

Welcome to the second issue of the blue green algae newsletter.

The 2007 08 season has been busy with significant blooms occurring across the whole State, of particular interest was the Gippsland Lakes bloom which created lots of media attention.

GENERAL NEWS

Working Group

The inaugural blue-green algae Working Group was held in April 2008. The Working Group consists of representatives from the eleven Convening Agencies and is a forum for the exchange of views, ideas and experiences. It is also a forum to provide input and advice on the coordination arrangements for Victoria. The group heard presentations by Barwon Water, who gave an insight into its management techniques for the Paincalac bloom, and DSE Gippsland region, who presented on the Gippsland Lakes bloom. Thank you to Dr William Buchanan of Barwon Water and Richard Teynchenne of DSE.

Gippsland Lakes Bloom

The long-running Gippsland Lakes bloom finally came to an end in May 2008, with the algae declining to levels that will no longer adversely affect human health. A multi agency Incident Management Team was set up and managed the response over the five month period. Warning signs were erected at 110 sites and monitoring occurred at over 30 locations. The bloom was non-toxic and from the *Synechococcus* genera.

Wannon Water Regional Coordination Plan

In April 2008, Wannon Water presented its Regional Coordination Plan to its local water managers. It was a great opportunity for all stakeholders to meet one another and to clarify any outstanding items.

Public Health Research Grant

The Department of Human Services is funding a Public Health Research Grant project focussed on undertaking a health risk assessment for nodularin toxins in seafood. It is anticipated that the project will determine acceptable residues of the cyanobacterial toxin nodularin in fish and other seafood. This will provide

Reeves Channel, Gippsland Lakes



Courtesy: DSE Gippsland Region

a sound basis for food safety advice and public health action in the event of a *Nodularia spumigena* bloom in the Gippsland Lakes. The project is scheduled to commence in August 2008 and is being led by researchers from DPI and RMIT.

Review of the Blue-Green Algae Coordination Framework

DSE is currently undertaking a review of the blue-green algae coordination framework. The review will look at the advantages and disadvantages of the existing arrangements and where institutional arrangements could be improved.

Blue-Green Algae Website:

www.dse.vic.gov.au (Water > Monthly Water Report > Blue-Green Algae)

If anyone has any blue green algae stories or tid bits of information, we are keen to hear from you. Please contact Deni Warwick on (03) 9637 9123 or via email: deni.warwick@dse.vic.gov.au.

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