



FIG. 1.1 TANJIL RIVER WATER SUPPLY CATCHMENT

1. Introduction

The Tanjil River arises as two streams on the Baw Baw Plateau in the Central Highlands of Victoria, some thirty kilometers north of Moe. Pennyweight Creek joins the West Branch before the two branches of the river unite in the forested foothills. The Tanjil River is then joined by Bull Beef Creek and Boggy Creek as it flows southwards through forest and farming land. It finally flows across a small riverine plain before joining the Latrobe River just upstream of Lake Narracan (see Figure 1.1). The total area of the catchment is approximately 510 sq km.

The Tanjil River provides a reliable source of relatively high quality water. It is being harnessed to serve the needs of power generation and industrial and residential development of the western end of the Latrobe Valley. A 200 000 ML on-stream storage (Blue Rock Lake) resulted from the construction of Blue Rock Dam. The City of Moe now obtains supplementary water supplies from the Tanjil River below the impoundment. There are numerous private diversions for stock, domestic and irrigation purposes along the river and further down the Latrobe River.

The catchment to the Tanjil River consists of a number of geological formations, upon which have developed a diverse range of landforms, soils and vegetation associations under a range of climatic conditions. Since the early days of settlement, a wide range of land uses have been imposed upon the landscape, culminating in recent years in increased residential use and the development of the water resource of the Tanjil River itself. Approximately 22% of the catchment is held in freehold title and used for predominantly farming purposes. The public land of the catchment (78%) is used for timber production, recreation, nature conservation and educational purposes.

While water of the Tanjil River is generally of high quality, existing land uses or changes in use undertaken without consideration of their effect on water catchment values could place water quality at risk. It is important that the type and intensity of use and management of the land be matched to the capability of the land to sustain such use without detriment to water supply.

The Soil Conservation Authority, as part of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands, has a significant responsibility within the catchment to maintain and, where possible, to improve water quality and yield. The Department provides advice to landholders and managers on a range of matters which may affect water quality or yield, including soil erosion prevention and control, and the possible off-site effects of residential development and associated wastewater disposal. The Authority may also prepare and implement a Land Use Determination to assist in the balancing of the needs of the water supply with those of sustained production (agricultural, residential uses, etc) from the land.

This report, which presents the Land Use Determination for the Tanjil River Water Supply Catchment, concludes a series of investigations by the Authority into this catchment.

The catchment was proclaimed as a Water Supply Catchment in 1979¹. Land types in the catchment were identified and described as part of a broad scale land system survey of the Gippsland region². A more detailed study³ of the Tanjil River Catchment concentrated on the capability of the land for residential and associated uses.

The Determination builds on this work, and on studies by other organizations, to provide guidelines for the use and management of the land of the catchment for a variety of purposes.

¹ D M McKinnon and R M McLennan, 1979. *A report on the Tanjil River Catchment: A Proposal for Proclamation prepared for consideration by the Land Conservation Council.*

² JM Aldrick, RHM van de Graaff, BM Nicholson, D O'Beirne, R Hook and NL Schoknecht, (in preparation). *A Study of the Land of the Catchments to the Gippsland Lakes.*

³ M Wells, 1982. *Tanjil River Catchment: A description of land its capability for development. Volume I & II*