

Snowy River Basin

January 2014

Introduction

Southern Rural Water is the water corporation responsible for administering and enforcing the Snowy River Basin Local Management Plan.

The purpose of the Snowy River Basin Local Management Plan is to:

- document the management objectives for the system
- explain to licence holders (and the broader community) the specific management objectives and arrangements for their water resource and the rules that apply to them as users of that resource;
- clarify water sharing arrangements for all users and the environment, including environmental flow requirements
- document any limits, including water use caps, permissible consumptive volumes or extraction limits that apply to the system.

Management objectives

The objective of the Local Management Plan is to ensure the equitable sharing of water between users and the environment and the long-term sustainability of the resource.

Water system covered

The Local Management Plan covers all the rivers and creeks located within the Snowy River Basin, which includes:

- Snowy River
- Major Creek
- Brodribb River
- Buchan River
- Deddick River
- Cabbage Tree Creek
- Hospital Creek

Catchment information

The Snowy River flows across the NSW border to the coast at Marlo. Significant tributaries of the Snowy River include Buchan, Murrindal, Suggan Buggan, Deddick and Brodribb Rivers. The Snowy floodplain contains a complex system of drains and levee banks to support agricultural production. Heritage River status applies to the entire Victorian length of the Snowy River. The Snowy has many significant attributes including canoeing and rafting opportunities, scenic landscapes, cultural Indigenous heritage sites and native fish and fauna habitat.

The Snowy River Basin has a total area of 1,580,000 ha (41% lies in Victoria). The area that occurs in NSW generates the greatest proportion of the basin's total annual streamflow. Of this 1,130,000 megalitres (ML) is diverted into the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme (Department Primary Industries). The long term average of inflows to the Victorian portion of the basin is 1,022,000 ML (Victorian Water Accounts 2010-11).

The Snowy environmental entitlements were created through the intergovernmental agreements between the Commonwealth, Victorian and New South Wales governments. This is known as the Snowy Water Inquiry Outcomes Implementation Deed. The agreement provides for the return of 21% (212,000 ML) of the river flow below Jindabyne currently, and increasing to 28% in the longer term.

Water entitlements and use

Licence allocations in the Snowy River Basin include the Snowy, Buchan, Murrindal, Deddick, Bendoc, Errinundra and Brodribb Rivers; Suggan Buggan, Sawpit, Bills, Hospital, Major, and Cabbage Tree Creeks

More detailed information can be located in the Victorian Water Register.

Licence Type	Number of Licences	Volume (ML)
Irrigation* - direct	49	3855.3
Irrigation - winterfill	1	27
Registration**	36	1524.3
Domestic and Stock	23	52.8
Commercial / Industrial	3	36.6
Dairy	6	26.5
Total	118	5522.5

* Includes amalgamated D&S and Commercial licences

**Includes Dairy and Commercial licences

General rules

Licences in the Snowy River Basin are managed in accordance with the Water Act 1989 and Policies for Managing Take and Use Licences. A copy of these policies can be found at: <http://waterregister.vic.gov.au/Public/TakeAndUseLicences.aspx>

The general rules for licences in the Snowy River Basin are as follows:

New licences

- The Snowy River Basin is fully allocated, so no new licences can be issued.

Metering

- Diversions are metered and licence holders must not use more than their licensed volume.
- Meters are installed on all active licences of 10 ML or greater or all new licences regardless of the volume.
- Meters are read at least twice per year.

Restrictions

- Take and use licences allow for Southern Rural Water to roster and restrict extraction during periods of low water availability. Restrictions will be applied by Southern Rural Water as required. Notifications will be provided to licence holders in advance of their implementation

Transfers

- Temporary transfers of a licence (or part of a licence) can be for up to 5 years, and conclude at the end of the water season (30 June).
- Permanent or temporary transfers of a direct stream (all-year licence) may only be approved if:
 - the licence will be transferred to a downstream user, or
 - the licence is issued to the buyer as a winterfill licence
- A winterfill licence cannot be transferred to be a direct stream (all-year licence).

Renewals

- Licences are renewed in accordance with the Water Act 1989 and Policies for Managing Take and Use Licences.

The general rules apply to all licences in the Snowy River Basin, unless otherwise stated in the system specific rules.

System specific rules

Some systems within the Snowy River Basin require more specific management rules that address rostering, restrictions and trade. In the Snowy River Basin specific rules exist for the following systems:

- Snowy River - refer to appendix 1
- Buchan River - refer to appendix 2

Annual reporting

Southern Rural Water produces Local Water Reports for each river basin. These reports include information on licences, water use and seasonal conditions. A copy is sent to each licence holder each year.

Consultation and review

SRW will consult with licence holders and relevant stakeholders before making changes to the Local Management Plan, other than administrative changes or clarifications.

The Local Management Plan will be reviewed every 5 years, unless an update is required sooner.

References

- Department Primary Industries – Victorian Resources Online
- Victorian Water Accounts

Contact details

For general information call 1300 139 510 or visit www.srw.com.au

Additional information

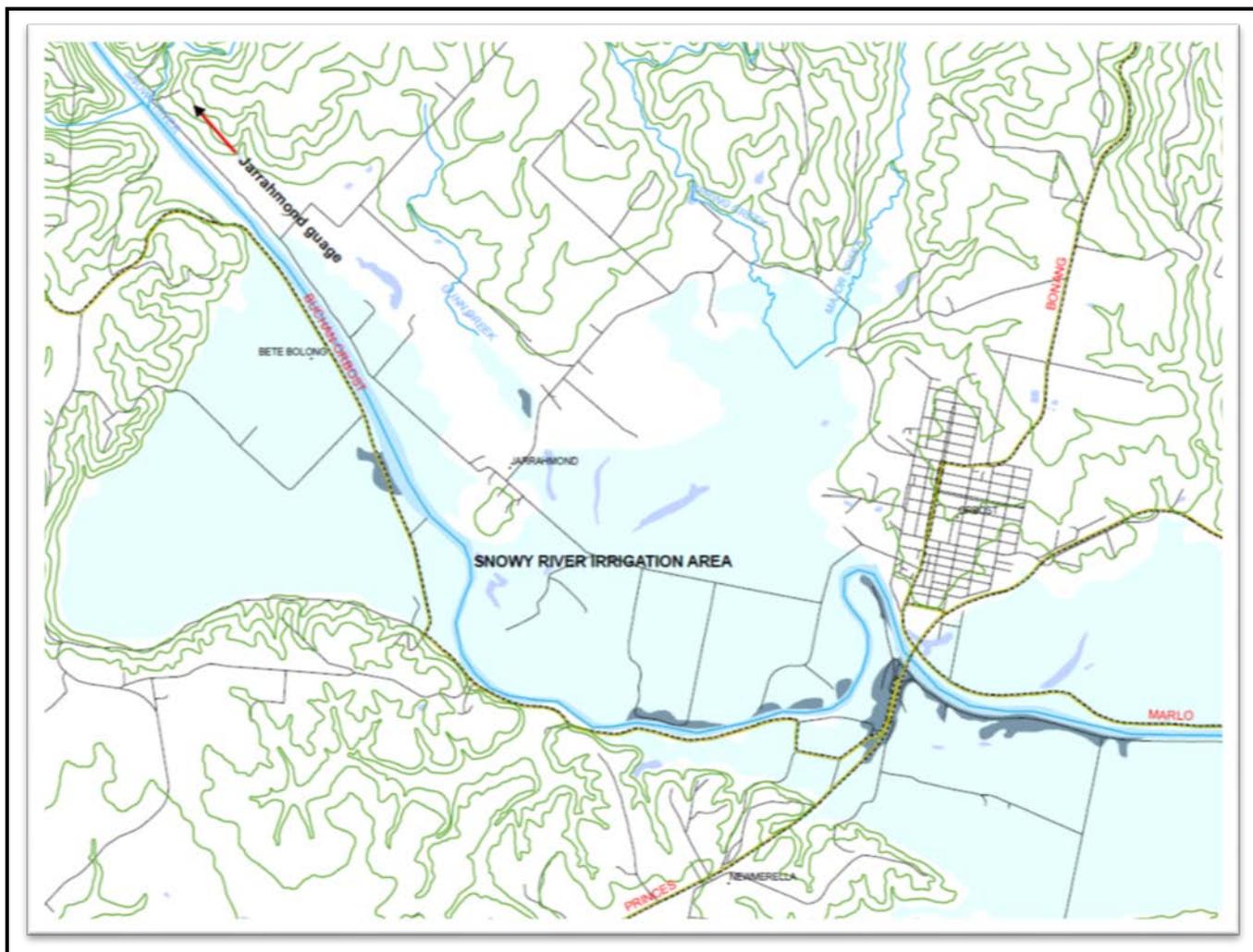
East Gippsland Water has Bulk Entitlements at the Buchan River and Rocky River. Contact East Gippsland Water or refer to its website for further information on management and compliance rules.

Appendix 1

Snowy River Rules

Area Description

These rules apply to all Snowy River irrigation licence holders downstream of the Jarrahmond Gauge Site, as shown below.



Licences

Licence Type	Number of Licences	Volume (ML)
Irrigation – Direct Pumping	27	2449

More detailed information can be located in the Victorian Water Register.

Management of Licences

Restriction triggers for each stage of restriction.

Restriction Stages	Trigger Value for Introduction of Next Stage of Restriction	Percentage Reduction
Stage 1 (Roster)	60 ML per day	0%
Stage 2	50ML per day	25%
Stage 3	40ML per day	50%
Stage 4	30ML per day	75%
Ban	<20 ML per day	100%

Management is by visual inspection and liaison with customers. Customers will be notified when restrictions are imminent, which will include information on how to obtain updates on the restriction levels.

Due to the relatively low irrigation use and reliable flows, rosters are likely to be implemented only in very rare events. In low flow periods, the mouth of the Snowy River can be closed via sand bars. This sometimes results in flooding of low lying areas below the Princes Highway Bridge with saline water. A review of the roster and its implementation may be required if there is a need to invoke restrictions.

Compliance Point

There is a gauging station (Site No.222200) located on the Snowy River at Jarrahmond which is located off Garnetts Track north of the Orbost township.

Transfers

- Temporary transfers of a licence (or part of a licence) can be for up to 5 years, and conclude at the end of the water season (30 June).
- Permanent or temporary transfers of a direct stream (all-year licence) may only be approved if:
 - the licence will be transferred to a downstream user, or
 - the licence is issued to the buyer as a winterfill licence
- A winterfill licence cannot be transferred to be a direct stream (all-year licence).

Consultation

Southern Rural Water liaises with the LAC whose membership consists of customers from the catchment. Meetings are held as the need arises. The purpose of the committee is to inform of policy changes and to consult on management practices in the local area.

Review

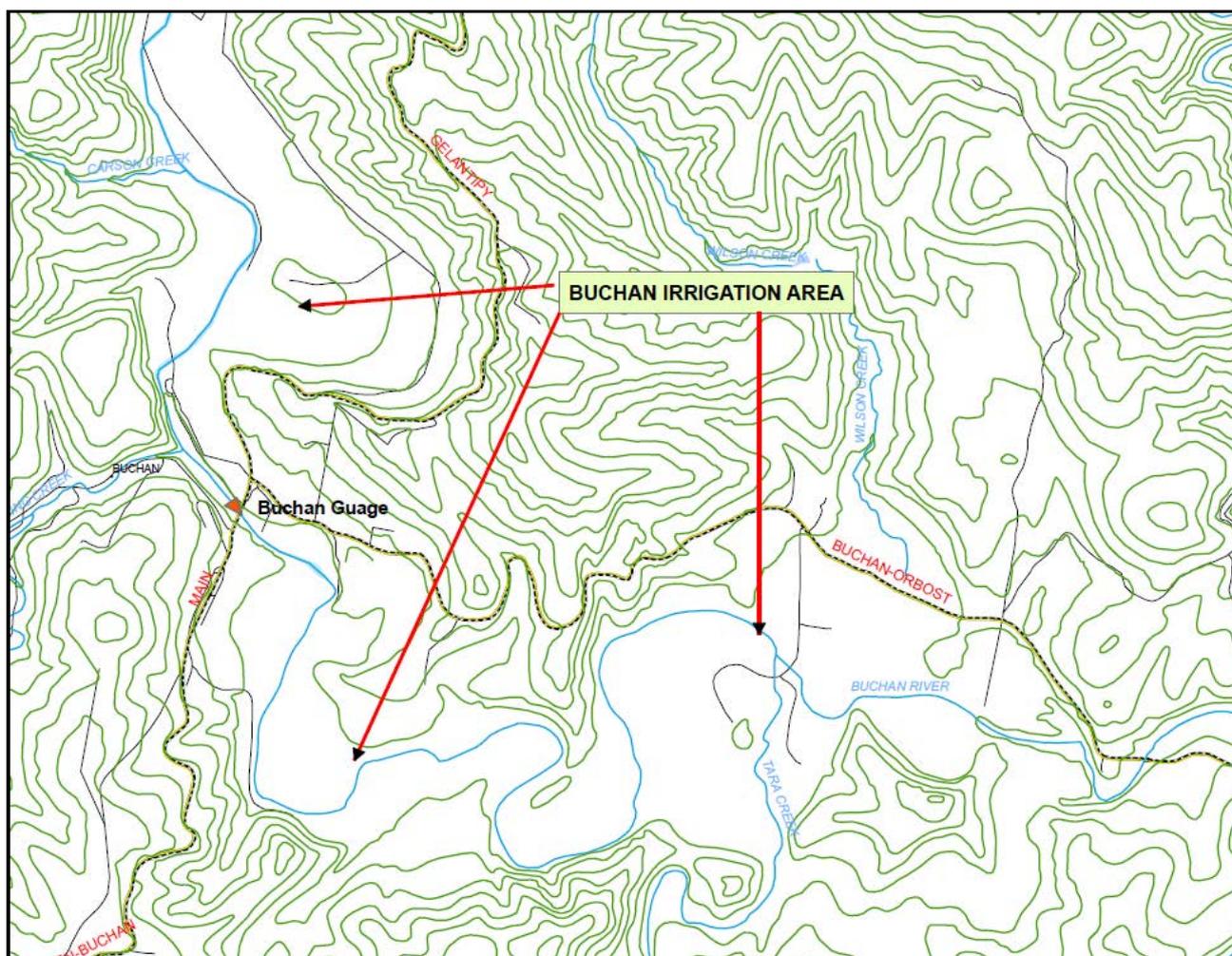
These rules will be reviewed every five years, unless an update is required sooner.

Appendix 2

Buchan River Rules

Area Description

These rules apply to all Buchan River irrigation licence holders, as shown in the map below.



Licences

Licence Type	Number of Licences	Volume (ML)
Irrigation – Direct Pumping	7	519.2

More detailed information can be located in the Victorian Water Register.

Management of Licences

Restriction triggers for each stage of restriction.

Restriction Stages	Trigger Value for Introduction of Next Stage of Restriction	Percentage Reduction
Stage 1 (Roster)	14 ML per day	50%
Ban	<=4ML per day	100%

A simple roster applies to irrigators on this system. Only two of the three active licence holders can irrigate at any one time for specified periods. Should all irrigation licence holders decide to irrigate in a season, the roster will be varied accordingly.

Management is by visual inspection and liaison with customers. Customers will be notified when restrictions are imminent, which will include information on how to obtain updates on the restriction levels.

Compliance Point

There is a gauging station (Gauge Site No.222206) on the Buchan River just off the main bridge within the Buchan Township.

Irrigation pump outputs below the site are taken into consideration when determining passing flow requirement.

Transfers

- Temporary transfers of a licence (or part of a licence) can be for up to 5 years, and conclude at the end of the water season (30 June).
- Permanent or temporary transfers of a direct stream (all-year licence) may only be approved if:
 - the licence will be transferred to a downstream user, or
 - the licence is issued to the buyer as a winterfill licence
- A winterfill licence cannot be transferred to be a direct stream (all-year licence).

Consultation

Southern Rural Water liaises with the LAC whose membership consists of customers from the catchment. Meetings are held as the need arises. The purpose of the committee is to inform of policy changes and to consult on management practices in the local area.

Review

These rules will be reviewed every five years, unless an update is required sooner.