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Lower Barwon Wetlands - Seasonal Watering Proposal (SWP) 24-25 Comments Register

Who	Comment	CCMA Response
Phil Mitchell Policy Officer, Environmental Water at the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback on the first draft of the lower Barwon Wetlands SWP 2024-25. I think it is a clear summary of the values at Reedy Lake and Hospital Swamps, the proposed watering regime, and the objectives to be achieved by the proposed water management at the lower Barwon wetlands.	Thankyou for your feedback.

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cared for by thriving communities*

Who	Comment	CCMA Response
<p>Ash Smith Geelong Gun & Rod Association representative</p>	<p>The Geelong Gun & Rod Assn will not be supporting the SWP as we are not allowed to <u>advise</u> as per our group title of LBCAC</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to provide input. CCMA are available to meet with the respondent to clarify and discuss any of the points below.</p> <p>As outlined in the email sent to the LBCAC on 23/01 there has been no change to the LBCAC's opportunity to provide input on the SWP. This was also communicated to the respondent via email on 30/01, 1/02 and 8/02. As per usual, all members of the LBCAC including the respondent were given 2 weeks to provide feedback from 1/03 – 15/03. This feedback is what forms this document and the SWP where relevant.</p> <p>In addition, a meeting will be held at the end of the water year where the LBCAC will have an opportunity to recap on the upcoming years watering actions, how the previous year went, future watering actions (prior to the next formal feedback period in Feb 2025), and other aspects relating to the water delivery This can and will include discussion on the new approach that we are trialing in response to the new timing requirements from the VEWH.</p>
	<p>The Geelong Gun & Rod Assn will not be supporting the Management of the LCWR Reedy Lake area by the CCMA</p>	<p>Please see above. CCMA is not sure what respondent means by 'LCWR'.</p>

Who	Comment	CCMA Response
	<p>The CCMA did not follow their own consultation protocol and organise a meeting of the LBCAC group when requested (the other LBCAC members where not advised either) as required by the Terms of Reference - there is no consultation - no input allowed - and the management plan does not support the Wetlands</p>	<p>As outlined in the emails sent individually to the respondent, the 2020 Terms of Reference for the LBCAC states that <i>'this group will meet on an as-needs basis with an estimated frequency of 1-2 times per year. Meetings can be requested by members, although will be determined by CCMA'</i>. Several CCMA staff and the CCMA CEO offered to meet individually with the respondent to discuss their concerns, none of these offers were accepted. As explained in the emails sent to the respondent throughout January and February, because no other member of the LBCAC requested a meeting, it was not logical to hold a committee meeting to re iterate timing changes to the LBCAC SWP meeting that had already been explained via email on 23/01. Multiple offers were made to the respondent to discuss in person.</p> <p>As outlined above, this document is the register of input provided by members of the LBCAC. This is the same process as previous years.</p>
	<p>The proposal is not Robust - how does a Wetland survive with low water levels that result in the water becoming to hot for inhabitants to survive</p>	<p>The 2024-25 proposal is half the length of more recent previous proposals as per information provided to the LBCAC via email on 23/01. All catchment management authorities across Victoria are required to develop seasonal watering proposals in accordance with guidelines issued by the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH).</p> <p>The watering regime, including a draw down, is mimicking natural wetting and drying cycles that have occurred for thousands of years. The inhabitants of the wetlands have adapted to the dynamic nature of a wetland. The watering regime is based on scientific evidence and expert opinion and takes a holistic approach to the ecology of the wetland.</p>

Who	Comment	CCMA Response
	<p>The CCMA's SWP is a cheap attempt at using the LBCAC group as a shield to justify another Convoluted Document that wastes time and uses funds - for no gain to the RAMSAR site</p>	<p>The CCMA is unsure as to what the respondent means by parts of this statement relating to using the LBCAC as a shield. CCMA would be happy to meet to discuss the respondent's statement.</p> <p>As expressed to the respondent in last year's feedback register, the CCMA make every effort to present all the relevant information in a clear form. In addition, an Executive Summary is provided which includes a single table of watering actions for quick and easy reference.</p> <p>All documents and processes informing the seasonal watering proposal are referenced in the document for full transparency.</p>
	<p>The CCMA over the last 12 years have not improved the wellbeing of the site and its Ecological Character - ? where are the Growling Grass Frogs & Australasian Bitterns ? Answer - they have nearly vanished because they don't have constant and consistent water available - not a drying regime</p>	<p>The Barwon River Environmental Entitlement has existed since 2011 and the CCMA has been actively managing the water regime since 2016/17 (approx. 8 years). There is no evidence to support the respondent's statement that Growling Grass Frogs and Australasian Bitterns have 'nearly vanished' from the lower Barwon wetlands.</p> <p>The currently recommended wetting and partial drying regime for Reedy Lake is intended to support a wider range of habitats and species. "<i>The implementation of a wetting and drying regime through the use of environmental water is the most important management activity to protect the ecology of the Lower Barwon Wetlands</i>" (Lloyd et al., 2012).</p>

Who	Comment	CCMA Response
	<p>And the Table of Stakeholders should appear in a chronological order relating to years of involvement and then default to alphabetical to help denote how long a group has been involved in the LBCAC as well as not pairing similar groups together (we are all separate entities) and deserve to be treated as such</p>	<p>Thank you for your feedback. As outlined above all catchment management authorities across Victoria are required to develop seasonal watering proposals in accordance with guidelines issued by the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH), this includes the engagement section. This table does not go down to individual group/agency level as each recreational group has the same engagement method and engagement purpose which is why they are located in the same table cell.</p> <p>All current members of the LBCAC are of equal standing and the length of time an individual or group has been involved has no relevance to their position on the LBCAC.</p>