



**Goulburn-Murray Water  
Laanecoorie Reservoir  
Recreational Area Management Plan  
DRAFT**

**April 2025**



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# Acknowledgement to Country

Goulburn-Murray Water recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and the proud representatives of the world's oldest, living culture.

We respectfully acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters and the rich cultural connections First Peoples have across our region.

We commit to building meaningful partnerships that create value for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities through genuine engagement and collaboration.

We recognise the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation as the Registered Aboriginal Party within the Laanecoorie Reservoir region and acknowledge their rights as the Traditional Owners of lands and waters, as outlined in their Agreements with the State of Victoria.

## About Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW)

**Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) is Australia's largest rural water provider, managing the storage, delivery and drainage systems for 70 per cent of Victoria's stored water resources, 50 per cent of Victoria's underground water supplies and 35 per cent of unregulated water resources.**

GMW services a region of 68,000 square kilometres, bordered by the Great Dividing Range to the south, the River Murray to the north and stretching from Corryong in the east to Nyah in the west.

Recreational areas managed by GMW are popular destinations for Victorian and interstate visitors to connect with water and the natural environment, and to undertake a variety of recreational activities. Since 2021, an average of almost 2.5 million people visit determined recreational areas managed by GMW each year.

GMW plays a crucial role in managing recreational areas at Laanecoorie Reservoir. The development of the Laanecoorie Reservoir Recreational Area Management Plan (the plan) aims to balance the needs of GMW customers, the environment and recreational opportunities.

*Cover Image Credit: Gab Connole*

# Introduction

The purpose of the Laanecoorie Reservoir Recreational Area Management Plan (the plan) is to provide clear guidelines for managing recreational activities at Laanecoorie Reservoir while minimising impacts on water quality, the environment, and GMW assets and operations.

The plan provides a comprehensive and practical framework for GMW to manage recreational activities at Laanecoorie Reservoir in a way that protects the natural environment, maintains water quality, and supports the safe enjoyment by visitors.

Key values referenced in the development of the plan include:

- Environmental protection
- Recreational opportunities
- Cultural heritage
- Economic benefits, and
- Community engagement.

The plan details permitted recreational activities, management objectives, designated set-aside areas to balance use and conservation, and highlights the variety of stakeholders involved in the management of Laanecoorie Reservoir. It references the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action's (DEECA) guidance materials to ensure sustainable use and the protection of water resources.

## Recreational Area Management Plans (RAMP)

The *Water (Recreational Area) Regulations 2023* (the regulations) apply to approximately 40 water storages across Victoria. These storages have been determined as recreational areas by the Minister for Water in accordance with section 122ZA of the Water Act 1989.

The regulations provide for the control, management and use of recreational areas, as well as provide for infringement offences and penalties. These infringement penalties were not available in the superseded Recreational Area Model By-law 2012. The regulations came into operation in August 2023, replacing GMW's Recreational Area By-law.

A key feature of the regulations is the requirement for water corporations to develop management plans for recreational areas under their management. These plans support the control, management and use of recreational areas and provide for infringement offences and penalties.

For further information on the Water (Recreational Area) Regulations 2023 visit:

[www.water.vic.gov.au/our-programs/recreational-values-of-victorias-water/recreational-area-regulations](http://www.water.vic.gov.au/our-programs/recreational-values-of-victorias-water/recreational-area-regulations)

In addition to the regulations, GMW manages the recreational use of this storage in accordance with:

- Water Act 1989
- Marine Safety Act 2010
- Safe Drinking Water Act 2003.

The plan serves as a guiding document for GMW, local communities, and stakeholders in managing recreational activities at Laanecoorie Reservoir.

It provides clear guidelines and actions to enable the sustainable use of Laanecoorie Reservoir recreational areas while protecting its natural and cultural values.

It is intended to be a living document, to be reviewed and updated when appropriate based on the monitoring of recreational activities and in consultation with key stakeholders.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The plan will be reviewed every 10 years, or sooner as needed, to assess its effectiveness and make necessary adjustments. This review process will involve:

- Traditional Owner engagement and an open feedback process based on the principles of self-determination
- Monitoring and Evaluation: Regularly monitoring the impact of recreational activities on the environment and water quality
- Regulatory Compliance: Ensuring compliance with DEECA's guidelines and other relevant regulations
- Community Feedback: Gathering input from local residents, recreational users, local government authorities, special interest groups and other key stakeholders.

# About Laanecoorie Reservoir

Laanecoorie Reservoir is on Dja Dja Wurrung Country. It is located on the Loddon River, 40 km southwest of Bendigo and 26 km northwest of the historic town of Maldon. It is a short drive from the historic towns/settlements of Dunolly, Tarnagulla, Waanyarra, Newbridge and Eddington.

Development of the storage began in 1889 and took 2 years. In 1909, repairs were completed following a major flood and in 1935, the reservoir was expanded to its current capacity of 8,000 ML and is used to control flows in the Loddon River downstream of the Cairn Curran and Tullaroop Reservoirs.

The reservoir is bordered by agricultural land and at the northern extent, natural bushland. The area provides multiple opportunities for physical activity and social connection, including gold prospecting, canoeing, fishing, and hiking. The reservoir also attracts school groups for outdoor education activities such as canoeing and kayaking.

There is also the opportunity for boating and waterskiing when water levels allow and for duck hunting during the declared season, usually from mid-March to early-June. Public areas provide facilities for day visitors including toilets, boat ramps and picnic and barbecue facilities. These are within the following GMW managed recreational areas:

- Bet Bet Recreational Area
- Brownbill Recreation Area
- Eastern Recreation Area
- Eddington Boat Ramp Recreation Area
- Franklin Chaplin Recreation Area
- Roadside Reserve (Eddington-Laanecoorie Road)
- Spillway Recreation Area.

# Objectives of the plan

The objectives of this management plan for recreational areas at Laanecoorie Reservoir are to:

- Protect the land, services and facilities in the area
- Protect and maintain water quality in waterways in the area
- Conserve and preserve flora, fauna and habitat in the area, including the biodiversity of that flora, fauna and habitat
- Protect the health and safety of visitors to the area
- Promote the enjoyment and recreation of visitors to the area
- Continue the ongoing enjoyment of Laanecoorie Reservoir by ensuring leases and licences for caravan parks, marinas, clubs and other appropriate organisations delivering recreational facilities to the community are maintained and reviewed regularly
- Protect and promote Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal intangible heritage in the area
- Protect and promote any other heritage features in the area
- Facilitate the participation of Traditional Owner groups in the management of that area, including in accordance with any agreements under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 that apply to the area
- Ensure that the area is managed and used in a way that respects and upholds the rights and aspirations of Traditional Owner groups who have a connection to the area.

# Traditional Owner rights and participation

This plan has been developed in full recognition and support of Traditional Owner rights to self-determination. It welcomes input outside western frameworks, respecting the time and decision-making processes of the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. To minimise pressures surrounding cultural load, a review of the plans can be initiated by the registered aboriginal party groups at any time under the regulations.

Water corporations are subject to agreements under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 and the Native Title Act 1993. This includes commitment to work in partnership with relevant Traditional Owner groups. The regulations provide for the incorporation of policy and legal frameworks that recognise Traditional Owners' rights recognised under these Acts.

*Section in progress - to be completed following completion of traditional owner involvement in the development of the plan*

# Consultation

Consultation processes with Traditional Owners, community, special interest groups and partner agencies were embedded into the development of the Laanecoorie Reservoir RAMP. Consultation opportunities were promoted widely, including via GMW social media posts, media, the GMW website and targeted mailing lists to notify stakeholders and encourage feedback on the Laanecoorie Reservoir RAMP.

The following consultation processes were undertaken in 2024/25 to support the development of this management plan (a full updated list of activities and stakeholders will be included at the completion of the plans development):

- Project awareness with Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation
- Interviews with partner agencies including Loddon Shire Council, North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA), Victorian Fisheries Authority, and Better Boating Victoria
- yoursay@gmw online feedback portal including values-based questionnaire and draft plans providing engagement with local communities, recreational users and special interest groups.

## What we heard

GMW engaged with various stakeholders through face-to-face gatherings, one-on-one discussions and an online survey to understand their connections to the land and water, personal experiences, and what they valued most about accessing Laanecoorie Reservoir for recreational purposes.

The consultation highlighted that the area provides multiple opportunities for physical activity and social connection, including gold prospecting, canoeing, fishing, and hiking. The reservoir attracts school groups for outdoor education activities such as canoeing and kayaking.

Key value themes include:

- i. **Strengthening Social Bonds:** Spending time with family and friends, sharing experiences across generations, and celebrating family events fosters strong social connections. These activities help build a sense of community, reduce feelings of isolation, and create a supportive network.
- ii. **Promoting Lifelong Learning:** Learning new skills and teaching the next generation encourages personal growth and development. This benefits individuals and enriches the community by fostering a culture of knowledge sharing and continuous improvement.

- iii. **Enhancing Mental Health:** Quality time spent relaxing and escaping day-to-day pressures helps reduce stress and anxiety. Recreational activities provide a much-needed break from routine, contributing to improved mental health and overall wellbeing.
- iv. **Preserving Cultural Heritage:** Participating in cultural traditions and celebrating heritage strengthens cultural identity and pride. It can support diversity and understanding within the community, fostering a more inclusive environment.
- v. **Encouraging Physical Activity:** Engaging in outdoor activities like walking, cycling, and water sports promotes physical health. Regular physical activity contributes to maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preventing chronic diseases.
- vi. **Fostering a Connection to Nature:** Getting back to nature and basics helps individuals appreciate and protect the environment. This connection can lead to more sustainable practices and a greater sense of environmental awareness in the community.
- vii. **Creating Lasting Memories:** Making memories through shared experiences enhances the quality of life. These memories contribute to a sense of belonging and continuity, enriching the community's collective history.
- viii. **Supporting Local Economy:** Recreational activities attract visitors and boost local businesses, contributing to the local economy.

# Location

Laanecoorie Reservoir is in central western Victoria, in the Loddon Valley. It is 40 km southwest of Bendigo and 26 km northwest of the historic town of Maldon.

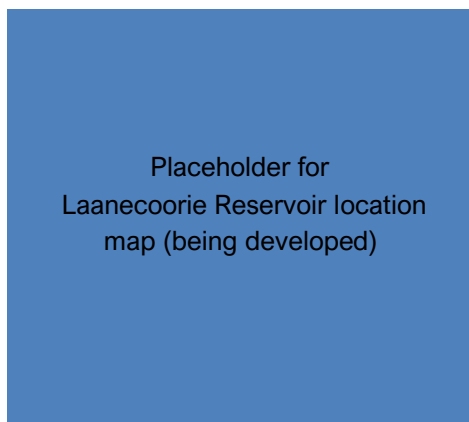


Figure 1: Laanecoorie Reservoir location map (map being developed)

The location of recreational facilities and user information is shown in Figure 3. The areas of Laanecoorie Reservoir that are determined for recreation under Section 122ZA of the *Water Act 1989* are shown in Figure 4 (map being developed).

## Facilities available

The following facilities are available at Laanecoorie Reservoir, with locations shown in Figure 3.

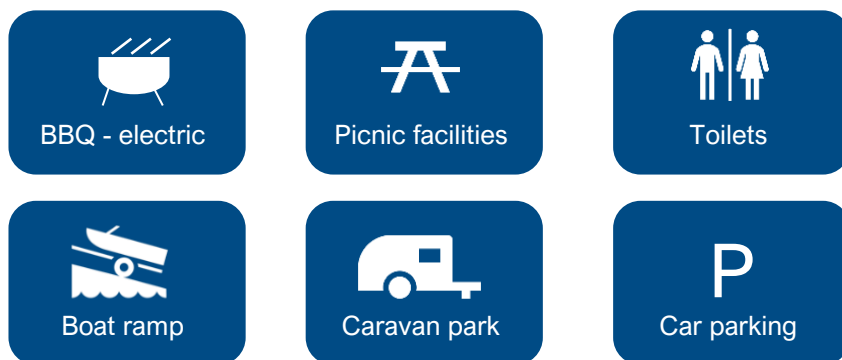


Figure 2: Facilities

For more information on recreational activities and facilities, please observe all signs and directions at GMW's storages and visit the GMW website at:

[www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/loddon/laanecoorieservoir](http://www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/loddon/laanecoorieservoir)

For information on all ability facilities, please refer to the GMW website at:

[www.gmwater.com.au/recreation/all-ability-facilities](http://www.gmwater.com.au/recreation/all-ability-facilities)

# Recreational activities

Public recreational areas managed by GMW are popular places for visitors to connect with water and the natural environment, and to undertake a variety of recreational activities. GMW places the highest priority on safety at the storages we manage.

The below table summarises the activities permitted at Laanecoorie Reservoir, any conditions that apply and links for further information.

**Table 1: GMW Recreational Area Activities**

Activity	Permitted ✓ or Prohibited X	Notes
Fishing	✓	Permits, bag limits and seasonal restrictions apply. For more information visit <a href="http://www.vfa.vic.gov.au">www.vfa.vic.gov.au</a>
Boating	✓	Speed and safety restrictions, and zones must be adhered to. Other restrictions may apply. Visit <a href="#">Rules And Exclusion Zones   Safe Transport Victoria</a> for more information.
Water skiing	✓	Laanecoorie Reservoir has two boating zoning rule trigger levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 1: When the storage level is at or above 158.400 AHD (30% capacity) normal boat zoning rules apply.</li> <li>• Level 2: When the storage level falls below 158.400 AHD (30% capacity) the whole of the waters of Laanecoorie Reservoir are subject to a 5-knot speed restriction with the exception of areas which are prohibited to boating and remain prohibited to boating.</li> </ul> For licence and registration requirements see <a href="#">Marine licence : VicRoads</a> .
Houseboats	X	Houseboats are not permitted on Laanecoorie Reservoir.
Canoeing/ kayaking	✓	Safety requirements, including capacity limits must be adhered to.
Camping/ caravanning	✓ *	*Camping/caravanning is available in caravan parks only. Camping/caravanning is prohibited in GMW public recreation areas, foreshore or lakebed areas.
Campfires	X	Campfires are not permitted in GMW public recreation areas, foreshore or lakebed areas. No wood collection is permitted within GMW public recreation areas, foreshore or lakebed areas.
Picnic & barbequing	✓	No wood fire BBQs are to be lit. On declared days of Total Fire Ban all solid fuel campfires, portable gas appliances and kerosene lanterns are prohibited. Electric barbecues are available at some locations (see Figure 3).

Activity	Permitted ✓ or Prohibited X	Notes
Dog walking	✓	Conditional – Dogs must be on a lead and under control at all times, and are not allowed in the lake. Please clean up after your pets.
Drone flights	X	Conditional – permits can be obtained, please contact GMW for more information. Drone safety rules must be adhered to. For more information visit <a href="http://www.casa.gov.au">www.casa.gov.au</a>
Bathing/ washing	X	Cleaning agents such as soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste or detergent are not to be used in or near the lake.
4WD and trailbikes	X	Vehicles and trail bikes are only allowed on public roads above full supply level within the recreation areas and are not permitted on the exposed areas of the shores or the lakebed. All vehicles must be roadworthy, registered and users must be licensed. Road rules must be obeyed at all times.
Hunting	✓ *	Appropriate permits and licences are required and MUST be carried – for more information visit <a href="http://www.gma.vic.gov.au">www.gma.vic.gov.au</a> *Seasonal restrictions (including locations) apply.
Prospecting, fossicking or digging	X	The removal of rocks, material or vegetation is prohibited within GMW public recreation areas. Permits may be obtained under certain circumstances, please contact GMW for more information.

## Caring for the Laanecoorie Reservoir environment

Laanecoorie Reservoir is a beautiful natural resource. To help care for the Laanecoorie Reservoir so that it can be enjoyed now and into the future, follow a few simple steps:

- Take Out your rubbish. The dumping of rubbish is prohibited and penalties apply, please take all your rubbish with you when you leave. Refer to the nearest council's website for transfer stations and consider the environment when disposing of litter
- Don't remove or bring in any vegetation (including harvesting of wood)
- Don't interfere with animals or their habitats, and don't feed them
- Keep to 5 knots within 30 m of shore as boat wash can cause erosion (even in higher speed zones)
- Keep the waterway healthy by not using cleaning agents such as soap, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner or detergent in or near the lake. They break the surface tension of the water, which reduces the oxygen levels in the water, causing harm to fish and other forms of aquatic life.

## Water safety

GMW places the highest priority on safety at the storages we manage. Ensuring personal safety and adhering to posted guidance can help prevent accidents and ensure a safer experience for everyone.

Water safety messages are communicated via GMW's Water Smarts campaign and are distributed via social media, in print at the recreational areas we manage and on the GMW website.

Key themes are aimed at educating recreational users and reducing risk taking behaviours and include:

- Speed
- Lifejackets
- Boating alone
- Checking conditions
- Hazard awareness
- Consumption of alcohol, and
- Diving.

## Swimming

GMW storages are not patrolled by lifeguards nor contain rescue equipment, therefore swimming is not recommended due to safety concerns. However, it is recognised that some visitors may still engage in this activity. Visitors are encouraged to wear life jackets, not swim alone and should make themselves aware of the local dangers and risks, such as submerged objects, varying water depths and water temperature, before entering the water.

## Boating safety

GMW is the Waterway Manager for Laanecoorie Reservoir under the Marine Safety Act 2010. When using the waterway, boaters need to be aware of the vessel operating and zoning rules, including supportive signage and buoyage in place. While in many instances there are state-wide rules in place, at many of GMW's storages there are also localised zoning rules that can vary depending on the type of watercraft being used or seasonal conditions such as water levels.

For more information on the state-wide vessel operating and zoning rules, signage and buoyage types visit:

<https://safetransport.vic.gov.au/on-the-water/using-waterways/rules-and-exclusion-zones/>

For localised zoning information, look for Boating Safety Information Signs located at public boat ramps or visit:

<https://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/loddon/laanecoorieservoir>

# Laanecoorie Reservoir boating and facilities guide

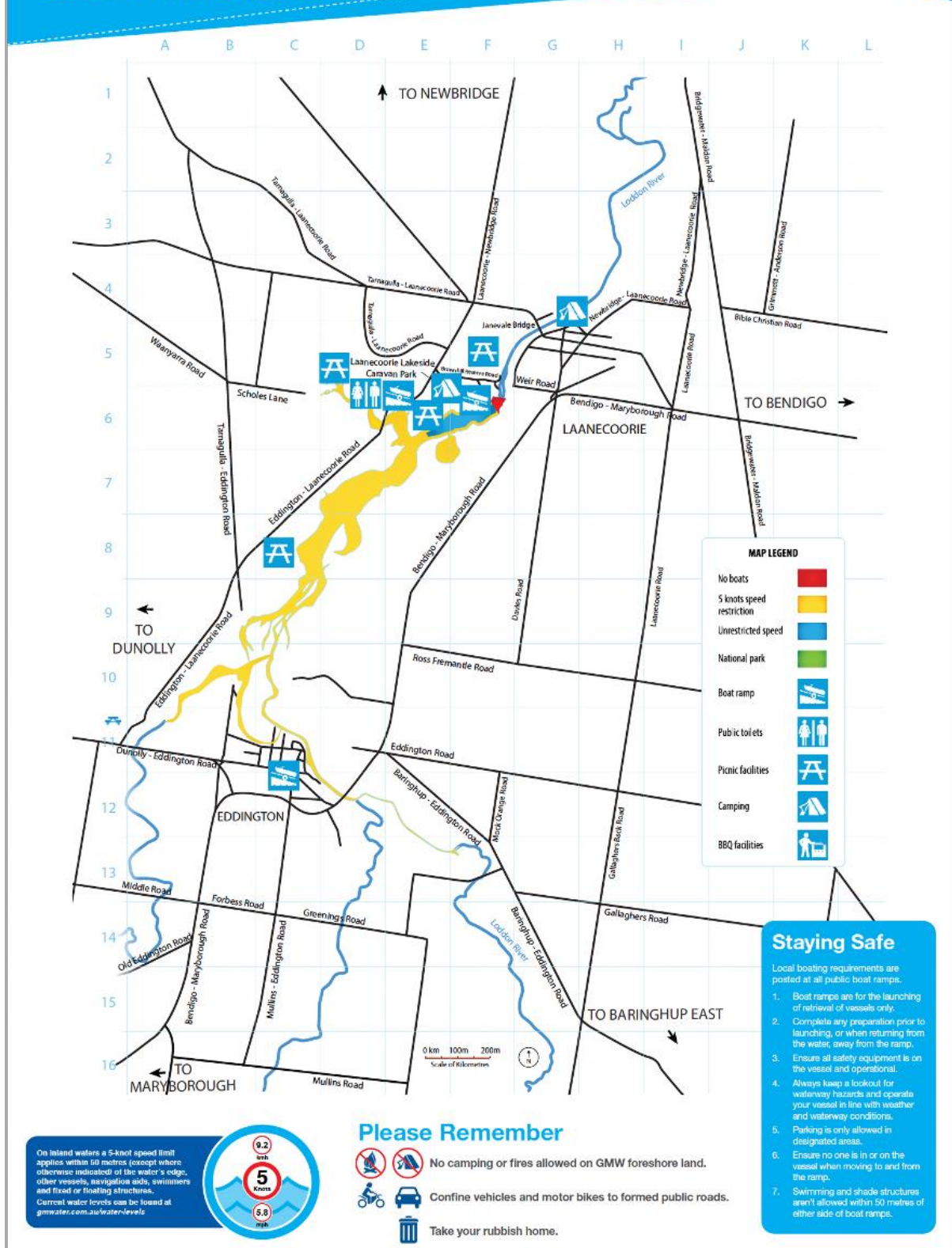


Figure 3: Laanecoorie Reservoir Recreational Area **map to be updated**

SECTION BREAK

Placeholder for image to introduce “Managing the Laanecoorie Reservoir Recreation Area

*Figure 4: Laanecoorie Reservoir Determined Recreational Area map* **(map being developed)**

# Set aside areas

To accommodate the diverse range of recreational activities that occur at Laanecoerie Reservoir, GMW may use 'set aside areas' to enable flexible or tailored management of the area under the regulations while ensuring the health, safety and enjoyment of visitors.

The regulations outline that a set aside area may:

- Apply to the whole of the recreational area or a specified area
- Apply on specified days, times or periods
- Apply to a class of person, vehicle, vessel or aircraft
- Specify any conditions which must be carried out for certain activities.

Set aside areas enable the safe operation of the water storage, ensuring that water quality is maintained, on-water recreation can occur safely, and that conflicting or complementary recreational activities are well managed. Set aside areas for Laanecoerie Reservoir are summarised in Table 2.

Occupation agreements for lease holders such as caravan parks, club sites or grazing licences may also have restrictions or conditions for public access subject to the terms of that agreement.

## Publishing a determination of a set aside area

A determination of a set aside area will be published on the GMW website and there will also be signs and notices placed on-site.

It is an offence not to comply with the conditions of determinations in set aside areas. If GMW revokes or amends a set aside area, any previous sign or notice that has been displayed under the regulations must be removed or amended to reflect the revocation or amendment.

## Signage for set aside areas

Signs or notices will:

- Be displayed in a manner that is likely to be seen by any person affected by the determination
- Indicate the area that is temporarily closed or set aside by the determination
- Where applicable, state the activities that are prohibited, restricted or permitted by the determination and any conditions specified in the determination.

# Register of set aside areas

A record of the set aside areas at Laanecoorie Reservoir is outlined in Table 2. **<Note that set aside areas will be moved to the GMW website when the management plans are live on the website and a link will be made available within this document.>**

*Table 2: Set aside areas*

Regulation		Basis	Purpose of set aside area	Set aside area	Times or periods
14 (1)(b)	Prohibited or restricted access	(r.30(1))	Prohibited access for public safety (operational area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embankment infrastructure (bridge area only)</li> <li>Secondary spillway west of embankment</li> </ul>	Always
14 (1)(b)	Prohibited or restricted access	(r.30(1))	Prohibited access for public safety	Vessel prohibited areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within 200 m south (upstream side) of the primary spillway and main embankment</li> <li>Immediately offshore of Brownbill Recreation Area (within the signposted vessel prohibited zone).</li> </ul>	Always
14 (2)(d)	Areas for operating BBQs or fireplaces	(r. 43(3))	Specify an area where BBQs are permitted	Public BBQ Areas and Commercial Caravan Park	Always
15 (2)(d)	Areas for operating BBQs or fireplaces	(r. 43(3))	Specify an area where fireplaces are permitted	Commercial Caravan Park	Always
14 (2)(e)	Areas where campfires are permitted	(r.44(2))	Specify an area where campfires are permitted	Commercial Caravan Park but not including foreshore or lakebed areas	Always
14 (2) (j)	Areas where livestock is permitted	(r. 62(2))	Specify areas where livestock is permitted	Livestock is permitted in areas where a grazing licence is held	Always

Regulation		Basis	Purpose of set aside area	Set aside area	Times or periods
14 (2) (k)	Areas where fishing is prohibited	(r.72(2))	Specify area where fishing is prohibited	Within 200 m south of the embankment	Always
14 (2) (l)	Areas where swimming is prohibited	(r.73(3))	Specify an area where swimming is prohibited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within 200 m south of the embankment</li> <li>• Within access lane for waterskiing west of Brownbill Boat Ramp</li> </ul>	Always
14 (2) (m)	Areas where camping is permitted	(r.74(3))	Specify where camping is permitted	Commercial caravan parks only. Camping is not permitted on GMW public recreation land, foreshore and lakebed areas.	Always
14 (2) (p)	Areas where vehicles, vessels and aircraft are permitted	(r. 79(3))	Specify an area where vessels are permitted	All areas except prohibited areas (within 200 m south of the embankment and immediately offshore of Brownbill Recreation Area (within the sign posted vessel prohibited zone)	Always
14 (2) (p)	Areas where vehicles, vessels and aircraft are permitted	(r. 79(3))	Specify an area where vehicles are permitted	Designated parking areas and public roadways only. Vehicles are not permitted on exposed areas, shores or lakebed.	Always
14 (2) (s)	Areas where vessels, or classes of vessels may be used	(r.86(2))	Specify area where vessels may be used	All areas except prohibited areas (within 200 m south of the embankment and immediately offshore of Brownbill Recreation Area)	Always
14 (3) (b)	Prohibited or restricted access <i>(Access by arrangement only).</i>	N/A	Continue the ongoing enjoyment of the recreational area by ensuring leases and licences delivering recreational facilities to the community are maintained.	All leased and licenced areas for caravan parks, marinas, clubs and other appropriate organisations.	Always

## Prohibited areas

Access to the embankment infrastructure and secondary spillway west of embankment is prohibited at all times to protect the water supply infrastructure and to minimise risks to public safety.

Vessels are also always prohibited from within 200 m south of the embankment and immediately offshore of Brownbill Recreation Area (within the sign posted vessel prohibited zone).

## Temporary closures

Temporary closures of GMW recreational areas may occur on occasion as outlined in the regulations.

A temporary closure will primarily occur to:

- Support the safe management of events such as floods and fires
- Allow for operational maintenance works to take place
- Manage amenities and access during periods of low water levels
- Manage safety during periods of high water levels
- Rationalise maintenance requirements during times of low visitation
- Manage safety during water quality events such as algal blooms.

In the event of an immediate temporary closure, GMW will:

- Publish the determination of a temporary closure on the GMW website and promote it through social media
- Where possible, display signs or notices on-site providing details of the temporary closure determination
- Publish a notification on the GMW website.

All other temporary closures will be communicated with impacted parties a minimum of two weeks prior to the closure.

# Events and permits

GMW storages and waterways are a great place to host personal, community or commercial events. An application for an event permit must be submitted to GMW no more than 12 months prior to the proposed event date. The timeframe for approving an event permit can vary, but we recommend applying for your permit at least 90 days before the event. This will ensure that all appropriate arrangements have been considered prior to your event such as details of communications, relevant permits, and risk management. Incomplete information will delay this process.

An event permit application form must be submitted to GMW for any event including but not limited to:

- An organised entertainment, sporting or recreation event or show
- A rally
- An organised boating event or regatta
- A festival, tour, fete or public meeting
- A demonstration, training class or similar event
- A wedding or similar ceremony
- A private function of 30 or more people.

GMW's Event Permits Policy and Procedure recognises the differing requirements and responsibilities associated with standard and commercial events to allow for better decision making, outcomes and pricing which is reflective of the proposed event. A Commercial Pricing Strategy will be developed in 2026-27.

For more information and to apply for an event permit, visit:

[www.gmwater.com.au/recreation/event-permits](http://www.gmwater.com.au/recreation/event-permits)

## Land and Development opportunities

GMW regularly reviews opportunities to maximise its landholdings. This is generally by way of leasing, licensing or transfer where the land is deemed surplus to operational needs.

From time-to-time GMW will release an Expression of Interest (EOI) for targeted parcels or proposed commercial activities on land and/or on water. Anyone wishing to register for upcoming opportunities can do so by submitting their interest via our dedicated procurement website at <https://app.eprocure.com.au/gmwater/home/public> and selecting "Classification" then "Property and Realty Services".

For further assistance please contact Property Services on 1300 013 357 or e-mail [eoim@gmwater.com.au](mailto:eoim@gmwater.com.au)

# Occupation Licences

In areas around some of the GMW storages, GMW may allow structures and activities that require an Occupational Licence to be obtained from GMW.

Adjoining landowners may apply for an Occupation Licence to construct and/or keep privately owned structures for recreational purposes on foreshore land owned or managed by GMW. In some areas there may also be an opportunity to apply for an Occupation Licence to graze livestock or seek formal access over GMW-owned or managed land.

For more information and to apply for an Occupational Licence, visit:

[www.gmwater.com.au/foreshore-occupation-licences](http://www.gmwater.com.au/foreshore-occupation-licences)

## Compliance and enforcement

The Water (Recreational Area) Regulations 2023 introduced the ability for GMW to issue Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) for offences under the regulations.

Water corporations can issue infringement penalties to users undertaking activities that are in breach of the regulations. These include activities that may risk land and water services, water quality, the environment, or the health, safety and enjoyment of other users within a recreational area.

## Operations and maintenance

### Water supply operations and infrastructure

GMW harvests and stores water entitlements for its customers in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Water Act 1989*.

GMW also delivers water for the Victorian and Commonwealth Environmental Water Holders who make decisions about watering sites with the aim of maintaining healthy environments.

**Further information on the operations of Laanecoorie Reservoir can be found on the website:**

[www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/loddon/laanecoorieservoir](http://www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/loddon/laanecoorieservoir)

Maintenance of water supply and hydro-electric infrastructure at GMW-operated storages is primarily undertaken by GMW storage operations staff. Maintenance activities include:

- Regular inspection of all water supply infrastructure
- Periodic operation of key outlet works and lubrication of ropes and bearings
- Testing and servicing of ancillary equipment
- Weed control
- Access track and fence repair works.

## **Recreational facilities and assets**

Recreational facilities and assets include but are not limited to toilet amenities, boat ramps, public access tracks, barbeques, and picnic furniture.

GMW has developed internal Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Manuals for recreation and land assets at each water storage. The O&M manuals include a description of each recreation and land asset, the associated standard operating and maintenance procedures and a maintenance schedule for storage staff to follow. The manuals support GMW in ensuring that its recreational assets are reliable, operational, and safe for public use.

A comprehensive internal review of these manuals is completed at least every five years to ensure their accuracy. The review enables our staff to safely and effectively perform maintenance activities, train new staff and continuously improve our recreation and land asset standards for the public.

Land that is occupied under licence or lease arrangements is required to be maintained in accordance with maintenance obligations detailed in lease/licence agreements.

Areas of public access may be restricted under an occupation agreement, subject to the conditions of that agreement.

# Water quality management

## Water Quality Monitoring Program

The Major Storages Water Quality Monitoring Program involves the monitoring of water quality in 14 of GMW's major water storages including Laanecoorie Reservoir.

Specific objectives for the program are to:

- Provide an overview of the current and historic water quality in GMW's storages
- Examine water quality and assess compliance with guideline values recommended in current state and national guidance
- Identify water quality status and trends so that future management practices have the potential to improve water quality within the storages
- Examine blue-green algae events (particularly the number of warnings issued) and identify trends so that future management practices have the potential to limit the risk of blue-green algae.

Further details of water quality management at GMW storages can be viewed here:

[www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/water-quality](http://www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/water-quality)

## Blue green algae

GMW is responsible for the management of blue-green algal blooms within our storages, irrigation channels and drains. GMW regularly monitors and inspects water bodies within our area of operation for blue-green algae. Find out more about our blue green algae warnings here:

[www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/bga](http://www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/bga)

## Wastewater management

Wastewater includes all septic tank effluent and sullage water. Untreated wastewater can transmit pathogens and viruses as well as nutrients, salts and heavy metals to Laanecoorie Reservoir if not managed properly.

Any leased sites must comply with the Leaseholds Club Rules and Standards. This requires all effluent/sullage from ablution blocks on leased land to be connected to an approved wastewater system in accordance with current standards and guidance.

# Implementation plan

Table 3 provides a summary of the measures to be implemented to meet the objectives of this management plan.

**Table 3: Implementation Plan**

Objective	Actions to meet objectives	Implementation timeframe	Responsibility
Protect the land, services and facilities in the area	Maintenance of facilities in accordance with O&M Manuals	Ongoing	GMW
	Development of Recreational Area Future Service Approach (including service standards)	2025–2026	
Protect and maintain water quality in waterways in the area	Water Quality Monitoring Program	Ongoing	GMW
	Blue green algae monitoring and reporting of warnings	Ongoing	
	Signage and public education on practices to minimise impact to water quality	Ongoing	
Conserve and preserve flora, fauna and habitat in the area, including the biodiversity of that flora, fauna and habitat	Facilitate delivery of water for the environment to support Victorian and Commonwealth Environmental Water Holders who make decisions about watering sites with the aim of maintaining healthy environments	Ongoing	GMW
	Signage and education to ensure visitors are aware of making their responsibilities to protect environment when using storages, including respecting GMW bylaws and taking their rubbish with them	Ongoing	
	Water Quality Monitoring Program	Ongoing	
Protect the health and safety of visitors to the area	Implementation of set aside areas	Ongoing	GMW
	Water safety program	Ongoing	
	Public information and signage	Ongoing	
Promote the enjoyment and recreation of visitors to the area	Public information and signage	Ongoing	GMW
	Maintenance of facilities in accordance with O&M Manuals	Ongoing	
	Commercial Pricing Strategy	2026-2027	
Protect and promote Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal intangible heritage in the area	<To be completed following TO engagement>		
Protect and promote any other heritage features in the area			
Facilitate the participation of Traditional Owner groups in the management of that area, including in accordance with any agreements under the <i>Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010</i> that apply to the area			
Ensure that the area is managed and used in a way that respects and upholds the rights and aspirations of Traditional Owner groups who have a connection to the area			