

Frequently Asked Questions

How much water will be extracted during the groundwater pumping test?

Groundwater extraction amounts during the pumping test will be dependent on a range of data, including (but not limited to) surface water storage levels and rainfall forecast, and will be in line with the environmental protections under the bulk entitlement.

We are planning to extract between 2,000 to 3,000 megalitres over the six-month pumping test period.

What will happen to the water extracted during the groundwater pumping test?

Groundwater extracted will be used to supplement supplies for Barwon Water customers.

Will there be any adverse impact on the Anglesea River as a result of our pumping?

Based on the past 12 years of environmental monitoring data, we believe there is no adverse impact to river as a result of Anglesea borefield operations.

Conducting the pumping test will help ensure a robust review and confirm how much water we can continue to take sustainably. The test will also help ensure the protection of groundwater-dependent ecosystems into the future.

We have 12 years of environmental monitoring data, and a comprehensive Monitoring and Assessment Program. However, the climate is changing and the review will allow us to check if anything in our management plan for the borefield needs to shift to cater to future climate scenarios. This will ensure we can continue to operate the borefield in a careful and considered way, so that we don't have an adverse impact on groundwater dependent ecosystems.

How does this differ to the Barwon Downs borefield?

Barwon Water operates the Anglesea borefield under a bulk entitlement issued by the Victorian Government. This includes environmental triggers and an extensive monitoring and assessment program designed to protect groundwater dependent ecosystems, which is overseen by the community through the Anglesea River Working Group.

The management of the Anglesea borefield is very different to the Barwon Downs borefield, which was operated and managed under a groundwater licence, fixed for 15 years, and did not include the same level of environmental monitoring or the adaptive management approach for protection of the environment.

The triggers for Anglesea borefield are conservative and designed to prevent impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems before they occur.

The below table details the different approach to both borefields.

Anglesea borefield	Past management of Barwon Downs borefield
Bulk entitlement, issued by Victorian Government	Fixed 15 year licence issued by regulator, SRW
Adaptive management approach	Non adaptive management approach
Extensive Monitoring and Assessment Program (MAP) to protect the environment	Groundwater levels, surface water flows and 5-yearly vegetation studies
MAP triggers are conservative and designed to prevent impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems before they occur	Fixed licence had triggers to <i>offset</i> impacts (i.e: reduced flow in Boundary Creek), rather than triggers to prevent impacts. Provision of supplementary flow to Boundary Creek as a licence condition did not adequately protect the downstream environment
10 years of data on groundwater, surface water, acidic sulphate soils, subsidence and ecological values	Additional monitoring undertaken to better inform remediation