



YORTA YORTA NATION ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

ABN: 55 942 996 311 - ICN: 3279

RE: Goulburn to Murray trade rule review - Consultation paper for DELWP

The Goulburn (Kaiela) and Murray (Dhungala) rivers have held significant cultural and spiritual values to the Yorta Yorta community since the beginning of immemorial. Managing physical system constraints such as the Goulburn and Barmah Choke cannot come at a loss to Yorta Yorta culture, identity and connection to Country.

Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation understand that the Inter-Valley Trade rules are currently being reviewed by the Federal Minister for Water, The Hon Lisa Neville and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and anticipate that the review will implement positive change for environmental issues that have occurred on the Lower Goulburn and Murray river systems as a direct result of the IVT rules.

YYNAC appreciate the opportunity to review and submit a response to the Inter-Valley Trade (IVT) rule proposals and share the vision of the Victorian Government to ensure Victorian waterways are healthy and well managed.

The variation in water temperatures and the high volume of flows created by the IVT are destroying the biodiversity values of our waterways. This is impacting the stability of our ecosystems and aquatic life. The IVT rules have created irreversible damage to important cultural heritage sites such as burials, middens, hearths, scar trees and artefacts. The effects of high volume flows as a result of water trading and unseasonal delivery of water have exposed our ancestors who have been buried in situ for thousands of years, our midden sites and scarred trees lost forever due to cutting and collapsing of banks. The IVT has caused damage to RAMSAR sites that are internationally important and protected by the EPBC Act (2006) The demand of the IVT coming from the Lower Goulburn has increased as a result of constraints on the Murray River due to the build-up of alluvial sands at the Barmah narrows.

As Yorta Yorta people, we have a strong connection to our waterways. These sites are also protected by the Aboriginal Heritage Act (2017). Further Government need to be mindful of unintended consequences of these trade rules and alternative delivery methods.

Ghow Swamp as part of the Victorian Mid Murray Storages (VMMS) is currently being assessed by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs as a 'Protection Declaration Area'. A Conservation Plan has been developed to protect sites of cultural heritage significance from the impacts of storing water and other pressures.



YORTA YORTA NATION ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

ABN: 55 942 996 311 - ICN: 3279

Yorta Yorta are advocating for tighter controls over the management and operating rules for this site due to its significance. The very mechanism of the VMMS enables authorities to store Murray water outside of peak demand periods. This has had unintended consequences to values and aspiration of Yorta Yorta people.

YYNAC shares the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authorities (GBCMA) concerns regarding the sustained high flows from the Goulburn-Intervally Trade (IVT) account to support water requirements in the Murray System. The very act of flow has and can continue to have detrimental effects on First Nation's culture, stories and inherent property rights to water and land.

YYNAC would require assistance with resources to aid remediation on any Cultural heritage sites that have been impacted upon as a result of the high-volume flows created by the IVT.

YYNAC would appreciate that DELWP strongly consider the following recommendations:

To minimize the impact of the Inter-valley trade rules by reducing the volume of water being delivered by means of implementing a pulse flow that would be similar the distribution of flows delivered by CMAs environmental watering.

Consider different methods of delivery to minimize the volumes of flow in the Goulburn such as out falling to other potential tributaries.

YYNAC would also welcome engagement in any future environmental impact assessment work completed on our waterways.

Yours sincerely,

Yorta Yorta Nations Aboriginal Corporation

Shepparton Office
PO Box 1363
Shepparton Vic 3632
Phone: 03 5832 0222
Website: www.yynac.com.au