

What is a Crown frontage licence?

- It is a licence that authorises the licensee to enter and use a Crown water frontage for a specified purpose such as grazing or riparian management. The conditions of the licence describe the responsibilities of the licensee and the licensor.
- A licence is normally issued to the owner/occupier of private land adjoining a Crown water frontage. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has the power to check licence compliance. In some areas Parks Victoria shares these responsibilities.
- If you have a Crown water frontage licence for grazing and have undertaken riparian management works such as fencing or revegetation, your licence should be changed to a riparian management licence to reflect changes in both grazing management and long-term management responsibilities.
- Riparian management licences recognise that all or some of the Crown frontage is being maintained to protect the riparian environment, typically by fencing to manage stock access to the waterway. Licence fees are generally reduced to as low as \$1 payable on demand.
- A licence is not a lease. It does not give the licensee exclusive use of the land. The public retains the right to enter and remain on the land for certain recreational purposes such as walking, fishing or bird watching.
- The public should not interfere with the licence purpose. Public access may be restricted to protect revegetation areas or erosion control sites. Pedestrian access must be provided at any fence that crosses the frontage by providing a stile or unlocked gate.

Customer Contact Centre 136 186

www.delwp.vic.gov.au

More information

Landholders may be eligible for funding for riparian works such as fencing, revegetation and off-stream stock watering in areas considered a priority by the local catchment management authority (CMA) or Melbourne Water.

These incentives are available for Crown water frontages, when landholders take out a riparian management licence.

For more information contact your local CMA or Melbourne Water.

Corangamite CMA

T: 1800 002 262

East Gippsland CMA

T: 5152 0600

Glenelg Hopkins CMA

T: 5571 2526

Goulburn Broken CMA

T: 5822 7700

Mallee CMA

T: 5051 4377

Melbourne Water

T: 131 722

North Central CMA

T: 5448 7124

North East CMA

T: 1300 216 513

West Gippsland CMA

T: 1300 094 262

Wimmera CMA

T: 5382 1544

For more information about Crown water frontages, contact the DELWP Customer Contact Centre on 136 186.

<https://www.forestsandreserves.vic.gov.au/land-management/crown-land-water-frontage-licensing>

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Cover photo courtesy of West Gippsland CMA



Managing Crown water frontages

For better farms and waterways



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning



There are several ways landholders can improve Crown and private river frontages to provide benefits for their property, as well as for the broader community and the environment.



Graeme and Justin Weaver. Photographer: Rob Addinsall

"Putting in the fencing improves the manageability of the property, it improves your ability to move stock around."

"It improves the land value because of the structural improvements as well as the aesthetic value, the environmental values."

Justin Weaver, Crown water frontage licensee, Glenelg River



Photographer: Clint Bain

"In this flat country with cold south westerly winds, the riparian vegetation provides protection for cattle. It's a very good windbreak."

Dennis Matthews, Crown water frontage licensee, Mitchell River

Options include fencing, revegetation, controlled grazing, off-stream watering and weed management. River frontage, also known as riparian land, is land that runs alongside a waterway.



David McLaren. Photographer: Sue Kosch

"Through fencing off the frontage we no longer have the worry of our cattle falling into the river or wandering stock from other properties."

"We have frequently noticed our cattle prefer to drink from troughs, rather than the river."

David McLaren, Crown water frontage licensee, Acheron River



Photographer: Jess Lill

"I treated the blackberries, willows and English broom along the fence which was then relocated further away from the river to reduce damage during flood events."

Herman Brunink, Crown water frontage licensee, Ovens River

What is a Crown water frontage?

- It is a strip of Crown land that runs alongside a waterway and is typically located between the waterway and a private land boundary. It can vary in width from 20 to 100 metres or more.
- Crown water frontages run alongside about 17% of Victoria's waterways. Private land, parks and state forests cover the remaining frontages.
- The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is responsible for the administration of Crown water frontage. In some cases Parks Victoria has a management role.

On farm benefits of frontage management

Fencing, off-stream watering and revegetation works on water frontages lead to:

Better stock management

- Fencing prevents stock falling down banks, getting stuck in the waterway or wandering on to other properties
- Fencing reduces time and costs of mustering
- Keeping stock out of waterways reduces risk factors for stock disease including mastitis

Enhanced productivity and capital value

- Stock have easy access to higher quality water when using an off-stream trough, leading to increased weight gain or milk production
- The presence of on-farm native vegetation increases the land value of the property
- Riparian shelter belts improve stock health and increase stock productivity

Erosion control

- Riparian vegetation reduces soil erosion and helps reduce the impact of floods

Improved water quality

- Riparian vegetation and stock management helps improve water quality in waterways

Environmental benefits

- Riparian vegetation improves habitat for birds, animals and fish.

Landholder wellbeing

- The presence of healthy riparian land leads to an increased sense of farmer wellbeing