

## Proposed changes to the *Water Sharing Plan for the Intersecting Streams Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2011*

Water sharing plans are made under the NSW *Water Management Act 2000* (WM Act) and continue to be the primary tool to define water-sharing arrangements in NSW. Water sharing plans are therefore a central component of each water resource plan, and have been amended to meet Basin Plan requirements where necessary.

### Why we propose making these amendments

To meet its commitments under the *Basin Plan 2012*, the NSW Government is developing water resource plans (WRPs) that make reference to and, where necessary, modify existing NSW water sharing plans (WSPs).

NSW is proposing minimal change for water sharing plans that are within their initial ten year period to provide certainty for water users. Significant changes to these WSPs will only be considered if current rules are inconsistent with the *Basin Plan 2012*, or where a rule has not been implemented or has had unforeseen consequences.

This factsheet explains the minor changes proposed to the *Water Sharing Plan for the Intersecting Streams Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2011*. These changes are not intended to impact existing licence holders' access to water.

The title of the water sharing plan has been changed to *Water Sharing Plan for the Intersecting Streams Unregulated River Water Sources 2011*. This reflects the removal of provisions in the plan relating to alluvial groundwater sources clauses. Please see below for more details.

### Changes in plan rules

#### Changes to wording of interstate trade rules

The Basin Plan allows for trade of surface water between Basin States in an unregulated system, when the boundary between the unregulated systems is based solely on the border between the two Basin States.

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is proposing minor changes to the current interstate trading provisions to allow for cross border trade if interest from water users is determined, and appropriate administrative arrangements are in place to enable this. NSW and QLD have developed a framework for monitoring interest in interstate trade.

#### Removal of Alluvial groundwater sources

As part of water resource plan development, alignment is needed between each water resource plan and the associated water sharing plans that form part of that water resource plan. Changes have been made to remove the alluvial groundwater sources and all provisions relating to these groundwater sources from this WSP.

These groundwater sources will be incorporated into a new *Water Sharing Plan for the Darling Alluvial Groundwater Sources 2020*.

As part of this change, the name of the plan will change to reflect the water sources to which it applies, and the associated maps will be updated.

### Changes to compliance in relation to long-term average annual extraction limits and sustainable diversion limits

Changes to the water sharing plan are required to enable NSW to address any non-compliance with the Basin Plan sustainable diversion limits. We propose to include in the *Water Sharing Plan for the Intersecting Streams Unregulated River Water Sources 2011* a second extraction limit, equal to the sustainable diversion limit specified in the *Basin Plan 2012*. Rules that enable NSW to undertake assessment with the Basin Plan compliance framework are included in the water sharing plan.

The associated assessment and compliance rules link the assessment of compliance to the framework specified in Chapter 6 of the *Basin Plan 2012* (Part 4, Division 2). The Murray–Darling Basin Authority will release guidelines on the Basin Plan compliance method.

### Administrative Changes

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is taking the opportunity to improve consistency among the plans, bring the plans up to date with current drafting practices and policy positions, and ensure plans are in line with current administrative practices.

In some circumstances, re-drafting was required to provide clarity or remove ambiguity associated with existing rules. The changes will not affect the operation of the rules governing the conditions under which water can be taken, or the rule governing water for the environment.

### Objectives, strategies and performance indicators

The objectives, strategies and performance indicators have been revised by the department. The revised objectives cover similar areas, but have been modified to:

- create a stronger logical connection between the objectives, strategies and performance indicators
- more clearly distinguish between the environmental, economic, social/cultural and Indigenous cultural objectives of the water sharing plan.

### Future amendments

The *Water Sharing Plan for the Intersecting Streams Unregulated River Water Sources 2011* will be reviewed by 2021. The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) will undertake a review of the water sharing plan under the NSW *Water Management Act 2000*. As part of the review, the NRC will seek public submissions on the effectiveness of the water sharing plan. The department will consider the review findings and the public submissions before making any potential amendments to the WSP. If changes are proposed, we will undertake public exhibition of the amended water sharing plan at this time.

### More information

The draft Intersecting Streams Water Resource Plan and other fact sheets are available from [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/intersecting-streams-surface-wrp](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/intersecting-streams-surface-wrp)

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