January 2010

FACT SHEET 22 NO.22

BULK ENTITLEMENTS

Produced by Goulburn-Murray Water

1. WHAT ARE BULK ENTITLEMENTS?

Bulk entitlements determine how much water an entity can take from an identified source (usually a regulated river system). A particular bulk entitlement specifies conditions about the use, management and supply of the allocated water.

2. WHO OWNS BULK ENTITLEMENTS?

G-MW holds bulk entitlements for the Murray, Ovens, Broken, Goulburn, Campaspe and Loddon systems. Other water corporations and organisations such as the Department of Sustainability and Environment also have bulk entitlements in these systems.

3. WHY WERE AMENDMENTS TO THE BULK ENTITLEMENTS REQUIRED?

The amendments were required to reflect the decommissioning of Lake Mokoan, the new operational arrangements for the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages and the resulting new environmental commitments for the Snowy and Murray Rivers.

4. WHEN WERE AMENDMENTS TO THE BULK ENTITLEMENT ORDERS GAZETTED?

Thursday November 26, 2009.

5. ARE ALL BULK ENTITLEMENTS THE SAME?

The conditions of each bulk entitlement vary according to the system to which it applies. This variation is most obvious in the volume available and the environmental flow requirements.

6. WHEN WILL HARVESTING INTO LAKE MOKOAN CEASE?

Harvesting, or diversions, to Lake Mokoan from Holland's Creek and the Broken River have now ceased in accordance with Amendments to the Bulk Entitlement. For the purpose of project water savings, this step effectively means that Mokoan has been decommissioned.

7. WHAT FORM WILL THE LAKE MOKOAN EMBANKMENT BREACH TAKE?

The breach will consist of a 10m wide cut in the existing Mokoan dam wall. The base of the cut will be set at the full level of the future Winton Wetland. The completed breach will enable flows above the wetland full level to flow through the breach, without creating any erosion, into the existing Mokoan Outlet Channel, formerly known as Stockyard Creek. These flows will then pass downstream to the Broken River at Casey's Weir.

8. WHY DO WE NEED A RAIN REJECTION STORAGE AT LAKE MOKOAN?

Rain Rejection or re-regulation storage provides the opportunity to capture and later release (re-regulate) surplus flows. The rain rejection storage has a relatively small capacity but when used a number of times throughout the irrigation season can reduce water losses from the system and assist in meeting downstream irrigator service requirements.

FACT SHEET 22 NO.22

BULK ENTITLEMENTS

9. WHERE WILL THE RAIN REJECTION STORAGE SIT AT LAKE MOKOAN?

The section of existing Inlet Channel from the Broken River to Holland's is to be retained to form the Inlet Channel Rain Rejection Storage. Structures along this channel will be modified and new structures constructed to allow this system to provide maximum operational flexibility.

10. HOW HAS THE HIGH LEVEL OF ENTITLEMENT PURCHASE IN THE BROKEN SYSTEM AFFECTED THE SCOPE OF THE RAIN REJECTION STORAGE WORKS?

Modifications have been made that will in turn reduce future costs of operating the system and will allow the decommissioning of the Inlet Channel, from Holland's Creek through to the future Winton Wetland. This will also allow the full decommissioning of Holland's Weir, thereby removing obstruction to fish passage along this important waterway.

11. WHEN WILL DECOMMISSIONING BE COMPLETED?

While use of Lake Mokoan to harvest water from the Broken River and Holland's Creek has ceased, and thereby provide project water savings and improved natural flows in the Broken, lower Goulburn and Murray Rivers, the physical decommissioning of the Mokoan embankment and inlet channel are not expected to be completed until April/ May 2010.

12. WHY IS LAKE MOKOAN BEING DECOMMISSIONED?

Lake Mokoan is Victoria's most inefficient storage and is costly to operate. It loses 50,000 megalitres of water every year through evaporation. Upon completion of the Mokoan - Return to Wetland project, 50,000 megalitres of water will be saved every year to be redirected for environmental flows.

13. ONE DECOMMISSIONED, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE EXISTING INLET CHANNEL?

The decommissioned channel will take the form of a shallower drainage depression which will carry all drainage flows through to the Winton Wetland. All drainage inlets which flow into the current Inlet Channel will continue to drain into the section of channel downstream of Holland's Creek.

14. WHY IS REHABILITATING THE MOKOAN WETLANDS SO IMPORTANT?

Water savings from the Lake will help improve the health of the Broken, Goulburn, Snowy and Murray Rivers. Healthy rivers are the lifeblood of our community, providing vital water for homes, towns, farms and businesses. Healthy rivers also support habitats for native animals and fish. The wetland itself will also play an important role in improving the local habitat for a number of endangered flora and fauna species.