

## **ACTEW Below Cotter Dam Environmental Flow Compliance Report 2010**

This report has been prepared and published on the ACTEW website in accordance with the conditions of approval for the 'Cotter Dam Expansion – Paddy's River Road, ACT – EPBC 2008'. Specifically, ACTEW is to provide an annual report, detailing how environmental flows downstream of Cotter Dam have been released in accordance with the advice of the Environmental Flows Technical Advisory Group (EFTAG) established by the ACT Environment Protection Authority.

The conditions of approval must be implemented upon commencement of construction. Construction of the Enlarged Cotter Dam (ECD) commenced on 4 January 2010.

The EFTAG met in December 2009 (prior to the conditions of approval being established) and again in December 2010. Shown below are the 2009 and 2010 EFTAG meeting recommendations and ACTEW responses relevant to the ACTEW management of environmental flows below Cotter Dam.

- The EFTAG (Dec 2009) recommended that Murrumbidgee to Cotter (M2C) environmental flow recirculation project Operating Rules not include inundation and flow velocities objectives.
  - ACTEW submitted the M2C Operating Rules to the EPA in 2010. The Operating Rules did not include inundation and flow velocities objectives. The Operating Rules were subsequently approved by the EPA.
- The EFTAG (Dec 2010) recommended that ACTEW environment reports should be made available to EFTAG members.
  - ACTEW has commenced preparation of a spatial database that will store all environmental flow reports. This database will be made available to all EFTAG members. Additionally, environmental flow reports relevant to Enlarged Cotter Dam are regularly uploaded onto the public ACTEW website.
- The EFTAG (Dec 2010) identified that the release of low volume flows in the Cotter catchment from January 2011 to September 2011 would have little detrimental effect, given the high flows recently experienced. The EFTAG recommended that the critical period was from September 2011 onwards, because if the catchment conditions are relatively benign then it was probable that the 2011 spring would be an important breeding / recovery / movement period – having come out of a drought – flood sequence.



- ACTEW submitted an updated ECD construction drawdown regime to the EPA for approval. In response to the EFTAG's recommendation, no drawdown is being considered during the 2011-12 spring spawning season (September 2011 – January 2012).

ACTEW continues to work closely with the ACT EPA, regarding environmental flow management of the ACT water catchments. Compliance with the ACT EPA Licence is reported upon monthly.

Prepared by:

Chris Pulkkinen  
Environment Manager  
ACTEW Corporation