

# Water Rights

## Dja Dja Wurrung On Country Rights

It is our goal as outlined in the Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan that our rivers and waterways are healthy and meet the needs of our people and land. Our traditional culture revolved around relationships to the land and water – relationships that hold deep physical, social, environmental, spiritual and cultural significance. Today, the land and its waterways remain central to our cultural identity and aspirations for community and economic development. Our rivers are the veins of Country, and provide food and medicine, and places to camp, hunt, fish, swim and hold ceremonies. They are places that are central to our creation stories, and many of our cultural heritage sites are associated with waterways – burial sites, birthing sites and middens. Our waterways are places that we connect with our ancestors and pass traditional knowledge on to our children and grandchildren. The rights negotiated within Recognition and Settlement agreement are important to us maintaining and strengthening this relationship.

Elizabeth Allen - John Terrick descendant

This page gives more detailed information about Dja Dja Wurrung water rights under the *Recognition and Settlement Agreement*. Please see the Introduction infosheet for important general information before you read this page, including how to get the Verification Card that you need to exercise these rights.

Whenever you're on public land within Dja Dja Wurrung Country you can take and use water from waterways or bores\* to which you have access and use it for "traditional purposes." That includes **your own needs, your family's, or the non-commercial communal needs** of a group of Dja Dja Wurrung people.

When you take water for **non-commercial and communal needs** (that is, not just for personal or domestic needs), you need to ensure it does not negatively affect:

- access to the water by others;
- use of the water by others;
- other water licence holders;
- other water entitlement holders;
- the maintenance of the environmental water reserve in accordance with the environmental water reserve objective; or
- the protection of the environment, including the riverine and riparian environment.

You need to have your Dja Dja Wurrung Verification Card with you when exercising these Traditional Owner water rights.



Picture of a State Observation Bore

\* Note that you can't take water from a State Observation Bore unless you have written permission from the relevant water minister.

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## Web links and more information

### Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement (2013)

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/your+rights/native+title/dja+dja+wurrung+settlement+commences>

### Authorisation Orders

<http://www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazettes2014/GG2014S354.pdf>

### Map of Settlement Area

<http://www.djadjawurrung.com.au/maps>

### Dja Dja Wurrung Contact Details

<http://www.djadjawurrung.com.au/contact-us>

5444 2888

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