

Upper Murray River Basin

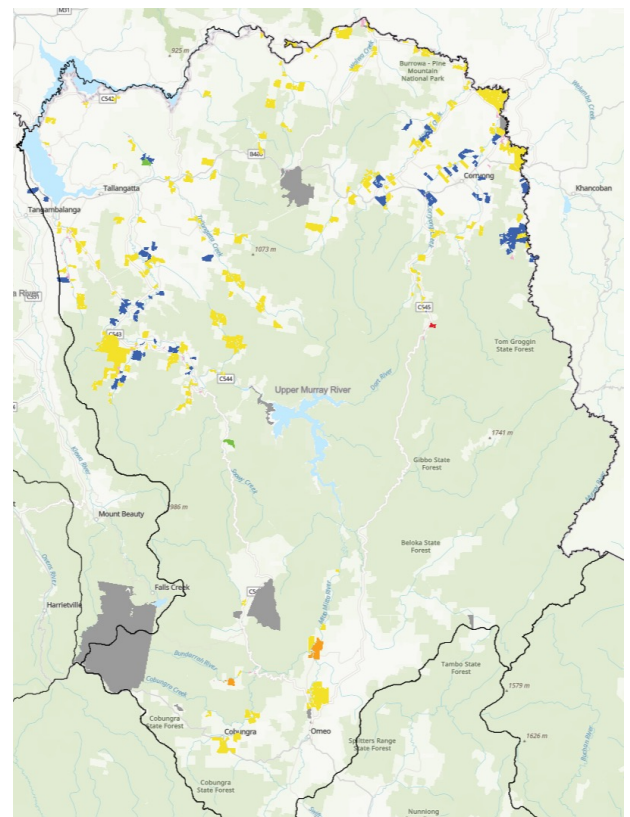
Unregulated and Groundwater Diversions 2023/24

The longest river in Australia, the Murray River spans 2,508 km from the Australian Alps in the east to Goolwa in South Australia. The section of the Murray River catchment included in this project is the upper Victorian catchment from where the river starts at the NSW border to Lake Hume and Omeo in the south. The main tributaries are the Murray and Mitta Mitta River. Dartmouth Dam (3,856 gigalitres (GL)) is the main storage in the catchment and when full holds more than 40% of the Murray River system’s total storage capacity. It enables downstream flows to be regulated to meet the needs of downstream users all the way through to South Australia.

Throughout the catchment, there are landowners that divert water from the unregulated sections of the rivers and streams and from the groundwater system.

As part of the Land and water use mapping project, assessment of these unregulated water users was undertaken to determine the amount of water used, what industry the water was used in and the number of Take and Use Licences within the catchment. Future data collection will provide an opportunity to then analyse changes in these criteria and inform future decision making across the basin for both land use and water use as well as industry types. The industry types are consistent with the Regulated Diversion project and the GMID project.

FIGURE 1: UPPER MURRAY RIVER BASIN



INDUSTRY TYPES:

- 
 Cropping
- 
 Dairy (Combined)
- 
 Energy
- 
 Glasshouse Plant / Vegetable
- 
 Horses
- 
 Horticulture Annual
- 
 Horticulture Perennial
- 
 Intensive Animals
- 
 Livestock Non Dairy
- 
 Rural Lifestyle/ Residential
- 
 Other
- 
 Not Irrigated

Upper Murray River Basin Results 2023/24

The results of the inaugural data collection provides an excellent basis to build on into the future.

For the Upper Murray River basin, there were 504 Take and Use Licences covering almost 65,000 ha, where just over 3.6 GL of water was used. Further details are provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF AREA, WATER USE AND TAKE AND USE LICENCES

UPPER MURRAY RIVER BASIN LAND USE	AREA (ha)	WATER USAGE (ML)	TAKE AND USE LICENCES
Cropping	672	120	2
Dairy (Combined)	8,332	1,477	73
Energy	—	—	—
Glasshouse Plant/Vegetable Production	—	—	—
Horses	—	—	—
Horticulture – Annual	79	14	2
Horticulture – Perennial	306	73	2
Intensive Animals	—	—	—
Livestock – Non Dairy	27,782	1,072	221
Rural Lifestyle/Residential	831	361	177
Other	26,993	507	27
Not irrigated	—	—	—
TOTAL	64,995	3,624	504

Please note: Licence area represents the parcels of land/title to which the licenced is attached and not the irrigation footprint.

Area (ha)

The total area with a Take and Use Licence for the Unregulated diversions and Groundwater users in the Upper Murray was 64,995 ha, with Livestock – Non Dairy and Other representing the largest areas at 27,782 ha and 26,993 ha respectively and representing 84% of the Take and Use Licence area. The “Other” category for this catchment is predominantly the Mt Hotham National Park, covering 18,300ha, a Hydro-electric scheme covering 3,183 ha and tree plantations,

covering 2,742 ha. The total licence area represents the parcels of land/title to which the licenced is attached and not the irrigation footprint.

Water Use (ML)

The total water use for the Unregulated diversions and groundwater users in the Upper Murray River basin was 3.6 GL, with Dairy and Livestock – Non Dairy enterprises using most of the water at 2.5 GL, representing 70% of the total water used.

Take and Use Licences

The total number of Take and Use Licences for the Unregulated diversions and Groundwater users was 504. Livestock – Non Dairy and Rural Lifestyle/Residential enterprises held the highest number of licences at 221 and 177 respectively and represented 79% of Take and Use Licence holders.