

13 May, 2020

██████████
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
PO Box 500
East Melbourne Vic 8002

Dear ██████████

DELWP REVIEW OF INTER-VALLEY TRANSFERS (IVT) OF WATER

I make this submission to the review of IVT of water to highlight the adverse effects of high water flows during summer on native fish and the social and economic benefits of angling, and to suggest that approvals processes for development of horticultural enterprises along the Murray River in north-western Victoria could be improved to minimise the need for such high flows.

My family previously owned property at Murchison with frontage to the Goulburn River (7km), and hence, have a good knowledge of the river, native fish and the importance of irrigation water for agriculture and horticulture. I worked closely with Fisheries Victoria on a Trout cod stocking and recovery program over many years. Although we do not own the farm now, our family regularly visit the new owners and still fish on the property.

Our experience suggests that the high summer flows of the river in recent years have contributed to a decline in Murray cod, Trout cod and other native fish. They have certainly made fishing more difficult and reduced the recreational value of our fishing trips. The new owner of the property has made the same comments to me. The high flows have resulted in anglers not fishing the river through the Goulburn Valley, and the economic benefits of fishing in this area have not been fully realised.

I understand that water is needed for irrigated agriculture and horticulture, especially along the Murray River at Robinvale and Sunraysia. However, the planning and approvals processes for such developments may need to place more emphasis on water supply and storage on farm during periods when the water levels in the lower Goulburn River are not as critical for fish stocks e.g. outside the summer period. Many stakeholders would need to be consulted to progress such an initiative and policy decisions. Submissions to this review certainly are not the way to consider such a suggestion. Facilitated workshopping would be a far more appropriate mechanism.

I wish you well in your deliberations. If you require additional information, I can be contacted on my mobile ██████████

Yours sincerely

Dr Frank Greenhalgh

