

Lisa Neville
Minister for Water
By email: lisa.neville@parliament.vic.gov.au

ON-WATER ACCESS COMMITMENT FOR UPPER COLIBAN

Dear Minister,

We write to you again regarding on-water access for kayaks/canoes and electric powered boats on the Upper Coliban Reservoir.

Since VRFish attended the launch of on-water access on 7 August 2019, just 5 days later on-water access was closed by Coliban Water due to the water levels of the Reservoir reaching the spillway. On-water access remains closed until further notice.

Upon further investigation we are now discovering a range of caveats, including closures when full water supply is reached, area closures, prohibition of inflatable boats, restrictions of only 2 people per vessel and length restrictions, cultural heritage plans etc. This is in addition to no launching facilities for electric powered boats. This situation is creating confusion and angst with recreational fishers when we should be celebrating on-water access and new fishing opportunities.

Given the large size of the Upper Coliban Reservoir we are also perplexed why there is only one launching site for kayaks and canoes and is located close to the dam wall/spillway. Installation of barriers near the spillway together with other launching sites around the reservoir should be applied.

In conclusion, recreational fishers have been guaranteed access for non-powered craft and small craft with electric motor to Tullaroop, Lauriston, Hepburn, Barkers Creek, Malmsbury and Upper Coliban. The current situation we describe at Upper Coliban demonstrates this commitment is not complete. We request your support to encourage Coliban Water to work more closely with the Victorian Fisheries Authority to resolve the situation for recreational users, including our fishers.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Loats
Chair
Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body

30 September 2019

Cc: Travis Dowling, CEO Victorian Fisheries Authority
Neville Pearce, Managing Director, Coliban Water

**Let's make fishing
better, for everyone.**