



MEDIA RELEASE

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Water sale in northern Victoria

The Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) will sell a small portion of its water allocation in the northern Victorian water market.

Up to 10 gigalitres of Murray allocation will be made available through selected brokers from March this year.

VEWH Chairperson Denis Flett said the VEWH's latest assessment showed that all priority environmental watering actions planned for dry conditions can be achieved this year, and there is enough water available to carry over for critical watering in 2019-20.

"We didn't need all the water we'd set aside to support bird breeding at Barmah Forest this year because only a small number of waterbirds bred. Our other waterings are progressing well, so we've decided to make some unused water available for sale."

Mr Flett said the decision to sell was made to manage the VEWH's available water for the greatest environmental benefit across Victoria.

"We've seen the impact of drought and no flows in the Darling River in New South Wales. The VEWH's critical priority during dry conditions is to make sure environmental flows work to provide refuges for plants and animals, avoid critical loss of species and improve resilience in rivers and wetlands across the state."

"Our assessment of demand and supply of water for the environment indicates there is very little risk that selling this volume of water will affect our ability to provide necessary flows next year."

Mr Flett said revenue raised from the sale will be invested in projects planned to boost native fish populations in northern Victoria, like works to improve fish habitat and movement.

The sale will also support irrigators and other water users ahead of autumn watering.

"We are aware that current market conditions are challenging for many buyers. Making this water available now will help meet some of the demand for autumn irrigation and carryover into next year."

The VEWH flagged that it would consider selling water in northern Victoria in its annual trading strategy released in July 2018.

Water set aside for the environment has strict rules governing its sale so that any trade protects the environment, is in the public interest, and has no adverse impacts on the community.



“We’ll use our experience with trade since 2012 to make sure that our actions won’t have any significant adverse impacts on other water market participants and we will monitor trading conditions over the coming months,” Mr Flett said.

-ENDS-

Fast Facts:

- The Victorian Environmental Water Holder is an independent body, established by the Victorian Government in 2011 and responsible for managing Victoria’s water for the environment.
- Under the Victorian Water Act, the Victorian Environmental Water Holder can buy, sell or exchange water to meet environmental needs.
- For general information on environmental water trade and sales see www.vewh.vic.gov.au/watering-program/trading.
- The VEWH’s annual trading strategy outlines potential allocation trading activities that may be carried out by the VEWH in 2018-19 and of how the VEWH plans to conduct trades throughout the year. Please see http://www.vewh.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/490863/VEWH-water-allocation-trade-strategy-2018-19_final.pdf

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