SECURING THE WATER SUPPLY IN GUNBOWER CREEK FOR ALL

A CHANGING CREEK

Gunbower Creek is a natural waterway and therefore is constantly changing. Use of the creek to deliver water for irrigation for more than 100 years, and more recently for the environment, has impacted changes in the creek such as erosion and sediment transportation. These changes to the creek limit the ability to pass large volumes of water. Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) is currently managing the creek at a maximum flow of approximately 800 ML/day. This volume is not enough to deliver the full suite of demands that may be placed on the creek, including all irrigation allocations even in the absence of environmental water needs. This means that **during peak demand periods, water in the creek may need to be rationed**. It also means that water may not be delivered to Gunbower Forest during spring when it would have naturally flooded, and that flows down the creek that promote Murray cod spawning may go unmet, putting at risk optimum conditions for breeding.

A CONNECTED SYSTEM

Gunbower Creek forms the southern border of the Ramsar-listed Gunbower Forest, which includes some of the highest value wetlands on the Murray River Floodplain. Twelve lagoons are associated with Gunbower Creek, representing natural and excised cut-off meanders of the original creek line. River regulation, farming practices and climate change have all impacted on the forest, its wetlands and the creek itself.

North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has shared the Gunbower Creek with irrigators for over a decade to deliver flows aimed at keeping the forest and creek healthy, so that plants and animals valued by the local community can continue to survive and flourish.

NORTH CENTRAL Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People

GOULBURN-MURRAY WATER

MURRAY–DARLING BASIN AUTHORITY

North Central CMA and GMW are supported by the Murray Darling Basin Authority and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on this project.

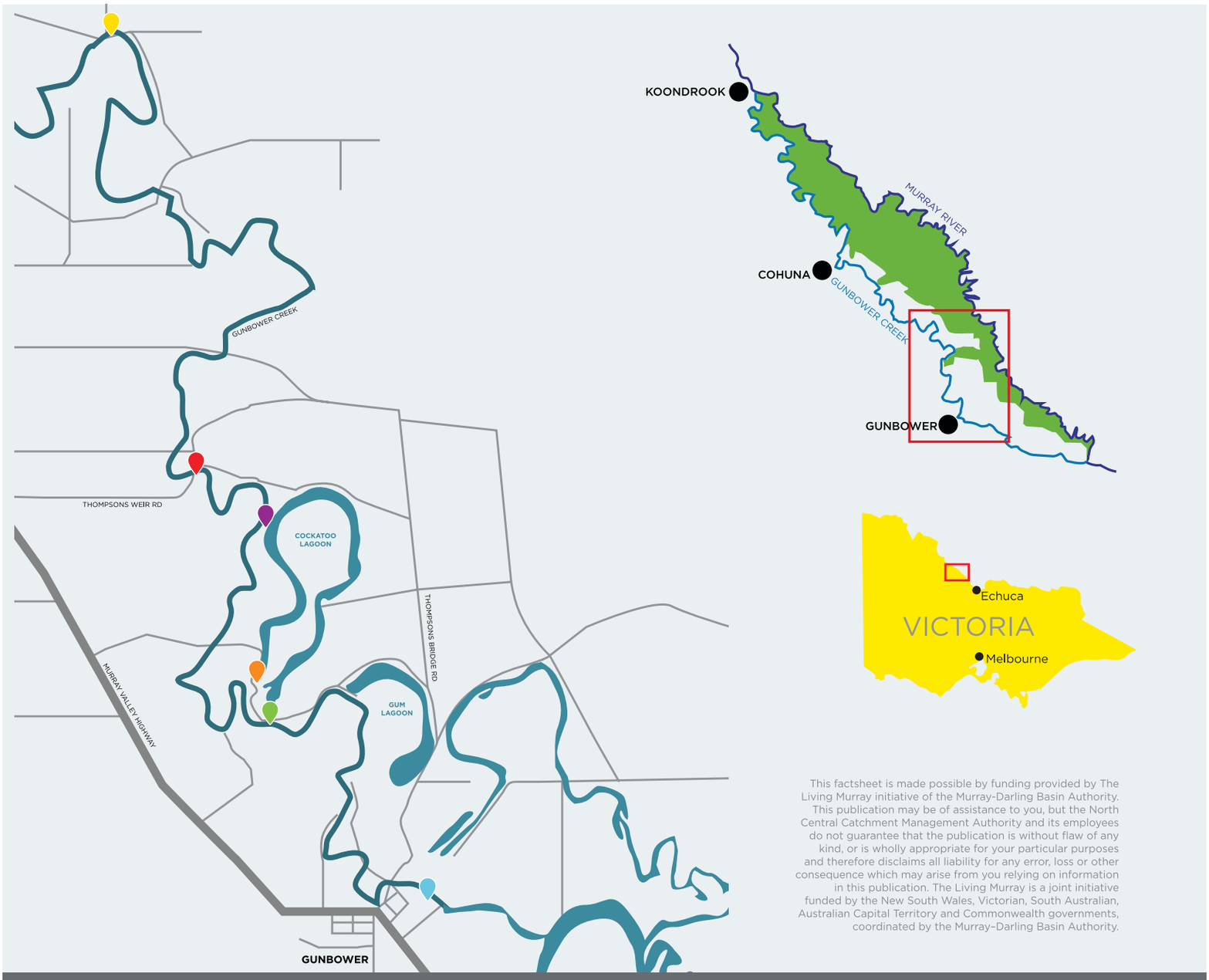
WORKING FOR A SOLUTION

The North Central CMA and Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) have identified a number of constraints along Gunbower Creek and have been investigating options to increase the capacity of the Creek. **One option being investigated is to remove Thompsons Weir and address other key constraints**. This would significantly increase the capacity of the creek to allow delivery of irrigation water and water for the environment during peak demand.

The removal of Thompsons Weir would reduce water levels upstream of the weir. This may impact on the ability for some landholders to pump from the creek when low flows are being delivered through the creek. GMW and the North Central CMA are investigating the possible impact of lower water levels on suction lines upstream of Thompsons Weir to identify any potential supply issues.

Removing Thompsons Weir would also reduce connectivity between Gunbower Creek and Cockatoo Lagoon. This could impact upon landholders' ability to draw water from Cockatoo Lagoon. **The North Central CMA and GMW will work with all irrigators that could be affected by the removal of Thompsons Weir to ensure they can continue to access water and maintain their current level of service**.

For more information about the Cockatoo Lagoon component of this project see the Securing the Future of Cockatoo Lagoon fact sheet.



This factsheet is made possible by funding provided by The Living Murray initiative of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority. This publication may be of assistance to you, but the North Central Catchment Management Authority and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind, or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on information in this publication. The Living Murray is a joint initiative funded by the New South Wales, Victorian, South Australian, Australian Capital Territory and Commonwealth governments, coordinated by the Murray–Darling Basin Authority.

Thompsons Weir | **Cockatoo Combine Regulator** | **Jumbo Cut 2 Regulator** | **Jumbo Cut 1 Regulator** | **Gunbower Weir** | **Hipwell Road Channel**