



**Media Release**  
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### **Water Table Study will monitor more than 1600 observation bores**

More than 1600 observation bores across the Shepparton Irrigation Region will be monitored in the coming weeks during Goulburn-Murray Water's (GMW) annual water table study.

The monitoring process allows the water corporation to map shallow groundwater levels across the Murray Valley, Shepparton, Central Goulburn and Rochester Irrigation Areas.

GMW Head of Customer Support Phillip Hoare said water table monitoring was a key way of informing salinity management in the region.

"Current research confirms that rainfall on a wet catchment is the main driver of water table behavior across the Shepparton Irrigation Region," Mr Hoare said.

"High water tables, and the associated salinity problems, peaked in the mid-1990s and water tables dropped away as a result of the extended drought with a low point in 2009.

"Water tables again rose in response to significant rainfall in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Now that more normal weather conditions have returned, it is important to continue monitoring to identify when and where groundwater pumping will be beneficial in minimising any salinity impacts."

Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) Manager Sustainable Irrigation Carl Walters said last year's map showed the area of land where the water table was within 3m of the surface had increased from 9000ha to 151,000ha between 2009 and 2013.

"If these watertable levels get within 2m of the surface they become a real cause for concern," Mr Walters said.

"This mapping project helps in planning and developing salinity management programs and implementation of government funding initiatives."

Mr Walters said approaches to tackling the problem included efficient irrigation, surface drainage and appropriate sub-surface drainage or shallow groundwater pumping.

"The balance and connection between all of these actions in the right places at the right time has been critical so far in our region and the community-driven planning for response has proven to be the key," he said

Mr Hoare said the majority of bores were located on public land, however there were many sites on private land and access to these sites was pivotal.

“GMW thanks landholders for partnering with the study,” Mr Hoare said.

The monitoring will be undertaken by GMW staff.

The Water Table Study is jointly funded by the Goulburn Broken CMA and GMW.

A copy of the 2014 August Water Table study map will be available later this year.

**For more information phone GMW Salinity Programs Officer Noel Watts on 5826 3791.**

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