

What's next?

Agricultural Floodplains

- Continue integrating farm and catchment programs with irrigation modernisation, the Farm Water Program and industry needs.
- The Shepparton Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan (incorporating the Local Plan) will be adopted.
- The partnership between the Goulburn Broken CMA, DEPI and the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network will continue to be critical in delivering Beyond SoilCare program activities
- Murray Dairy's Soils Focus Farm Project will be rolled out. Demonstration trials will be developed with local landholders.
- The Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy will be introduced leading to opportunities for preparing a full, revised regional floodplain management strategy.
- Opportunities to work with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to look at environmental floodplain watering along the mid and lower Goulburn River will be captured.
- The third year of the Securing Priority Waterways program will target improvement in the health of a number of priority waterways and associated wetlands, including Broken Creek and the Goulburn River.
- Conservation management networks will continue to strengthen in the region, and play a major role in delivering works across the Agricultural Floodplains.
- Call for registration from irrigators for funding through for Tranche 2 of the VFMP.
- Goulburn Murray Landcare Network will roll-out the Victorian Landcare Grant funded "Living the good life – Tips for small landholders" project.
- Goulburn Murray Landcare Network will continue to deliver the very successful floodplain ecology course with participants from agencies and community.
- The SoilCare demonstration trial at Katunga will continue to collect data and evidence for soil rehabilitation after laser grading works.

Productive Plains

- Priority instream barriers to be modified or removed on the Broken River include Gouldings Weir, Rupertsdale Ford crossing and Gowangardie Weir.
- The third year of the Securing Priority Waterways program will target improvement in the health of a number of priority waterways and associated wetlands, including the Hughes Creek Broken River, and the Goulburn River.
- Conservation management networks will continue to strengthen in the region, and play a major role in delivering works across the Productive Plains.
- Ongoing review of the Productive Plains Local Plan.
- Gecko CLaN will continue to lead the delivery of Sustainable Farming projects and land management information to its communities.
- Gecko CLaN will commence delivery of the "Using shelterbelts as climate change refuge for stock" project.
- The Communities for Nature Turquoise Parrot Project will continue to install and monitor nest boxes and host events for the Glenrowan-Warby Ranges-Chesney Hills communities.
- Victorian Landcare Grant-funded weed control projects will be carried out by Granite Creeks Project and Balmattum Shean's Creek Landcare Group.
- Euroa Arboretum will implement its Victorian Landcare Grant-funded environmental education in schools program.
- The subsoil manuring demonstration site at Costerfield will continue data collection through the Australian Government funded Bestwool Bestlamb project with support from SoilCare.
- Violet Town detailed design phase for flood levee protection continues.
- Warby Range Landcare Group will continue its sustainable farming program of activities through its 'Developing and caring for a healthy soil' project.



The next round of the Farm Water Program will help irrigators improve on-farm water use, with at least half of the water savings returned to the government for environmental purposes.

Commuting Hills

- The third year of the Securing Priority Waterways program will target improvement in the health of a number of priority waterways and associated wetlands, including the King Parrot Creek, Hughes Creek and Yea River, and the Goulburn River.
- Ongoing review of the Commuting Hills Local Plan.
- South West Goulburn Landcare Network will continue its Farm Blitz (tips for small landholders) Victorian Landcare Grant-funded program.
- Sunday Creek / Sugarloaf Sub Catchments will continue their Victorian Landcare Grant-funded gorse control work confining the works to the fire recovery area to make the most of the investment.
- Glenaroua Land Management Group has received Victorian Landcare Grant-funding for its biolinks project to create vegetation corridors.
- The Yea SoilCare group will continue its program of sustainable farming and land management activities, with a particular focus on grazing management.
- A SoilCare group will be established between DEPI and the SoilCare program to support the community in its sustainable farming pursuits.

What's next?

Upland Slopes

- Conservation management networks will continue to strengthen in the region, and play a major role in delivering works across the Upland Slopes.
- Ongoing review of the Upland Slopes Local Plan.
- Warrenbayne-Boho Land Protection Group and Molyullah Tatong Tree and Land Protection Group will use Victorian Landcare Grant funding for blackberry/weed control.
- Strathbogie Ranges Conservation Management Network will use Victorian Landcare Grant funding for its 'Engaging absentee and new landowners' program.
- Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative will continue with its Victorian Landcare Grant-funded integrated pest plant and animal control work.
- Creighton's Creek Landcare will use its Victorian Landcare Grant for improving stream quality and land management in the Creighton's Creek catchment.
- Up2Us Landcare Alliance (Mansfield area) will use its Victorian Landcare Grant to identify local community NRM priorities.
- Up2Us Landcare Alliance will deliver its two year SoilCare funded project 'Inspiring small farms to grow big ideas' to support new and niche farm businesses in the Mansfield district.
- Upper Goulburn Landcare Network will use its Victorian Landcare Grant for environmental education for schools and community in Alexandra and surrounds.
- Strathbogie Tableland Landcare Group will implement phase two of its Alternative Fertiliser Trial Site assessing acid tolerance of pasture species through the SoilCare program.



Broken Boosey Conservation Management Network's Communities for Nature Turquoise Parrot Project supports landholders in the Warby Ranges area to provide habitat for the threatened bird. Photo: Chris Tzaras

Southern Forests

- Ongoing review of the Southern Forests Local Plan.
- Buxton flood investigation will be completed.
- Up2Us Landcare Alliance (Alpine and mountain areas) will carry out Victorian Landcare Grant-funded projects to manage weeds.

Urban Centres

- GBCMA Site at the Seymour Alternative Field days.
- Through the Ken Smapson Fairley Leadership Scholarship support a young, emerging leader to complete the 2015 Fairley Leadership Program.
- Goulburn Murray Landcare Network will continue its Victorian Landcare Grant-funded Biodiversity Education Aquatic Discovery program for schools in Shepparton, Tatura, and Nathalia.
- Continue to support the RiverConnect Program.
- Seymour detailed design phase for flood levee protection continues.

Catchment wide

- Continue to implement the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-2019.
- Promote and implement the new Goulburn Broken Regional Waterway Strategy, in partnership with regional agencies and the community.
- A final review will define the scope and focus of the next Biodiversity Strategy for the Catchment.
- Continue to build indigenous skills, knowledge and capacity to deliver works, contribute to natural resource management planning, traditional ecological knowledge and undertake indigenous projects on country.
- Continue to build the capacity of community groups and individuals to carry out their own assessments of soil health and management practices in a rigorous and logical way through support of demonstration trials.
- DEPI will continue to work with community-based NRM groups and the Goulburn Broken CMA to identify priority areas for management of established weeds and rabbits.
- Work with the region's NRM groups to help leverage funds to undertake local priority works.
- Work with the community to implement and update local plans.



Supporting and recognising the community's vital role in improving and protecting the catchment's land, water, biodiversity and productivity is critical to implementing the Regional Catchment Strategy.

2013/14 Annual Report Summary for the Community



Highlights

We were pleased to receive approval from the Victorian Government for \$4.6 million to invest in the delivery of the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) through the Victorian Waterway Management Program, Sustainable Irrigation Program and Victorian Landcare Program.

The second generation Goulburn Broken Regional Waterway Strategy was completed in 2014 and for the first time incorporates wetlands, capturing the needs of important native vegetation communities and waterbird breeding sites across the catchment.

Community natural resource management groups that were funded to undertake onground works leveraged \$1.60 for every \$1 invested by the Goulburn Broken CMA from Victorian and Australian Government programs. Grant agreements with 61 community groups were entered into.

The Goulburn Broken CMA was able to redirect the Victorian Government funded Fruit Industry Employment Program crews

into the Wunghnu area to help with the recovery effort after fire burnt more than 10,000ha of public and private land in the region in February. Fire also burnt about 3,400ha near Kilmore and grants were fast-tracked through the South West Goulburn Landcare Network to support farmers whose properties were damaged.

Indigenous enterprises were supported to undertake important works on Country and we were very pleased to provide significant support for the Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Action Plan 2012-17, and to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

We have completed 379 Farm Water Program projects at a cost of \$96 million, saving 52 gigalitres of water. At least half of the saved water is returned to the environment. During the year we welcomed a further \$100 million investment from the Victorian Government in farm irrigation upgrades through the Victorian Farm Modernisation Program.

We continued to effectively manage our environmental water allocations to improve the health of the catchment's waterways with many opportunities during the year for aligning favourable weather conditions with community needs. We have made great advances in communicating the reasons behind our actions to a large number of interested stakeholders, including a focus on anglers.

We are maximising value for our communities through a new memorandum of understanding with the North East and North Central CMAs, which enables us to share staff resources, especially in times of natural disasters, as well as for business processes when technical expertise is required to meet statutory responsibilities.

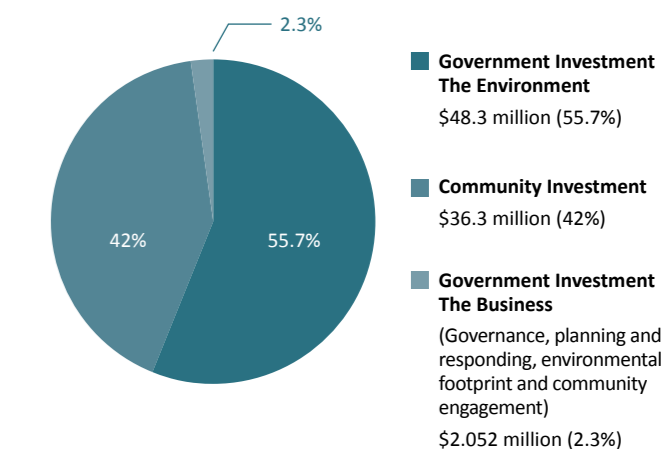
The Goulburn Broken CMA would like to acknowledge and thank Rien Silverstein for her contribution as Board Director from October 2011 to April 2014. We also welcomed two new Directors Lisa McKenzie and Adrian Weston in October 2013.

Achievements¹ during 2013-14

Output ¹	Achieved	Target ²
Remnant vegetation fenced, hectares	1,218	561
Long-term conservation agreements, hectares ³	0	75
Indigenous revegetation (planted), hectares	1,211	778
Irrigation drains built, kilometres	0	0
Reuse systems installed, numbers	64	32
Landforming/Lasergrading, hectares	6,671	4,262
Groundwater pumps installed, numbers	0	0
Weeds treated, hectares	3,643	1,799
Rabbits and foxes treated, hectares	31,201	27,434
Bed and bank protection actions, kilometres	1.20	0.95
Fishway structures installed and barriers modified	2	2
Aquatic habitat works	15	15
Threatened species projects, numbers	0	0
Whole farm plans prepared	79	146

i. Detailed outputs relating to each investment area are explained fully in the 2013-14 Annual Report
ii. Targets are determined by considering levels of government funding as listed in the Corporate Plan
iii. More information available in the 2013-14 Annual Report

Goulburn Broken Investment share



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Agricultural Floodplains

Northern floodplain with Murray River along boundary with NSW

- Landscape highly modified for agriculture with remaining vegetation fragmented and found mainly on waterways, wetlands and roadsides
- Irrigation supports dairy, horticulture and cropping and a large food processing sector with major investment in on and off-farm irrigation infrastructure recently
- Barmah National Park highly valued internationally (Ramsar listed) important breeding site for many bird species
- Long history of community leadership in managing land and water problems

Activities and events:

- Registrations of interest open for the \$30 million first tranche of the Victorian Farm Modernisation Project.
- The Victorian Government provides \$2 million to deliver a Fruit Industry Employment Program for those affected by SPC-Ardmona's fruit intake cuts.
- A total of 249,255 megalitres of environmental water is delivered to support fish, macroinvertebrates and vegetation in the lower Goulburn River and lower Broken Creek and to Barmah-Millewa Forest.
- The North Central, North East and Goulburn Broken CMAs secure \$4.5 million State Victorian Environmental Partnerships Program funding for the Northern Eco-Connection biolinks project.
- Environmental water management plans are completed for Kanyapella Basin, Mansfield Swamp, Wallenjoie Swamp, Gaynor Swamp and Moodies Swamp.
- The 2013 shallow watertable map, completed each year for the Goulburn Broken CMA by Goulburn-Murray Water, shows the area where the watertable was within three meters of the surface had increased from 9,000 ha to 151,000 ha between 2009 and 2013.
- The multi-partner Sand Ridge Woodlands project continues to deliver works within Yorta Yorta traditional boundaries.
- A draft local plan is developed by the Agricultural Floodplains taskforce to communicate the priorities – and actions – for supporting the community as it responds to changes in land use, water policy reform, climate and farm production.
- The Broken Boosey Conservation Management Network's Communities for Nature Woodland Bird project revegetates 60ha and holds events that promote community engagement within the Box Ironbark environment.

Productive Plains

Foothills and floodplains towards the north of the Catchment

- Habitat provided by vegetation along waterways, roadsides, ranges and spring-soak wetlands
- Dryland farming includes cattle, sheep, cropping and viticulture and many farms remain in same families for generations with average farming populations ageing
- Rivers and creeks in moderate condition and wetlands in moderate to good condition.
- Landcare and conservation management networks establish sustainable farming practices and protect threatened species.

Activities and events:

- Conservation Management Network (CMN) Photo Competition sees 160 photos submitted with 26 photos chosen and included in the CMN calendar and 5,000 copies distributed.
- More than 90 people take part in the Destination Chesney Vale field day, organised by the Broken Boosey CMN. The event includes a talk by Chris Tzaros from Birds, Bush and Beyond and a tour of the Winton Wetlands.
- WaterWatch continues to monitor the Honeysuckle Creek and other streams impacted by fire in 2013 to identify any resultant blackwater and low dissolved oxygen water quality issues.
- 44 people help build 60 nest boxes to provide habitat for endangered box ironbark forest wildlife at the Whroo Goldfields CMN's "Marsupial Mansions 2" Field Day held at Heathcote Community House.
- This is the final year of monitoring the impact of decommissioning Lake Mokoan on the ecology of the Broken River. The project has found that decommissioning has had a positive impact on the Broken River's hydrology, water quality and native fish community.

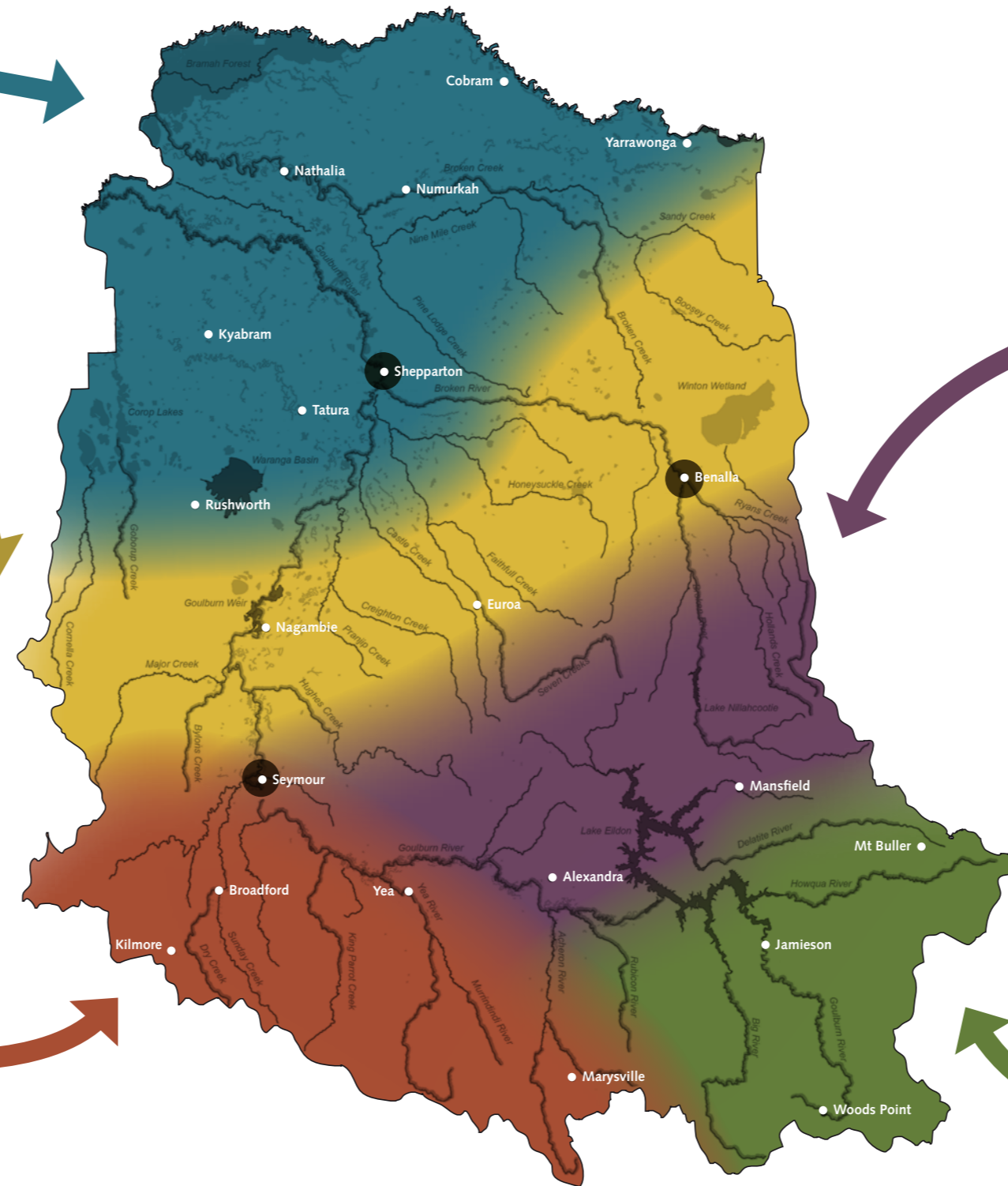
Commuting Hills

Mountainous southern and south western urban fringe

- Public and private forests support many plant and animals including the Golden Sun Moth
- Land use also supports range of agricultural industries and lifestyle communities
- Waterways largely remain healthy because of the extent of remaining vegetation
- People drawn to area for natural beauty and lifestyle and commute to Melbourne for work

Activities and events:

- Willow control to help the Yea Wetlands Committee implement its Yea Wetlands Vegetation Management Plan is carried out through the Hooray for Yea project.
- An advisory group, made up of agency staff and community members and scientists, meets for initial discussions as part of a flow study of the Goulburn River downstream of Lake Eildon to Nagambie environmental, social and economic values.
- A large-scale woody weed control program is undertaken on the Yea River near Yea in response to community feedback.
- Electrofishing in the King Parrot Creek, Yea River and mid Goulburn River helps assess fish populations, with a focus on Macquarie perch.
- Sunday Creek / Sugarloaf Sub Catchments secure Victorian Landcare Grants funding for gorse control.
- Glenaroua Land Management Group secures Victorian Landcare Grants funding for expanding and creating biolinks to Mt Piper across the Glenaroua Landscape.
- Sunday Creek / Dry Creek Landcare Group secures Victorian Landcare Grants funding for restoring Sunday and Dry creeks for platypus habitat.
- Upper Goulburn Landcare Network and South West Goulburn Landcare Network share resources and knowledge gained after Black Saturday to provide fast efficient fire recovery support to Kilmore area landholders affected by February fires.
- Study to understand the physical processes that affect the Yea and Acheron Rivers completed.



What's been happening across the Catchment?

Across the Catchment, the landscape, people, threats and priorities differ. To address these differences, six social-ecological systems have been identified through consultation and research. These systems don't have sharp boundaries, but they do share similar characteristics and issues which give them a unique identity.

Why are they important? They shape what can be done to build and maintain resilience so that the best combination of people, land, biodiversity and water outcomes valued by the local community can continue to be provided. A description of activities achieved in each social-ecological systems during 2013-14 is provided here.

Upland Slopes

Slopes and valleys towards the south of the Catchment

- Grazing and other agricultural enterprises occur in cleared valleys surrounded by partially forested hills and vegetation along waterways
- Lake Eildon provides water for agricultural production, recreation, tourism, and river health all the way down the Catchment and beyond the boundary
- Generational farmers live alongside increasing numbers of lifestyle properties and absentee landholders

Activities and events:

- A rock ramp fishway is constructed to address a major fish barrier at Emu Bridge on the Holland Creek and a private crossing on the Broken River is also modified to allow fish passage through an additional 20km of the Broken River.
- A Farming for Soil Biology workshop with well-respected soil expert Nicole Masters is held in Benalla followed by a visit to Graceburn Farm, Glenburn, a beef cattle and paddock egg enterprise run by Tom Abbottsmith Youl and Sally Abbottsmith.
- Warrenbayne-Boho Land Protection Group secures Victorian Landcare Grants funding for its Brush 'em off project to control blackberries and rabbits.
- Final mapping and overlays are prepared for the Mansfield Flood Mapping Project.
- Molyullah Tatong Tree and Land Protection Group secures Victorian Landcare Grants funding for blackberries and emerging weeds control.
- Upper Goulburn Landcare Network secures Victorian Landcare Grants program funding for environmental education for schools and community in Alexandra, Buxton and surrounds.
- A draft local plan is developed to communicate the priorities and actions for supporting the Upland Slopes community as it responds to changes in land use, water policy reform, climate and farm production.

Southern Forests

South-east mountains, waterways and snow covered alps

- Unique alpine vegetation supports endangered mountain Pygmy Possum
- Most of the area is public land managed for conservation, but also for recreation and timber production
- Waterways are in good condition with recreation and tourism highly valued
- People live in small and seasonal communities and travel to and from this area
- The interface between private and public land is important for management

Activities and events:

- A draft local plan is developed to communicate the priorities, and actions, for supporting the Southern Forests community as it responds to changes in land use, water policy reform, climate and farm production.
- Up2Us Landcare Alliance receives Victorian Landcare Grants program funding to manage infestations of blackberry and gorse on roadsides and the private public land interface.
- In addition to protecting the ecological character of Alpine bogs through works on country, Taungurung are engaged in projects that build capacity through training opportunities and cross-cultural participation through field days and workshops.

Urban Centres

Shepparton, Seymour and Benalla

- Biodiversity is poor but urban people value the rivers and remaining vegetation for recreation
- Provide employment, housing, schools and services surrounded by farming and lifestyle properties on Goulburn and Broken River floodplains
- Water is pumped from the rivers for domestic use and runs off into rivers following storms
- Large diverse populations

Activities and events:

- The Goulburn Broken Seedbank is officially moved to new management under Goulburn Valley Community Energy.
- Respected botanist and arboriculturist Dr Greg Moore highlights the "hidden" economic, social and environmental benefits of trees in urban spaces at a free Urban Centres Forum held at Mooroopna.
- The Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Action Plan 2012-17 and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Goulburn Broken CMA and YYNAC are officially launched at Mooroopna.
- Taungurung Clan representatives join the Goulburn Broken CMA site at the Seymour Alternative Field Days.
- RiverConnect initiatives include the installation of historical flood markers; the 'Activities in the Park' program; and over 500 local school students participating in river protection and improvement works.
- Victorian Government funding is secured for the Seymour Town Levee Implementation Plan.
- Goulburn Broken CMA participates in the simulation by VicSES of the implementation of the Regional Flood Emergency Plan at the new Benalla Incident Control Centre.