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Snowy River high-flows set to commence

The first of five planned high-flow environmental water releases to the Snowy River are set to commence in early June, DPI Water Acting Director Surface Water Management, Brian Graham, said today.

“These high-flow water releases are designed to better mimic the natural flow characteristics that are seen in Snowy Mountain rivers, with the aim of improving the long-term health of the iconic Snowy River,” Mr Graham said.

“The release of environmental water into the Snowy River over a series of high-flow events has been successfully trialled over the last three years.

“There are two scheduled releases during winter and three in summer this year, to reflect the natural timing of high-flow events.

“Downstream landholders are being encouraged to make appropriate plans ahead of the water releases, including moving pumps and infrastructure to higher ground.”

The planned high-flow releases are:

- **Thursday 16 June** – equivalent peak flow 2,115 ML/d for 8 hours
- **Wednesday 17 August** – equivalent peak flow 2,236 ML/d for 8 hours
- **Wednesday 7 September** – equivalent peak flow 2,536 ML/d for 8 hours
- **Tuesday 20 September** – equivalent peak flow 3,079 ML/d for 8 hours
- **Wednesday 5 October** – equivalent peak flow 8,109 ML/d for 8 hours

“This flow pattern includes a higher degree of daily and seasonal flow variability, but still maintaining the need to ensure high-flow events occur in the Snowy, allowing the river to be reworked to improve the in-stream habitat.”

Mr Graham said the results from previous studies from DPI Water’s Snowy Flow Response Monitoring and Modelling Program, show the Snowy River is responding well to the seasonal high-flow events.

“The move to the five smaller flow release pattern has been demonstrated to make better use of the available water to establish a new smaller channel within the former channel of the Snowy River, wet the riparian zone and promote the establishment of aquatic and riparian vegetation,” said Mr Graham.

This year’s high-flow events will once again be given culturally significant names by Aboriginal elders, reflecting their respective community’s connection with the rivers of the Snowy Mountains.

Environmental water releases to the Snowy River are mandated under the *Snowy Water Inquiry Outcomes Implementation Deed 2002*, a tri-government agreement between the Australian, New South Wales and Victorian Governments, to achieve significant improvements in river health.

Further information about the Snowy River environmental releases is available on the DPI Water website – www.water.nsw.gov.au

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