



# East Gippsland Basin

## Local Water Report 2019-20

### Introduction

Welcome to our annual Local Water Report for East Gippsland Basin customers. This report provides information on:

- how our rivers have fared in the last season (2019-20)
- groundwater level trends
- the number of irrigation licences in each of our systems
- how much water irrigators used last season, with some comparison to previous years
- emerging local water issues

### What happened with your local rivers last season?

Last season water was again very scarce for customers within the East Gippsland Basin. The Tambo upstream from the Little River had a particularly lengthy period of bans commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> November and finally ceasing on 30<sup>th</sup> April with only a couple of periods of respite in between. The lower Tambo customers experienced more severe restrictions as well - overall usage was down by up to 37% over the previous two seasons.

Although flows were relatively low for the Snowy River, no restrictions were required however some of our customers were affected again by the closure of the river mouth. This results in lower land areas becoming inundated with brackish water and can restrict usage below the Princes Highway bridge. The Buchan and Cann Rivers also experienced extended periods of bans.

#### Tambo River - Swifts Creek region

Stage	Total Days
Ban	141

#### Tambo River downstream of Ramrod Creek

Stage	Total Days
Stage 1	3
Stage 2	0
Stage 3	0
Stage 4	13
Stage 5	4
Ban	25

## Buchan River

Stage	Total Days
Stage 1	16
Ban	32

## Cann River

Stage	Total Days
BAN	64

## Water quality- the effects of the summer bushfires

Substantial rainfall in many parts of the catchments which started breaking the grip of the drought years, significantly affected the quality of the water in many parts of the eastern waterways. The ash and charcoal that covered huge areas of destroyed forests washed into the waterways polluting the water to such an extent it was unusable for much of the latter part of this season. Many of our customers had to utilise water tankers and bores particularly for stock & domestic purposes. This has resulted in emergency water bores being established in several key areas to ensure supply for basic needs (other than drinking water for residents).

## 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](http://www.srw.com.au/customer/rosters-and-restrictions)

## Surface water figures

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

River system	Number of licences <sup>1</sup>	Licensed volume (ML) <sup>1</sup>	Total Volume Extracted (ML)				
			2019-20	2018 -19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Tambo	69	3628	574	903	633	244	227
Snowy	53	3763	1,255	1,434	869	473	471
East Gippsland Basin <sup>2</sup>	10	540	64	64	49	95	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>7931</b>	<b>2,072</b>	<b>2,401</b>	<b>1,551</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>754</b>

<sup>1</sup>Does not include farm dam registrations

<sup>2</sup> Includes usage from Cann River, Bemm River, Genoa River

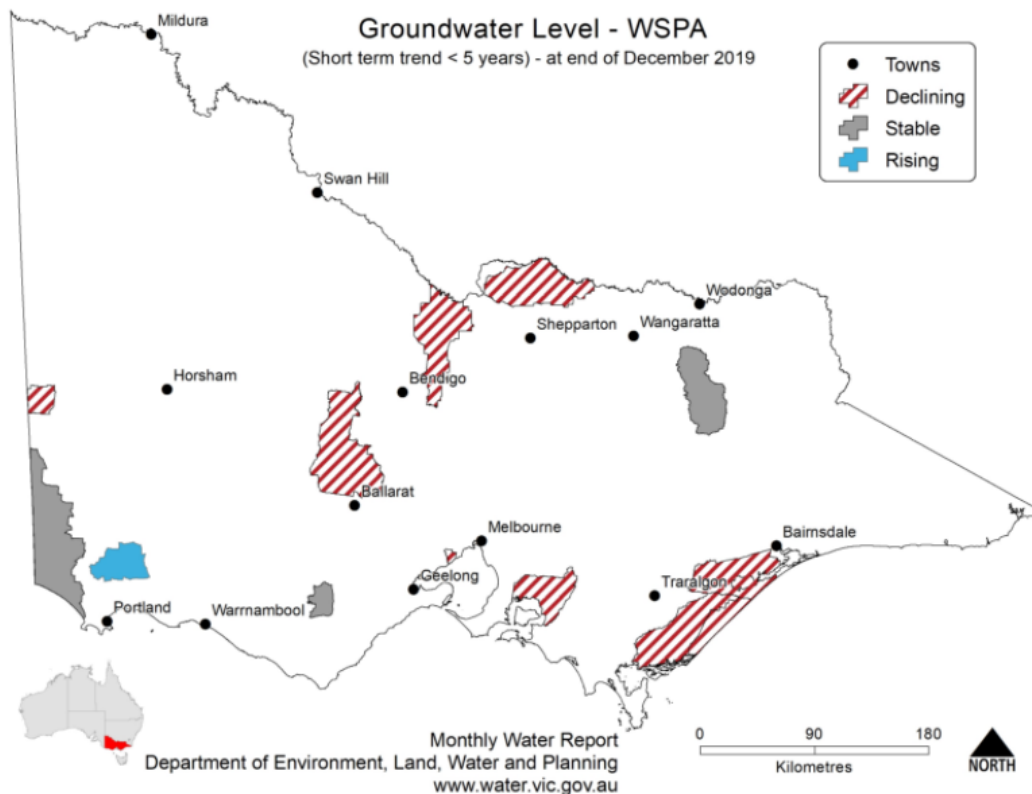
# What's happened with your local groundwater?

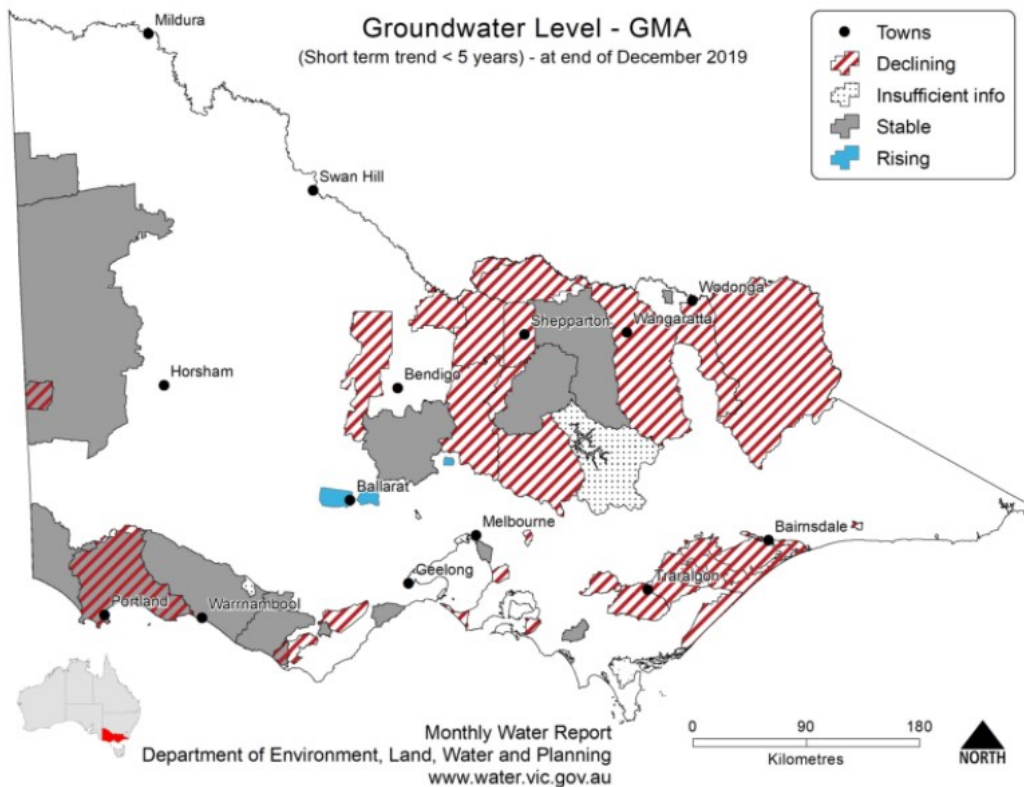
## Overview

There are two groundwater management areas within the East Gippsland basin - Orbost and Stratford.

The Orbost aquifer is a thin shallow alluvial deposit that is associated with river valleys, while the Stratford aquifer is a deep sand aquifer. The 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

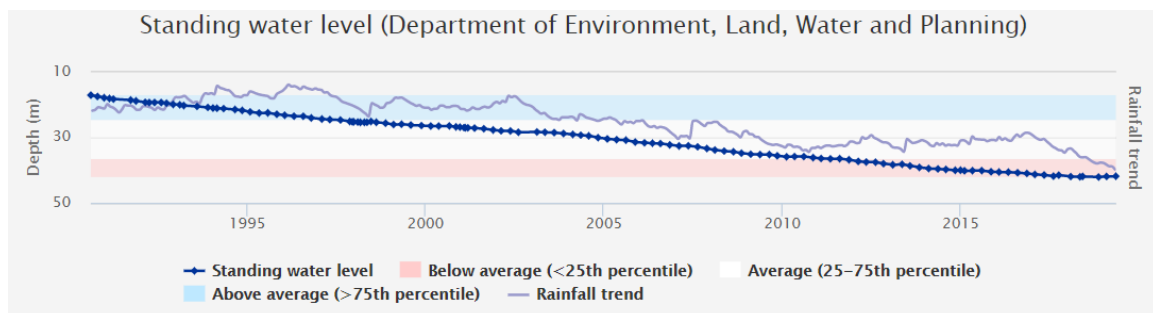




Use [this link](#) to view groundwater trends across Victoria.

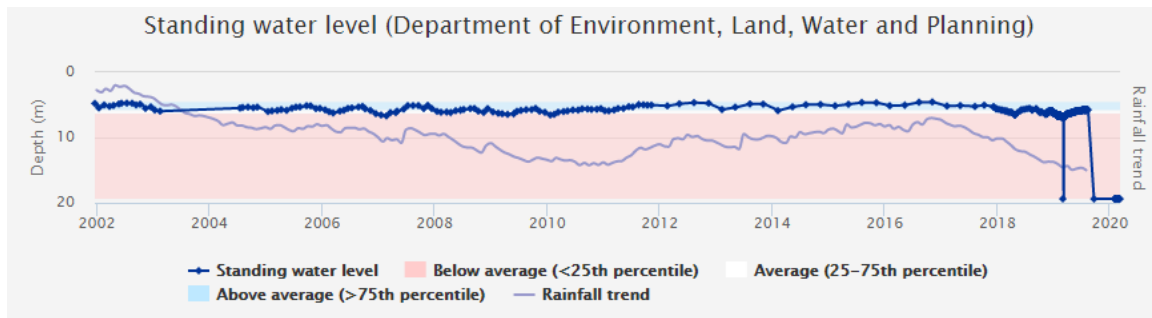
## Stratford

Stratford GMA received 542mm of rain at the Maffra rain gauge station which was approximately 30mm more than the long-term average of 516mm. Groundwater usage last year was 35ML compared to the 10 year average of 28ML. 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.

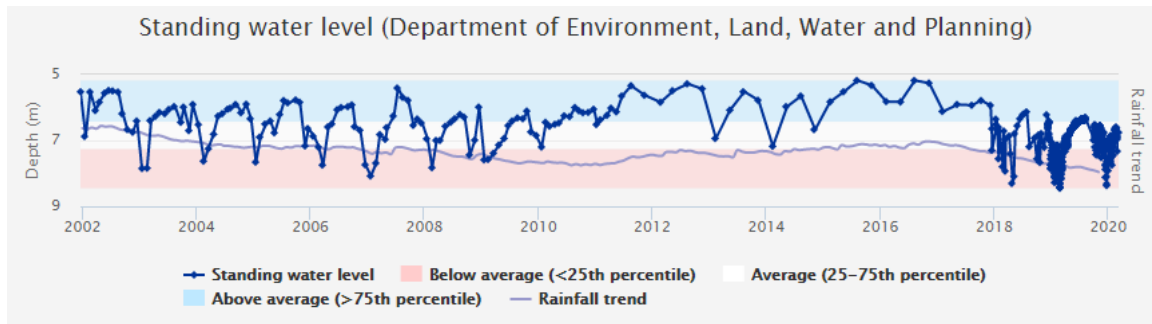


## Orbost

Orbost GMA received 562mm of rain at the Bete Bolong rain gauge station which was approximately 270mm less than the long-term average of 834mm. Groundwater usage last year was 241ML compared to the long-term average of 309ML. Water levels this year are average to below average.



Buchan/Orbost Road, Orbost (115732)



Buchan/Orbost Road, Orbost (144467)

To find out more information about the bore depths in your area visit [https://www.vvg.org.au/vvg\\_map.php](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)				
			2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Stratford GMA <sup>1</sup>	9	836	35	110	18	15	22
Orbost GMA	4	1,217	241	545	537	104	154
Unincorporated	29	1,603	1,065	1,319	1,176	593	582
<b>Totals</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>3,656</b>	<b>1,341</b>	<b>1,974</b>	<b>1,731</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>758</b>

<sup>1</sup> Does not include power generation licences.

## 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.

1. Previous years water trade ML volumes , numbers and traded price can be [found here](#).

Basin / GMU	Permanent trade		Temporary trade	
	Number	Volume (ML)	Number	Volume (ML)
Tambo Basin	2	3.2	0	0
Snowy Basin	3	14	5	167
East Gippsland Basin	0	0	0	0
Orbost GMA	0	0	0	0
Stratford GMA	1	50	0	0

## More information

For more information about river flows closer to the summer months and 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](http://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.