

Mitchell River Basin – Local Water Report 2019

Introduction

Welcome to our annual Local Water Report for our Mitchell River Basin customers. This report provides an insight on:

- how our rivers fared last season (2018-19)
- groundwater level trends
- the number of irrigation licences in each of our systems
- how much water irrigators used last season, compared with previous years
- emerging local water issues.

What happened with your local rivers last season?

The 2018-19 season was a severe season for all customers in the Mitchell River Basin. Restrictions for the Mitchell River started on 12 January and restrictions were not able to be lifted until 5 May. 56% of days during restriction were at stage 8 and above. Dargo/Wonnangatta Rivers restrictions started on 17 January with restrictions ending 4 May, although there were some minor intermittent periods without restriction.

Usage for the catchment was down approximately 6.5% from the previous season.

Mitchell River (from Glenaladale downstream)

Stage	Total Days
Stage 1	8
Stage 2	3
Stage 3	6
Stage 4	7
Stage 5	6
Stage 6	2
Stage 7	16
Stage 8	10
Stage 9	25
Stage 10	11
Ban	15

Mitchell River has an 11 stage roster – 11th stage is a ban.

Wonnangatta River at Waterford

Stage	Total Days
Stage 1	20
Stage 2	43
Ban	6

Dargo River at Lower Dargo Road

Stage	Total Days
Stage 1	20
Stage 2	43
Ban	6

The Wonnangatta/Dargo Rivers have a three-stage roster. The third stage is a ban.

Rosters and restrictions

When river, creek and groundwater levels drop, we often have to introduce rosters, restrictions or bans to ensure a fair distribution of available water to all licence holders.

You can find your area's hotline number and local management rules by visiting www.srw.com.au/customer/rosters-and-restrictions

River water usage

The table below compares last season's usage with the previous four years.

River system	Number of licences	Licensed volume (ML) ¹	Total Volume Extracted (ML)				
			2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Mitchell	145	14,933.6	12,325	13,165	9,737	7,352	7,750
Dargo / Wonnangatta	31	1107.5	421	459	237	155	134
Totals	176	16,041.1	12,746	13,624	9,974	7,507	7,884

¹Does not include farm dam registration licences.

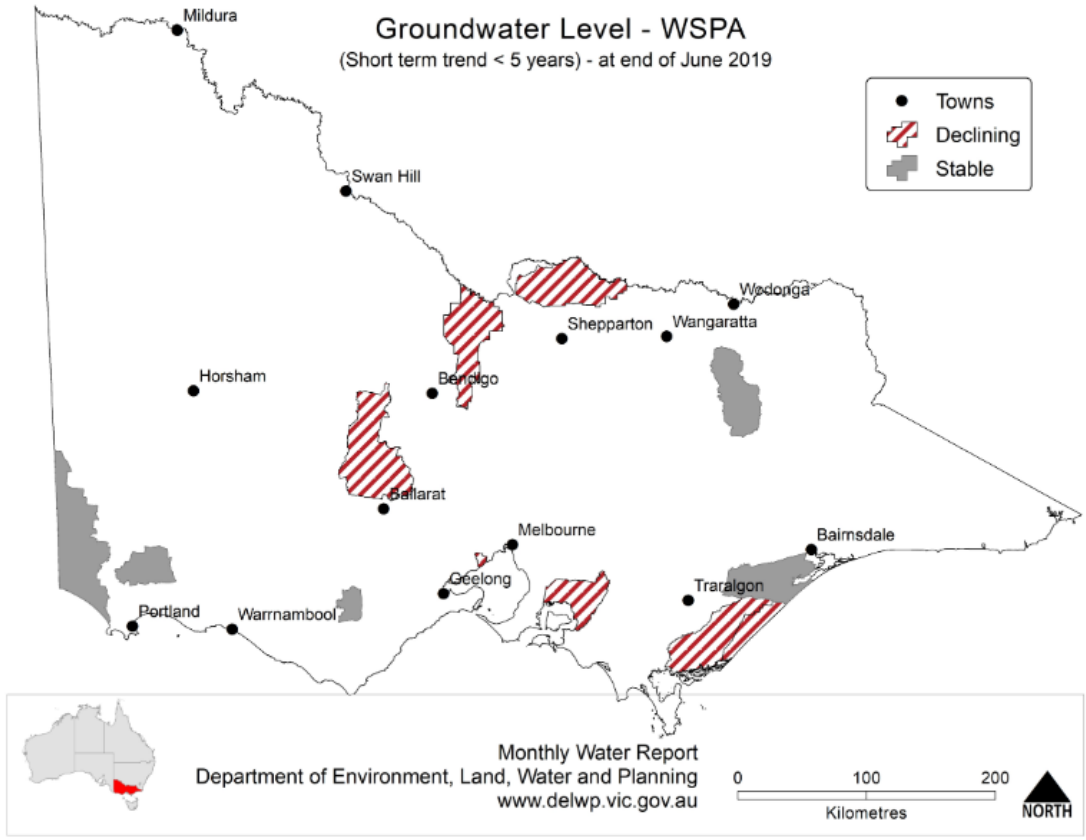
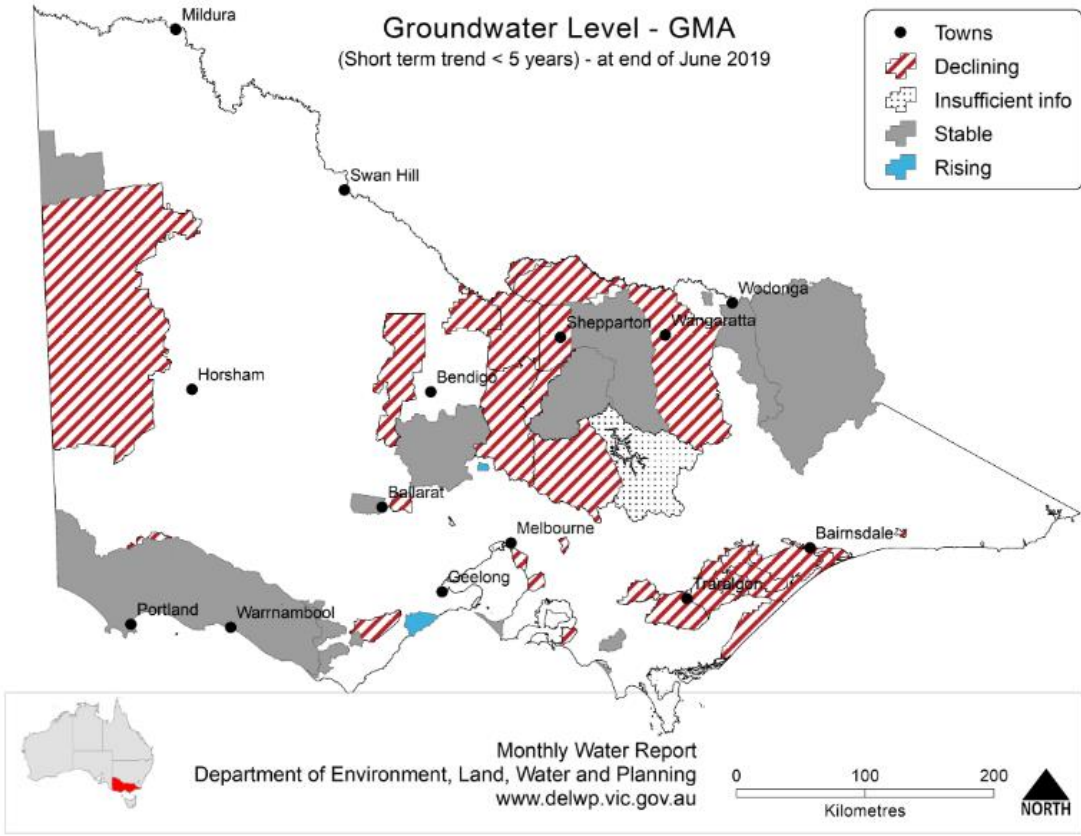
What happened with your local groundwater last season?

Overview

There are three Groundwater Management Units within the Mitchell basin (Wy Yung, Sale and Stratford).

The Wy Yung aquifer is a thin shallow alluvial deposit that is associated with the river valley. The Sale aquifer is a buried sand aquifer, and Stratford is the deep sand aquifer. A bedrock aquifer, which covers most of the basin, has limited quality and yields and is generally only used for domestic and stock purposes.

Follow this [link](#) if you would like to know more about groundwater management in your area.



Use this [link](#) to view groundwater trends across Victoria.

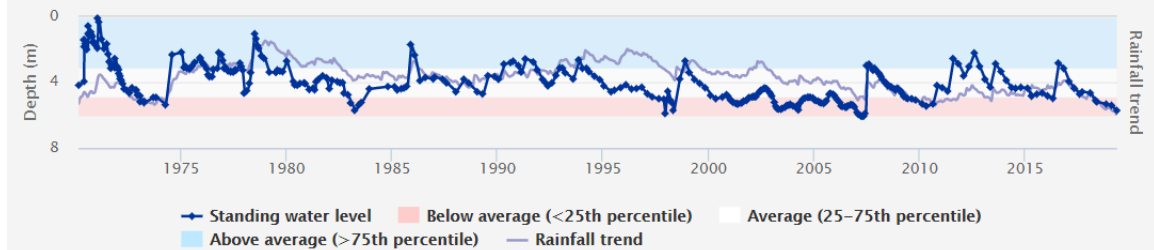
Wy Yung

Wy Yung GMA received 553mm of rain at the Bairnsdale (Mitchell River @ Rosehill) rain gauge station which was approximately 90mm less than the long-term average of 640mm.

Groundwater usage last year was 1,547ML compared to the long-term average of 962ML.

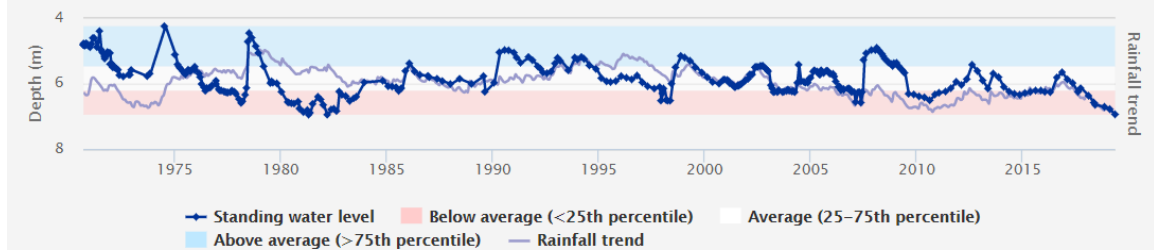
Average water levels this year are within or below the long-term average

Standing water level (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning)



80762 - Wy Yung

Standing water level (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning)



56540 - Wy Yung

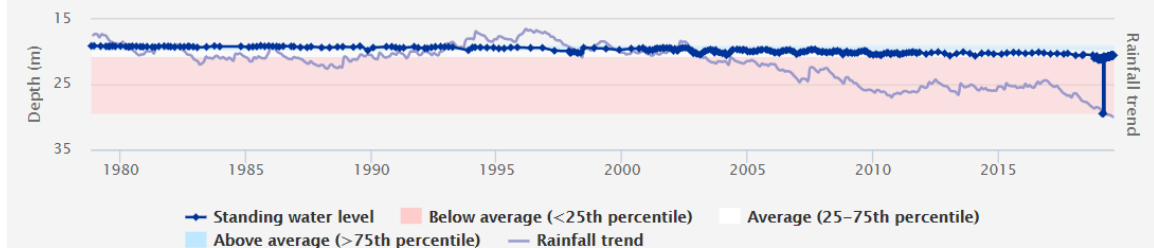
Sale

Sale GMA received 383mm of rain at the East Sale rain gauge station which was approximately 210mm less than the long-term average of 593mm.

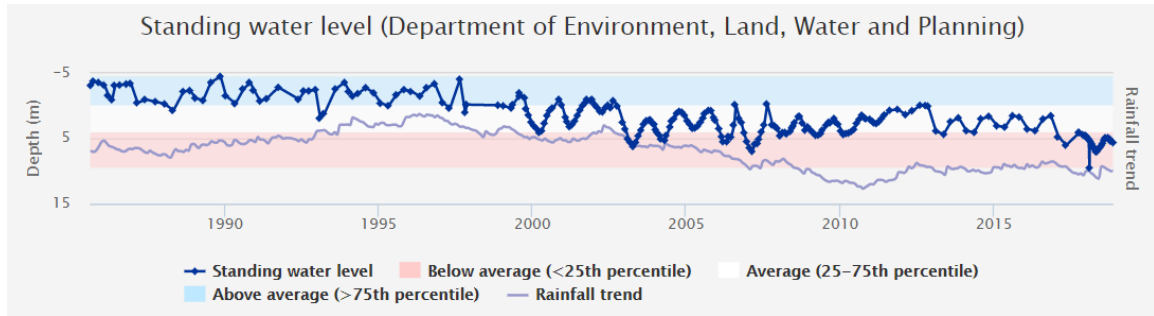
Groundwater usage last year was 17,751ML compared to the long-term average of 11,239ML.

Average water levels this year are below the long-term average (below 25th percentile)

Standing water level (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning)



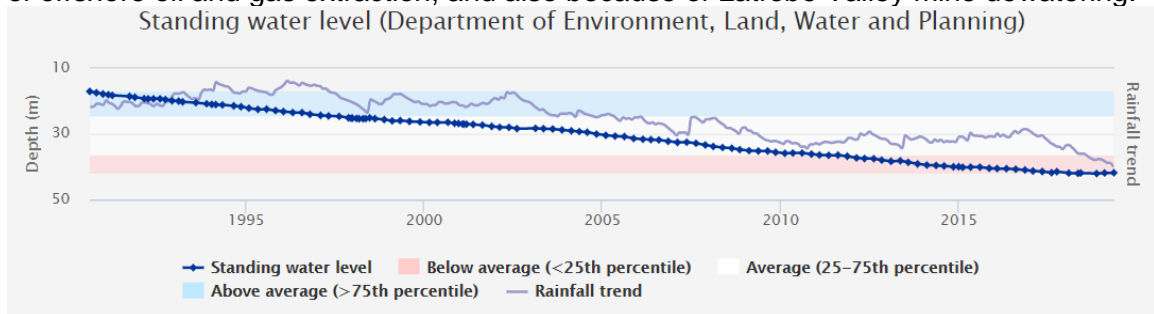
[65762](#) – Sale



[86464](#) - Sale

Stratford

Stratford GMA received 390mm of rain at the Maffra rain gauge station which was approximately 140mm less than the long-term average of 531mm. Groundwater usage last year was 110ML compared to the 10 year average of 39ML. Groundwater levels are slowly declining in this deeper aquifer, mainly due to the effects of offshore oil and gas extraction, and also because of Latrobe Valley mine dewatering.



[47063](#) – Romawi Road

To find out more information about the bore depths in your area visit https://www.vvg.org.au/vvg_map.php

Groundwater figures

The table below compares last season's usage with the previous four years.

Groundwater system	Number of licences	Licensed volume (ML)	Total Volume Extracted (ML)				
			2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Sale WSPA	106	20,851		14,447	11,982	10,171	8,762
Stratford GMA ¹	9	836		18	15	22	3
Wy Yung GMA	59	7,462	1547	1,326	559	414	528
Unincorporated GMU	62	4,443		1,176	593	582	391
Totals	236	33,592		16,967	13,149	11,189	9,684

¹ Excludes entitlements for power generation. Usage recorded does not include power generation at the Latrobe Valley mines.

Water trading

The table below shows the number and volume (ML) of water trades. Temporary and permanent volume trades show water trades across different locations, as distinct from ownership changes that are part of land transfers.

Previous years water trade ML volumes, numbers and traded price can be found at:

<http://waterregister.vic.gov.au/water-trading/take-and-use-licence-trading>

Basin / GMU	Permanent trade		Temporary trade	
	Number	Volume (ML)	Number	Volume (ML)
Mitchell Basin	2	80	3	114
Sale WSPA ¹	4	580	39	3276.2
Wy Yung GMA	0	0	2	37

¹Section 54(2) *Water Act 1989* allows permanent trades where a management plan is refused. Sale WSPA Draft Management Plan was refused May 2004. Refusal advertised May 2004.

More information

For more information about rural water use in your area, please contact your local field officer, **Nick Krajnc** on **0429 404 751** or phone Southern Rural Water on 1300 139 510.

Southern Rural Water is publishing local water reports for all basins. You can view these online at our website (www.srw.com.au)

PLEASE DON'T DRINK OUR WATER

ANY water from sources managed or licensed by Southern Rural Water, including irrigation storages, channels, rivers and creeks, groundwater and farm dams, is untreated. It should not be considered safe for human consumption without proper treatment.