

# Camping on licensed Crown river frontages



The Victorian government has made legislative changes to enable more camping opportunities on public land along Victorian rivers. Camping on licensed Crown water frontages will be permitted in specific, designated areas that have been assessed and deemed suitable for camping.

## Crown Land river frontage

Victoria has an estimated 85,000 kilometres of rivers and creeks, with approximately 170,000 kilometres of frontage. Approximately 30,000 kilometres of this water frontage is Crown land, the rest is private land, reserves, parks or state forest.

Crown water frontage is usually a strip of Crown land between the waterway and a private land boundary. Frontages can vary in width from 20 to 100 metres or more.

Some Crown land river frontages are subject to licences, issued by DELWP or Parks Victoria to the adjoining landowner/occupier, under section 130 of the Land Act 1958. A licence includes conditions for the licensee, including the management of the licensed land.

## Regulated Watercourse Land Regulations

The Regulated Watercourse Land Regulations 2021 manage the recreational use of Crown water frontages.

These regulations establish a clear set of rules and behaviours for the recreational use of certain Crown land near watercourses, both licensed and unlicensed. The regulations aim to:

- protect the environment, including natural and cultural values, and water quality
- support the enjoyment of those using the land for recreation
- protect the interests of licensees
- manage fire risk.

The regulations include tools to assist land managers to manage particular circumstances, including designating ('setting aside') areas for particular purposes (e.g. to protect sensitive natural or cultural values, or for public safety).

## Camping on licensed Crown river frontages

For licensed Crown river frontages, camping is only permitted on licensed areas that have been assessed and designated as suitable for camping.

Details and maps for the designated camping areas can be found on the DELWP website.

### Camping Rules

- Only camp in designated camping areas on licensed river frontages
- No camping within 20 metres of the waterway
- No camping within 200 metres of any nearby house
- Maximum stay 14 nights

### Waste disposal

- Portable toilets must be at least 50 metres from the waterway
- If not disposed of in a portable toilet human waste and toilet paper must be buried more than 100 metres from the waterway.
- All rubbish and belongings must be taken with you on departure.

### Campfires & Firewood

- Campfires will only be permitted in a few campsites. Check the information for each campsite to see if a campfire is permitted. Fire restrictions and regulations ([fm.vic.gov.au](http://fm.vic.gov.au)).
- Firewood collection is prohibited on all licensed river frontages. If your campsite allows a fire, you must bring your own firewood.
- It is illegal to cut, fell, pick (for flowers or foliage), damage or destroy any vegetation, whether it is alive or dead.

### General behaviours

- No dogs
- Do not enter or cross private land without permission
- Leave any gate as found (i.e. leave open gates that were open and close those that were closed).
- Do not interfere with or disturb livestock

Authorised officers may issue infringement notices for breach of the rules.

To report a breach of the regulations phone 136 186

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## How are camping areas assessed?

DELWP will lead the assessment of sites, with the support of other agencies. Assessments include consideration of environmental values and the suitability of an area for camping.

Traditional Owners will undertake an assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage, prior to an area being approved for camping.

## How do I find and access areas approved for camping?

The DELWP website will list those licensed river frontages that have been designated where camping is permitted.

This will include maps of the areas and appropriate access, and any information or conditions specific to the use of that area (e.g. whether campfires are permitted).

Access to camping sites on licensed Crown river frontages is only permitted via public access points. Trespassing on private land is illegal.

Vehicle access on licensed Crown river frontages, other than on formed roads or tracks, remains prohibited and subject to the Land Conservation (Vehicle Control) Regulations.

## Access and recreational use of Crown water frontages

While camping is only permitted in designated areas, the public are already able to visit all Crown water frontages for recreation.

Crown frontages are a public, natural asset for the recreational use and enjoyment of Victorians. Crown water frontage licences do not provide an exclusive right or use by the licensee, and recreational use by the public is permitted.

Further information on the activities permitted on Crown river frontages can be found in the 'Crown river frontage: A guide to access and recreational use' fact sheet.

## Responsible enjoyment of Crown river frontage

Rivers and waterways are important areas providing food and habitat for native plants and animals, and wildlife corridors and refuges in heavily cleared landscapes.

These areas are also important for recreation, such as walking, picnicking and fishing. Where licensed to adjoining farms, this land also provides for grazing, shelter and access to water for livestock.

Compliance with the rules is important to protect these areas and ensure they can be enjoyed by generations to come.

## Planning your Trip

- It can be hard to tell where the boundaries are between public land and private land. Ensure you are accessing Crown land via an appropriate access point. Remember straying onto private land from the camping area is trespassing.
- Actively supervise children around water, and livestock, where present.
- The identification of licensed Crown river frontages where camping is permitted is intended for dispersed camping. It is not expected that any additional facilities be provided, or site maintenance undertaken.
- Campers and recreational visitors to Crown river frontages use the areas at their own risk. Campers are responsible for their own safety and the safety of those in their care. Campers should be prepared for any natural hazards or outdoor risks when visiting public land, including public land subject to a grazing licence for livestock. Farm animals are not pets and should not be approached.
- Bushfire safety is a personal responsibility. Anyone entering Crown river frontages during the bushfire season needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions.

## Further information

Website:

<https://www.forestsandreserves.vic.gov.au/land-management/managing-crown-land/access-to-crown-water-frontages/>

Phone: 136 186

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