



Water for the environment

One of the key issues facing our region is the pressure on its lifeblood – the Wimmera and Glenelg River systems.

These precious rivers supply and sustain wetlands of international significance, provide a social and environmental focus for many in the region, and provide water for stock, domestic and irrigation uses.

But the Wimmera and Glenelg rivers are under stress – leading to the serious consequent issues of salinity, loss of habitat, protecting biodiversity and other impacts.

The challenge is to balance our water usage requirements while sustaining viable populations of native flora and fauna. As such, the environment has always been a major focus of planning for the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline Project.

Our rivers, streams, wetlands, lakes and their surrounding environs will be a major beneficiary of the water savings that the pipeline project will create

Environmental Water Reserve

It is estimated that 103,000 megalitres (ML) of water will be saved each year as a result of the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline. Up to 83,000 ML of this amount will be allocated to the Environmental Water Reserve.

Catchment management authorities will manage the Environmental Water Reserve, under delegation from the Victorian Government, by returning this water to regional waterways.

Wetlands

An allocation of 1,000 ML of water each year to off-stream water bodies acknowledges the range of habitats that the region supports. It is recognised that these wetlands enhance the quality of life in a relatively dry region. Wetlands located on drainage lines or that are a component of a Landcare corridor are likely to have higher habitat values - leading to preference for a water supply.

Landscape changes and pipeline opportunities

One of the issues in relation to the project's impact on the environment that has been raised during the extensive consultation phase is:

Without dams and channels, there won't be enough 'water' for birds and animals.

Project leaders and planners acknowledge that the project will result in some changes to the landscape. But landscape change is nothing new – in this region 100 years ago, many of our water bodies and wetlands held water for longer than they do now. This can mostly be attributed to agricultural development rather than to water supply.

This pipeline project, by taking into account our agricultural needs as well as our environmental needs, is a great opportunity for positive and sustainable landscape change

Recreational lakes

The eleven nominated recreational lakes and weirs in our region will also receive a top-up supply as part of the pipeline project.

As a result of the the pipeline, up to 3000 ML of recreational water will be supplied each year these important community facilities.

For more information on recreational lakes refer to 'Water for recreational lakes' Fact Sheet.

More information is available by contacting

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