

Delivery of water for the environment to Loch Garry wetland

About Loch Garry

Loch Garry is a 680-hectare wetland on the lower Goulburn River floodplain about 20 kilometres north of Shepparton.

The wetland incorporates a former course of the Goulburn River and is more than two metres deep at its deepest point.

It is surrounded by shallow wetlands, riverine forest and sand ridges. When it holds water, the wetland provides important habitat for frogs, fish, turtles and thousands of waterbirds, including ducks, grebes, cormorants, darters, ibis and spoonbills.

The wetland is a wildlife reserve managed by Parks Victoria and a narrow section adjoining the Goulburn River is part of the Lower Goulburn River National Park. The wetland lies within traditional Yorta Yorta lands and contains several cultural heritage sites. It is also a popular recreational site.

Loch Garry is bound by artificial levees and has a large regulating structure managed by Goulburn-Murray Water to control floodwater.

Loch Garry provides flood protection to downstream landholders during minor flood events. During large flood events (when flow exceeds 10.36m at Shepparton or about 40,000 ML/day) the regulating structure is opened to divert water through the floodplain to protect Shepparton and Mooroopna townships.

Delivering environmental water to the wetland will have no impact on the operation of the Loch Garry regulating structure as the wetland is connected to the river before the structure is opened.



Why water Loch Garry?

Loch Garry receives water naturally from the Goulburn River when flows exceed approximately 20,000 ML/day.

Due to river regulation the frequency and duration of these flow events has been reduced, which has had an impact on the lifecycle and habitat of the wetland's plants and animals.

The site has been wet twice in the past nine years. It filled naturally after the the 2011/12 floods and partially filled after heavy rain in 2016. The Loch has now been dry for 14 months.

To protect the health of the wetland's plants and animals it requires more regular inundation. Therefore, up to 1000 ML of water for the environment is scheduled to be delivered to the wetland between May and June 2020 via an adjoining irrigation drainage channel.

This will partially fill the wetland. The delivery is expected to shallowly inundate **the area highlighted in the image over the page.**

Weather will be monitored during the water delivery and if heavy rain is predicted the delivery will stop.

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