMID	Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District
GMW	Goulburn-Murray Water
GST	Goods and Services Tax
ha	Hectare
HSR	Health and Safety Representative
IRP	Issue Resolution Procedures
IT / ICT	Information Technology / Information and Communications Technology
km	Kilometre
kg	Kilogram

kL	Kilolitre
kW	kilowatt
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
L	Litre
LoE	Letter of Expectation
LSL	Long Service Leave
LWMP	Land and Water Management Plan
MDBA	Murray-Darling Basin Authority
ML	Megalitre
MLC	Member of Legislative Council
MP	Member of Parliament
MPSG	Major Project Skills Guarantee
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWh	Megawatt hour
NFF	National Farmers Federation
NHT	National Heritage Trust
no	Number
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OAIC	Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
OCI	Organisational Culture Inventory
OCOC	Our Catchments Our Communities
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OPEX	Operating expenditure
OVIC	Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner
PEER	Public Entity Executive Remuneration Policy
PV	Photovoltaic
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RCS	(Goulburn Broken) Regional Catchment Strategy
RWS	Regional Waterway Strategy
RTW	Return to Work
SE	Social Enterprise
SES	Social-Ecological System
SIR	Shepparton Irrigation Region
SIRF	Shepparton Irrigation Region Forum
SIRLWMP	Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan
SIRPPIC	Shepparton Irrigation Region People and Planning Integration Committee
SoO	Statement of Obligations
SPF	Social Procurement Framework
t CO2e	Tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2) emitted
TERN	Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network
TLaWC	Taungurung Land and Waters Council
VEWH	Victorian Environmental Water Holder
VFA	Victoria Fisheries Authority
VIPP	Victorian Industry Participation Policy
VMIA	Victorian Managed Insurance Authority
VPDSS	Victorian Protective Data Security Standards
VPSC	Victorian Public Service Commission
WFH	Working From Home
WFP	Whole Farm Plans
YYNAC	Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation

Recognising major NRM contributions



John Laing

Each year Goulburn Broken CMA recognises a major Natural Resource Management contributor for their outstanding work in the sector. This year John Laing is acknowledged for his lasting impact on the catchment community and beyond.

At a community event featuring boutique food, art, and coffee vendors it's the modest Goulburn Murray Landcare Network stall that's drawing the largest crowd. But it's not the typical native seedlings, plant guides or giveaway merchandise attracting children and adults in equal numbers: it's volunteer John Laing and his collection of insects — most notably a huntsman, scorpion and centipede. These often-feared creatures are not simply on display in glass containers to be peered at. The huntsman is in John's hands and as the spider wanders, John is calmly explaining to the enthralled crowd the many features of this amazing eight-legged creature. This is John Laing and his mini beasts and he's been educating the local community about the importance of insects in the environment for about 25 years.

"In 1986 my wife Rhonda and I bought a four-acre property at Old Toolamba. It was a wind tunnel and we had to plant some trees to deal with it and that's where my association with Landcare started," John said. "I started helping out with Landcare and school groups. While at Cussen Park near Tatura with some kids, we had spare time so decided to see what we could find. We discovered insects and spiders on the ground and in trees that the kids and I were equally enthralled by."

"I was an ignoramus of arthropods at that point and it started a fascinating learning curve for me." Now John is renowned for his knowledge and for educating kids and the community about the insect world. "Insects are the building blocks of the environment but their populations are collapsing, mainly through impacts of habitat loss and urbanisation," he said. "So, it's vital to teach people about the importance of the small creatures that make up the natural world. You can't care about something if you don't understand it. I'm able to teach kids, in particular, about insects and from that understanding they come to value them."

John engages with more than 2,000 people a year at community events and with schools. "Often when I visit a school, I meet the kids again at a public event, this time with their parents in tow. The parents tell me they're not allowed to kill a spider in the house anymore!"

At his stall today, John also has a black rock scorpion. He shines an ultraviolet light into a container filled with dirt and bark, revealing the adult scorpion glowing bright blue as well as several baby scorpions that were there all along but almost impossible to spot without the ultraviolet glow. There are shrieks and gasps as the insects light up, followed by a flood of questions for John. "I'm happy to be here, sharing knowledge creating interest in such an important part of the ecosystem. It is very satisfying knowing I am having a positive impact."

John has been a Landcare volunteer for more than 30 years and is most notably known for supporting the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network (GMLN) and the Dhurringile and District Landcare Groups to implement a range of revegetation and education programs. He has held the position of GMLN Chair for more than 20 years.

In 2003 John received the National Landcare Victoria individual award in recognition of his commitment to environmental education, an incredible honour for him, his family and those involved locally in Landcare.

John has been a long-standing member of many Goulburn Broken Catchment working groups such as the Sustainable Irrigation Region Farm and Environment Working Group, Goulburn Broken catchment Landcare Network Chairs, chair of the Community Monitoring Committee (1998-2007), RiverConnect, and was the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network representative on the Shepparton Irrigation Region People and Planning Integration Committee (and previous iterations) until 2024-25. He is a member of the Goulburn Valley Environment Group and strongly advocates for the protection of native vegetation.

PARTNERS IN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

The health of the Catchment relies on many partner organisations and individuals. In fact, there are so many partner organisations of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority that we have found it challenging to capture them all. Any partner logo not appearing above does not undervalue their contribution to the Catchment.

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