

Water Plan – Water For Victoria

Elizabeth Johnston and Kate Berg

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victoria

Abstract

The Victorian Government is developing a plan that will set the strategic direction for water management in Victoria for decades to come.

Water for Victoria – Discussion Paper was released for public comment on 16 March 2016. Public comment closed on 13 May 2016. The Discussion paper focused on building on the strong foundations of Victoria's current water management system, including the entitlements and planning frameworks. It acknowledges the role water plays in underpinning our communities, by providing liveable cities and towns, recreational and environmental values. It also aims to recognise Aboriginal values of water through work with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians.

Over the eight week consultation period, the government held 28 Community and Stakeholder workshops. We received over 270 submissions from a range of stakeholders and community members. Key themes raised through the consultation process were:

- Education and inter-generational knowledge transfer, and community engagement
- Challenges of climate change and population growth
- Impacts on water security, water entitlements
- Maintaining a healthy environment and improving the health of our waterways
- Alignment between land use planning and water planning
- Water for agriculture and productive farming
- Jobs and industry
- Liveable and resilient cities and towns and urban water management
- Alternative water sources
- Affordability of water
- Research and innovation

A final *Water for Victoria Discussion Paper* is being developed to align with environment and climate change strategies such as the government response to the review of the Climate Change Act and the Biodiversity Strategy. Land, Fire and Environment Group supports the submission. The government aims to consider feedback in the development of a final plan, which will be finalised in mid-late 2016.