



# **Central Gippsland Shallow Aquifers Local Management Plan**

Version 1

April 2023

## Version Control

| Version | Change summary  | Date       |
|---------|---|------------|
| 1       | Removed from previous Catchment Statement and presented as a standalone Local Management Plan that incorporates Denison GMA, Wa De Lock GMA and the Lake Welling Trading Zone. Minor administrative updates included. | April 2023 |
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## Purpose of this document

This Local Management Plan (LMP) documents the current management arrangements for the Denison Groundwater Management Area (GMA), the Wa De Lock GMA and the Lake Wellington Trading Zones. The objective of the plan is to ensure the equitable sharing and long-term sustainability of the groundwater resource.

The plan aims to clearly and simply explain how groundwater is managed in this area, this includes information on the boundaries and depth of the management area, the cap on total annual groundwater licensed volume, how groundwater licences can be accessed (via a trade of entitlement), and the metering requirements. This LMP consolidates rules for these related areas to provide a broad perspective of management across the resource.

The Local Management Plan will be reviewed on an as-needs basis. The aim of future reviews will be to improve existing management and where possible to make management less complex, while ensuring equitable sharing and long-term sustainability of the resource.



SIMON WILKINSON

General Manager Service Delivery

12 April 2023

# Denison GMA

## Area description

The Denison GMA is shown below. The plan is lodged with the Central Plan Office, reference number LEGL./01-87.

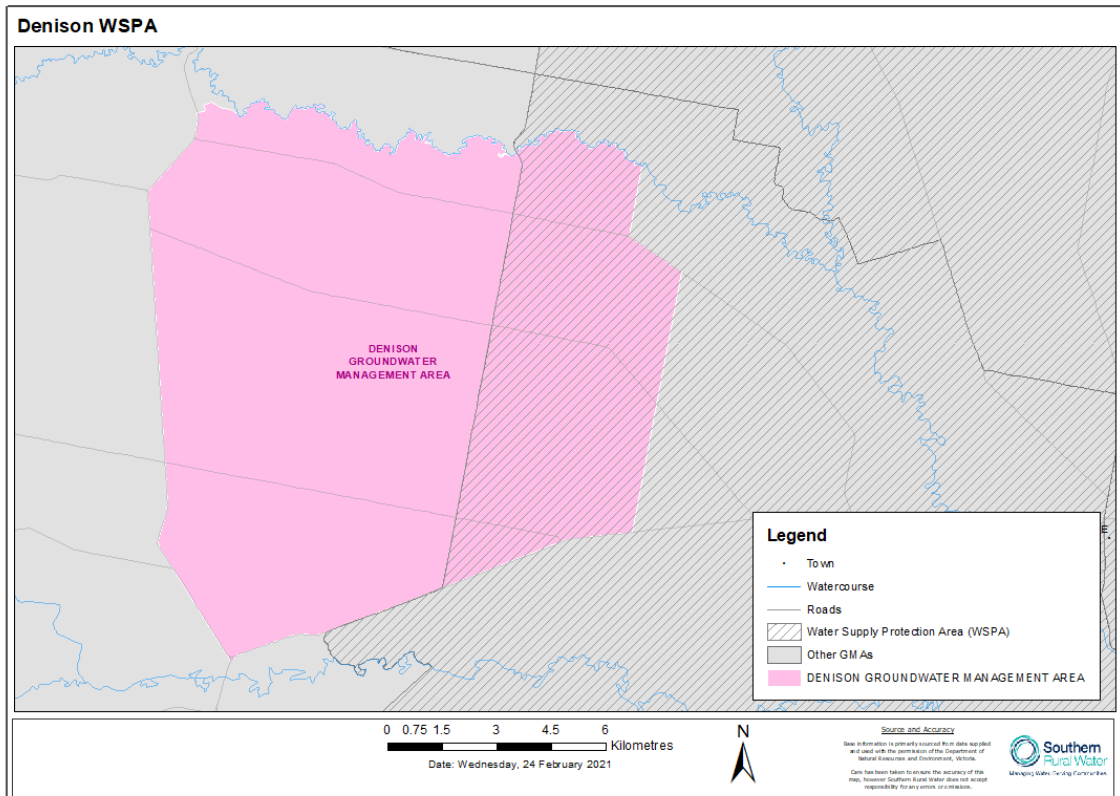


Figure 1: Map of Denison Groundwater Management Area.

## Permissible Consumptive Volume

A Permissible Consumptive Volume (PCV) currently applies to the Denison GMA. The PCV is a cap on the amount of groundwater entitlement in this management unit. The PCV for Denison GMA is 18,502 ML/yr.

The PCV applies to the area covered in Figure 1, for all formations from the surface to 25 metres below the surface.

## Water entitlements

The extraction of groundwater for purposes other than domestic and stock use is authorised under a groundwater licence. People have rights to take groundwater for domestic and stock use without a groundwater licence.

Annual summary information on licence numbers, total entitlement volume and groundwater levels can be found in the relevant Southern Rural Water (SRW) Local Water Report on the SRW website.

Licence holders must not take more than their annual licence volume.

## Restrictions

The PCV determines the maximum volume of licensed entitlement that can be issued from the Denison GMA. The local management plan does not place any other specific restrictions on taking groundwater.

If necessary, SRW will temporarily qualify rights to groundwater under section 33AAA of the *Water Act 1989* if a water shortage occurs - for example, if regional drawdown is affecting access to groundwater by users.

Groundwater licences also allow SRW to restrict extraction if required - for example, to minimise the effect of extraction from specific sites if there is a significant impact on nearby users or the aquifer. If restrictions are necessary, SRW will notify licence holders in advance.

## New Licences

New groundwater licences (additional entitlement) will not be issued in the Denison GMA because this may adversely impact on the sustainability of the local groundwater and surface water resource, however temporary or permanent trade of existing entitlement is allowed.

## Trading

In considering an application to transfer a licence (temporarily or permanently), SRW must undertake a thorough assessment of the application. An application to transfer a licence is not automatically approved. In deciding whether or not to approve an application SRW must consider section 40 of the Act, including:

- Availability of water now and in the future;
- Adverse effects that an approval may have on existing users, on waterways and aquifers and on the environment; and
- Existing and projected water quality in the GMA.

When an application is made, SRW will assess whether groundwater extractions at the new site will cause adverse and material interference to any nearby groundwater user. If interference is likely, SRW may set transfer conditions to minimise interference, or it may refuse the application. Approval of an application to transfer may be subject to a technical assessment to determine the risk of bore interference and unacceptable impacts on the surrounding environment.

In the Denison GMA:

- Permanent transfers are permitted
- Temporary transfers are permitted for a period of up to five years

## **Metering**

SRW meters new and existing groundwater users with an annual volume greater than 20ML<sup>1</sup>. This allows SRW to keep track of how much water is being used and enables licence holders to keep within their allocated volume.

The meters are supplied by SRW, and the licence holder is responsible for paying the full cost of the meter and initial installation. The meter remains the property of SRW and SRW is responsible for maintenance and replacement.

Meters are read at least twice per year.

## **Consultation**

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

The LMP will be reviewed on an as-needs basis.

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<sup>1</sup> Except where metering is physically impractical, or where it is high risk from a health and safety perspective

## Wa De Lock GMA

### Area description and sub zones

Wa De Lock GMA is comprised of three zones. The Wa De Lock GMA plan is lodged with the Central Plan Office with reference numbers LEGL./04-160, LEGL./04-161 & LEGL./04-162 respectively for Zones 1, 2 and 3.

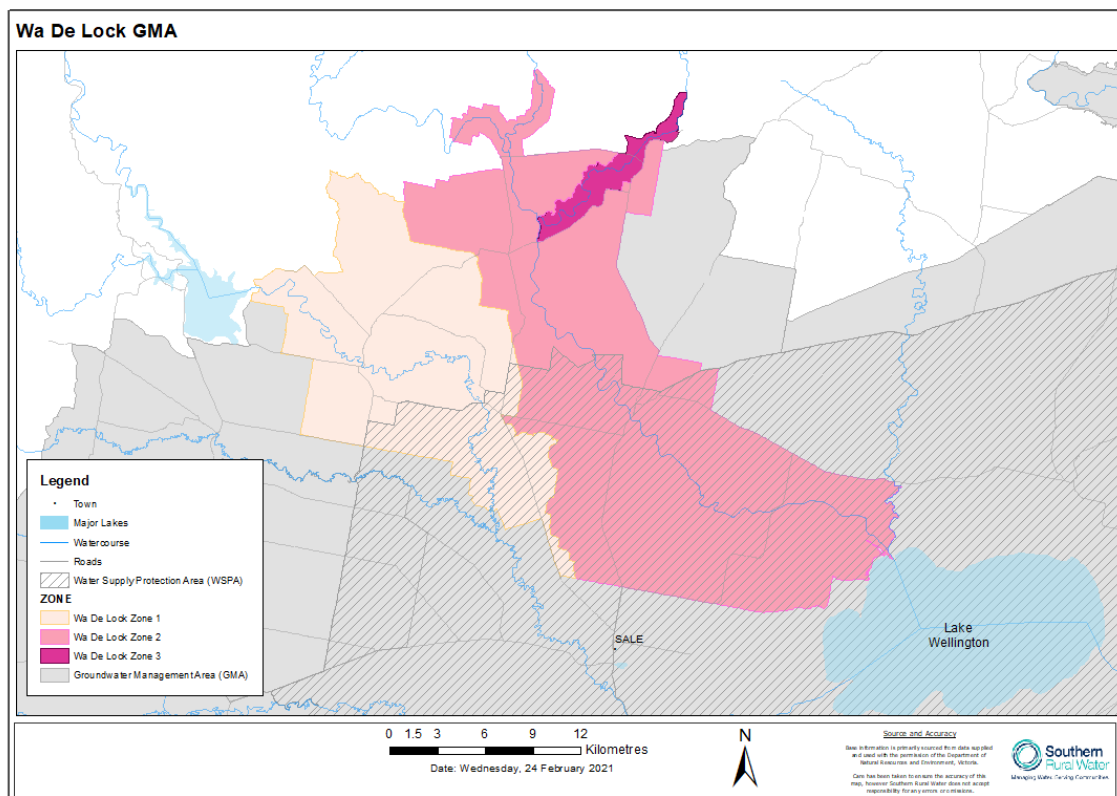


Figure 2: Map of Wa De Lock Groundwater Management Area.

### Permissible Consumptive Volume

A Permissible Consumptive Volume (PCV) currently applies to the Wa De Lock GMA. The PCV is a cap on the amount of groundwater allocated in this management unit

The PCV applies to the area covered in Figure 2:

- Zone 1 – All formations from the surface to 25 metres below the surface
- Zone 2 – All formations from surface to 25 metres below the surface
- Zone 3 – All formations from surface to 25 metres below the surface

The PCVs for these three subzones are:

- Zone 1 – 12,595 ML/yr
- Zone 2 – 17,000 ML/yr

- Zone 3 – 1,200 ML/yr

## Water entitlements

The extraction of groundwater for purposes other than domestic and stock use is authorised under a groundwater licence. People have rights to take groundwater for domestic and stock use without a groundwater licence.

Annual summary information on licence numbers, total entitlement volume and groundwater levels can be found in the relevant SRW Local Water Report on the SRW website.

Licence holders must not take more than their annual licence volumes.

## Restrictions

The PCV determines the maximum volume of water that can be extracted from the Wa De Lock GMA; however, the LMP does not place specific restrictions on taking groundwater.

If necessary, SRW will temporarily qualify rights to groundwater under section 33AAA of the *Water Act 1989* if a water shortage occurs - for example, if regional drawdown is affecting access to groundwater by users.

Groundwater licences also allow SRW to restrict extraction if required - for example, to minimise the effect of extraction from specific sites if there is a significant impact on nearby users or the aquifer. If restrictions are necessary, SRW will notify licence holders in advance.

## New licences

New groundwater licences (additional entitlement) will not be issued in the Wa De Lock GMA because this may adversely impact on the sustainability of the groundwater resource, however temporary or permanent trade of existing entitlement is allowed.

## Trading

In considering an application to transfer a licence (temporarily or permanently), SRW must undertake a thorough assessment of the application. An application to transfer a licence is not automatically approved. In deciding whether or not to approve an application SRW must consider section 40 of the Act, including:

- Availability of water now and in the future;
- Adverse effects that an approval may have on existing users, on waterways and aquifers and on the environment; and
- Existing and projected water quality in the GMA.

When an application is made, SRW will assess whether groundwater extractions at the new site will cause adverse and material interference to any nearby groundwater user. If interference is likely, SRW may set transfer conditions to minimise interference, or it may refuse the application. Approval of an application to transfer may be subject to technical assessments to determine bore interference and impact on surface water bodies.



- Permanent transfers are permitted
- Temporary transfers are permitted for a period of up to five years

Transfers can only occur within zones. Groundwater cannot be transferred from one zone to another.

## **Metering**

SRW meters new and existing licensed water users. This allows SRW to keep track of how much water is being used and enables licence holders to keep within their allocated volume. This means:

1. All new licences for irrigation or commercial purposes require a meter
2. Existing licences of 10ML or greater require a meter

The meters are supplied by SRW, and the licence holder will be responsible for paying the full cost of the meter and initial installation. The meter remains the property of SRW. SRW is responsible for maintenance and replacement.

Meters are read at least twice per year.

## **Consultation**

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

The LMP will be reviewed on an as needs basis

## Lake Wellington Trading Zone

The Lake Wellington trading zone comprises of six sub-zones.

These sub-zones apply to the shallow groundwater resources of the Haunted Hills Formation and associated aquifers within 25m of ground surface within the catchment. The trading rules should be read in conjunction with the management rules and PCV limits for Denison and Wa De Lock, and where there is any conflict, the PCVs take priority.

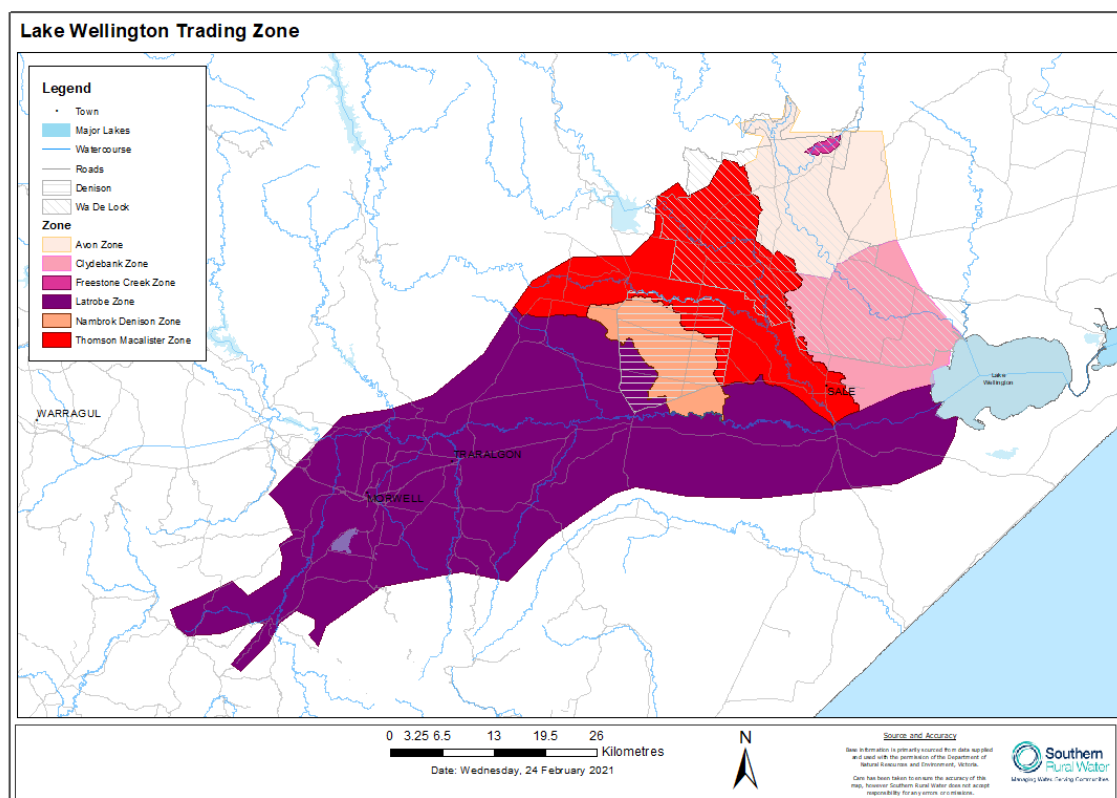


Figure 3. Map of Lake Wellington trading zone.

The groundwater transfer rules that apply to the Lake Wellington trading zone are:

- Transfers may occur within and into the Latrobe zone
- Transfers may occur within but should not occur into the Nambrok Denison zone
- Transfers may occur within but should not occur into the Thomson Macalister zone
- Transfers may occur within but should not occur into the Avon zone
- Transfers may occur within but should not occur into the Freestone Creek zone
- Transfers may occur between surface water and groundwater in the Freestone Creek zone
- Transfers may occur within and into the Clydebank zone

- Dewatering for salinity control is not capped in the Clydebank zone, but licences are limited where the Wa De Lock WSPA (and PCV) overlaps the zone
- Transfers are subject to section 40 assessments including Permissible Consumptive Volumes