

# Gunbower Forest

## Wetland and floodplain watering in 2021

*North Central CMA acknowledges the Barapa Barapa and Yorta Yorta Traditional Owners of Gunbower Forest, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country, and their contributions to and interests in land, water and natural resource management.*



*North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) will be managing water for the environment deliveries to high-priority wetlands and areas of the floodplain in the lower Gunbower Forest in spring 2021.*

### Why are the wetlands and floodplain being watered?

Reedy Lagoon, the Little Reedy Wetland Complex and the Little Gunbower Wetland complex (including Black Swamp) are high-priority permanent and semi-permanent wetlands in Gunbower Forest. Spring environmental water deliveries will build upon the results of recent autumn deliveries, capitalizing on the head start that the aquatic vegetation has received, and top-up these wetlands to maintain habitat for fish and waterbirds and provide favorable conditions for wetland vegetation to grow.

Much of the flood-dependent vegetation in the Gunbower Forest has not been inundated since 2018, stretching the tolerances of these vegetation types to dry conditions. Deliveries in spring 2021 will aim to inundate some of the low-lying areas of flood dependent vegetation in the lower Gunbower Forest.



*Floodplain surrounding the Little Reedy Complex will be watered in spring 2021 (credit: NCCMA)*

The actual area that can be watered is dependent on the available capacity in Gunbower Creek after irrigation demand is met. A range of scenarios have been planned for, and operations may also be adapted if natural inflows into the forest occur to take advantage of them.

### When will the watering start?

Water will begin flowing into the wetlands in mid-August 2021. Water will initially be delivered from the Yarran Creek Regulator to top-up the Little Reedy Complex,

before overtopping the wetlands and spilling out onto the floodplain. Water will continue to move through low-lying areas of floodplain via the natural creek lines to fill wetlands and inundate some areas of flood dependent vegetation. Regulators at Reedy Lagoon and Black Swamp may also be used to target individual wetlands or complexes, to maintain the watering extent and ensure that ecological objectives for the event are met.

Spring deliveries will taper off in November 2021 ahead of the peak tourist season over summer. Targeted deliveries may continue to specific wetlands at lower flows to support growth of aquatic vegetation or a waterbird breeding event, if initiated.

### Where to visit?

Reedy Lagoon is always a special place to visit. It's a great spot for waterbird watching, photography and has excellent aquatic vegetation. Yarran Creek and Little Gunbower Creek will be great options for kayaking, and the Gunbower floodplain will be at its best in late spring and makes a perfect place to explore when the weather warms up.



*Reedy Lagoon will be a haven for nature lovers (credit: NCCMA)*

### How will the watering impact forest users?

The delivery of water for the environment will impact access to some areas of the lower Gunbower Forest floodplain during the watering event. Forest users from Cohuna will be able to access the Murray River via Nursery Track, and users from Koondrook can access forest from River Track via Condidorio's Bridge. Access will be restored to the majority of the forest before peak visitation periods in late spring and summer.

*The flows are authorised by VEWH in line with its Seasonal Watering Plan 2020-21, which is available for download from [www.vevh.vic.gov.au](http://www.vevh.vic.gov.au), with regular watering updates posted on the North Central CMA website [www.nccma.vic.gov.au](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au).*

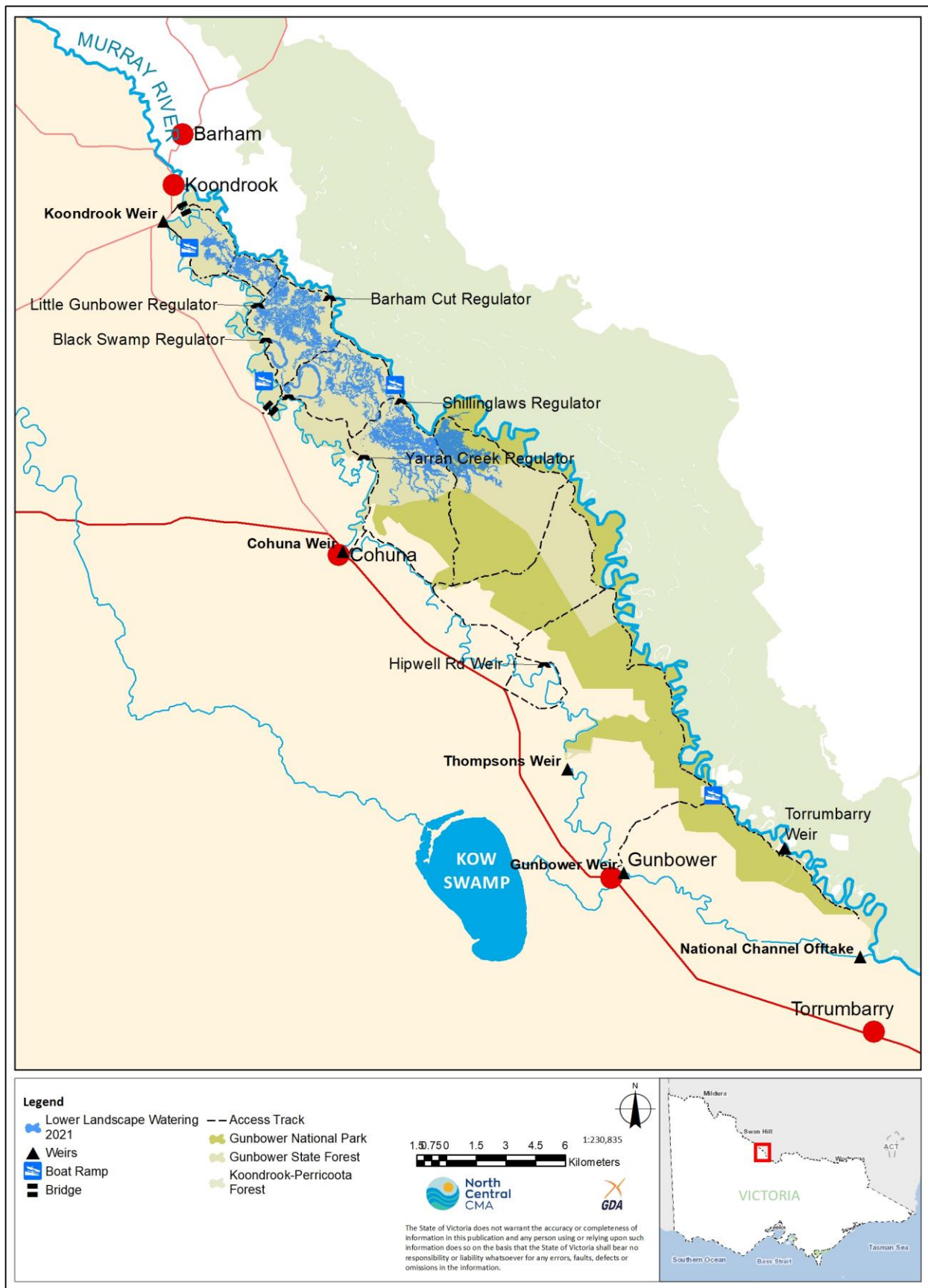


Figure 1. Map of expected inundation extent from deliveries of water for the environment in spring 2021. Actual extent may vary.

Information on forest access, domestic firewood collection and camping:

- DELWP on 136 186 or visit [www.facebook.com/DELWPLoddonMallee](https://www.facebook.com/DELWPLoddonMallee)
- Parks Victoria on 131 963 or visit [www.parksvic.gov.au](http://www.parksvic.gov.au)

**For more information**

Telephone 03 5448 7124 or visit [www.nccma.vic.gov.au](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au)

