

## List of exemptions provided under temporary water restrictions – Northern NSW Murray-Darling Basin and Floodplain Harvesting

Exemptions to these water restrictions means take is now only prohibited as follows:

- by floodplain harvesting in the Barwon-Darling Valley Floodplain
- by A, B and C Class access licences downstream from Culgoa River Junction to Lake Wetherell (Management Zones 10 to 14)
- by unregulated access licences and unregulated (special additional high flow) access licences in the Intersecting Streams Water Source

### Current exemptions

River system/floodplain	Water source	Licence type	Exemption period (inclusive)	Reason for exemption
Barwon-Darling	Upstream of the Culgoa Junction (Management Zones 1 to 9)	Unregulated river (A, B, and C Class)	5pm 27 February to 28 February	Flows in the Barwon-Darling have reached Beemery, near the Culgoa Junction. Inputs from the Culgoa River system mean that forecast flows for the Barwon-Darling will exceed the critical needs target of 60-70GL at Lake Wetherell.  Allowing access to unregulated access licence holders in the Barwon-Darling, upstream of the Culgoa Junction will be consistent with how the Department has allowed access in the northern NSW tributaries of the Murray Darling Basin, that is, providing access when we are confident that the critical downstream needs and the Lake Wetherell target will be met
Namoi regulated	Namoi water source	Regulated (High)	From 09 February	It was estimated that HS take would be in the order of

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	Upper Namoi water source	Security)	2020	up to 150ML/day, 3ML/day, and 0.2ML/day in the Namoi, Peel, and upper Namoi respectively. At the time of the exemption, flows in the Namoi were 10,000ML day at Gunnedah and 14,000ML day at Narrabri (and rising). Flows were predicted to reach Walgett, and critical environmental needs in channel were being met, or forecast to be met, through most of the Namoi.  The impact of allowing HS take was considered to be insignificant when considered against the flows, so would have no material impact on flows downstream.
Peel regulated	Peel water source			
Border rivers	Border rivers regulated water source	Regulated (High Security)	17 February to 28 February 2020	There have been significant flows into the Border Rivers regulated river water source since 10 February. Forecasts from 14 February indicate that 8,000-15,000ML is expected to pass the flow gauge at the end of system at Mungindi. These forecasts indicate that 15,000-35,000ML is expected to arrive as inflows to Menindee Lakes (Lake Wetherell).  While the Border River flows will contribute to flow in the Barwon-Darling, the material impact of permitting access by high security licence holders is minimal. The total high security entitlement volume is 1,200ML and 100% was allocated on 1 July 2019; however, it is anticipated that not all of this

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				entitlement would be accessed, with the impact of allowing high security take believed to be low risk to meeting downstream critical needs when considered against the flows in the system and forecast flows.
<p>Border Rivers Gwydir Namoi Castlereagh Macquarie</p>	<p>All unregulated water sources in the Water Sharing Plan for the NSW Border Rivers Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2012</p> <p>All unregulated water sources in the Water Sharing Plan for the Gwydir Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2012</p> <p>All unregulated water sources in the Water Sharing Plan for the Namoi Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2012</p> <p>All unregulated water sources in the Water Sharing Plan for the Macquarie Bogan Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2012</p>	Unregulated	5pm 21 February to 28 February 2020	<p>As a result of the restrictions in the Northern Basin, flows to the northern parts of NSW are now expected to meet critical needs along the full length of the Barwon-Darling River and the target of 60-80GL in Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>Flows into the Barwon-Darling are forecast to reach Lake Wetherell in sufficient volumes to achieve full connection to the end of the Lower Darling River and to meet critical needs. This includes some reserves for Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>Peak flows have now moved out of the unregulated tributaries of the northern regulated rivers, and are no longer included in flow forecasts to meet target volumes in Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>As a result, the take of water from the unregulated water sources listed will not impact on reaching the Lake Wetherell flow target.</p>

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	<p>All unregulated water sources in the Water Sharing Plan for the Peel Valley Regulated, Unregulated, Alluvium and Fractured Rock Water Sources 2010</p> <p>All unregulated water sources in the Water Sharing Plan for the Castlereagh River Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2011</p>			
Gwydir, Macquaire, upper Namoi	<p>Gwydir Valley Floodplain, Narromine to Oxley Station Floodplain (as designated under the Water Act 1912, Gazette No. 155 of 5.12.2008 and sometimes referred to as the Macquarie Valley Floodplain), Upper Namoi Valley Floodplain, Lower Macquarie Valley Floodplain (as designated under the Water</p>	Floodplain harvesting	5pm 21 February to 28 February 2020	<p>As a result of the restrictions in the Northern Basin, flows to the northern parts of NSW are now expected to contribute to meeting critical needs along the full length of the Barwon-Darling River.</p> <p>Flows into the Barwon-Darling are forecast to reach Lake Wetherell in sufficient volumes to achieve full connection to the end of the Lower Darling River and to meet local critical needs. This includes some reserves for Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>Peak flows have now moved out of the floodplain areas listed, and are no longer included in flow forecasts to meet target volumes in Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>As a result, the take of water from the floodplains listed above will not</p>

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	Act 1912, Gazette No. 105 of 19.07.1985)			materially impact on the forecast flows to Lake Wetherell.
Lower Namoi, Macintyre	Lower Namoi Valley Floodplain Narrabri – Wee Waa Floodplain Lower Macintyre River, Whalan Creek & Boomi River Floodplain	Floodplain harvesting	1pm 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2020 to 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	<p>As a result of the restrictions in the Northern Basin, the flows to the northern parts of NSW are now expected to meet critical needs along the full length of the Barwon-Darling River, and the target of 60-70 gigalitres in Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>Flows into the Barwon-Darling are forecast to reach Lake Wetherell in sufficient volumes to achieve full connection to the end of the Lower Darling River and to meet critical needs. This includes some reserves for Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>The areas listed were not included in the approval to take floodplain harvesting water on 21 February, as the flows in these areas were required to meet targets. However, following intensive rainfall and increased flows over the past 24 hours from Queensland, the forecast flows to Lake Wetherell are now 75-95 gigalitres. Access in these water sources can be provided without jeopardising the 60-70 gigalitre target at Lake Wetherell.</p>
Border Rivers	Border rivers regulated water source	Regulated (General Security)	1pm 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2020 to 28 <sup>th</sup>	As a result of the restrictions in the Northern Basin, flows to the northern parts of NSW are now expected to meet critical needs along

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			February 2020	<p>the full length of the Barwon-Darling River and the target of 60-80GL in Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>Flows into the Barwon-Darling are forecast to reach Lake Wetherell in sufficient volumes to achieve full connection to the end of the Lower Darling River and to meet critical needs. This includes some reserves for Lake Wetherell.</p> <p>The area listed was not included in the approval to take on 21 February, as these flows were required to meet targets.</p> <p>However, following intensive rainfall and increased flows over the past 24 hours from Queensland, the forecast flows to Lake Wetherell are now 75-95 gegalitres.</p> <p>Access in these water sources can be provided without jeopardising the 60-70 gegalitre target at Lake Wetherell.</p>
Border Rivers and Upper and Lower Namoi	Border Rivers and Upper and Lower Namoi regulated water sources	Regulated (General Security)	From 25 February 2020	<p>The improvement in the Pindari Dam volume and the town water weirs on NSW Border Rivers means that the restricted 2.3 GL of account water can be supplied from run of river flows without negatively impacting the security of essential supplies.</p> <p>The improvement in Split Rock Dam and Keepit Dams means that the restricted general security account balance of 1.4 GL and 12.6</p>

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				GL respectively can now be supplied from run of the river flows without negatively impacting the security of essential supplies.
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## Lapsed exemptions

River system/floodplain	Water source	Licence type	Exemption period (inclusive)	Reason for exemption
Gwydir Valley Floodplain	Mehi River, Barwon, and Thalaba Creek	Floodplain harvesting	10 February to 13 February 2020	<p>On the weekend of 8-9 February, there had been in excess of 200mm of rain in lower Gwydir and Namoi valleys. This led to widespread localised overland flows and flooding. Flows from the Mehi River were backing up due to high flows in the Barwon Darling. Within valley critical high priority needs had been met (or forecast to be met), and it was expected that these would also be met at Brewarrina, and possibly Bourke, in the Barwon Darling. Flows were not forecast to move further downstream of Bourke at this stage.</p> <p>The department received reports of infrastructure damage as a result of localised flooding, and the inability to move water due to the restriction.</p> <p>The main intent of lifting this order was to minimise flood impacts to infrastructure, and allow farmers to move water around their property</p>
Barwon-Darling Floodplain	Mehi River, Barwon, and Thalaba Creek			
Barwon-Darling Floodplain	Pian Creek, and Barandine Creek Gwydir Valley			
Lower Namoi Valley Floodplain	Pian Creek, Lower Namoi, and Barandine Creek			

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				for a short period of time.
Gwydir unregulated	Thalaba Creek Water Source	Unregulated	08 February to 17 February 2020	<p>On the weekend of 8-9 February, there had been in excess of 200mm of rain in lower Gwydir and Namoi valleys. This led to widespread localised overland flows and flooding. Flows from the Mehi River were backing up due to high flows in the Barwon Darling. Within valley critical high priority needs had been met (or forecast to be met), and it was expected that these would also be met at Brewarrina, and possibly Bourke, in the Barwon Darling. Flows were not forecast to move further downstream of Bourke at this stage.</p> <p>The potential for unregulated water take in the Thalaba and Millie water sources is small, and the opportunity to take will not materially impact on downstream flows in the Barwon Darling.</p>
	Millie Creek Water Source			
	Mehi unregulated	Unregulated	09 February to 12 February 2020	<p>On the weekend of 8-9 February, there had been in excess of 200mm of rain in lower Gwydir, and Namoi valleys. This led to widespread localised overland flows and flooding. Flows from the Mehi River were backing up due to high flows in the Barwon Darling. Within valley critical high priority needs had been met (or forecast to be met), and it was expected that these would also be met at</p>

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				<p>Brewarrina, and possibly Bourke, in the Barwon Darling. Flows were not forecast to move further downstream of Bourke at this stage.</p> <p>The department received reports of infrastructure damage as a result of localised flooding, and the inability to move water due to the restriction.</p> <p>The potential for unregulated take in the unregulated Mehi water source is higher than Thalaba and Millie water sources, and could impact on flows into the Barwon Darling.</p> <p>The main intent of lifting this order was to minimise flood impacts to infrastructure, and allow farmers to move water around their property. This was due to the severe localised flooding caused by intense localised rainfall.</p>
Namoi unregulated	Mooki River Water Source	Unregulated	26 January 2020 to 7 February 2020	<p>As of 30 January 2020 Quirindi Creek was flowing at a rate of 11.3 ML/d at Greenacre, and 7.2 ML/d at Dury Bridge. Mooki River was flowing at a rate of between 17.6 ML/d and 29.9 ML/d and is flowing into the Namoi River. Discharges from Mooki River and Peel River re-established connectivity of flows in Namoi River from Gunnedah to Narrabri. This connectivity was achieved</p>
	Quirindi Creek Water Source			

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				while allowing take from the Quirindi or Mooki Rivers from 26 January, as the pump sizes are small compared to the flow rates. It was determined that connectivity could be maintained if take was allowed up to and including 7 February.
	Upper Macdonald River Water Source	Unregulated	08 February to 17 February 2020	<p>On the weekend of 8-9 February, there had been in excess of 200mm of rain in lower Gwydir, and Namoi valleys. Within valley critical high priority needs had been met (or forecast to be met), and it was expected that these would also be met at Brewarrina, and possibly Bourke, in the Barwon Darling. Flows were not forecast to move further downstream of Bourke at this stage.</p> <p>Flows were predicted to reach Walgett, and critical environmental needs in channel were being met, or forecast to be met, through most of the Namoi. Unregulated take from these water sources was deemed to not materially impact on these flows.</p>
	Mid Macdonald River Water Source			
	Upper Namoi Water Source			
	Werris Creek Water Source			
	Rangira Creek Water Source			
	Bluevale Water Source			
	Coxs Creek Water Source			
	Maules Creek Water Source			
	Eulah Creek Water Source			
	Bohena Creek			

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	Water Source			
	Spring and Bobbiwaa Creeks Water Source			
	Mooki River Water Source			
	Quirindi Creek Water Source			
	Warrah Creek Water Source			
	Yarraman Creek within the Lake Goran water source	Unregulated	12 February to 17 February 2020	An intensive rainfall occurred in Yarraman Creek, resulting in very high localised flows and flash flooding. Yarraman Creek is a terminal system, ending in an alluvial fan, and does not connect to Lake Goran. In rare events when it does spill, it flows into the Mooki Creek water source. There are 2 water users along Yarraman Creek, and their take of water would not materially impact on the flows that were being experienced along Yarraman Creek, nor impact on downstream requirements.
	Brigalow water source	Unregulated	09 February to 17 February 2020	On the weekend of 8-9 February, there had been in excess of 200mm of rain in lower Gwydir, and Namoi valleys. Within valley critical high priority needs had been met (or forecast to be met), and it was expected that
	Bundock water source			
	Coghill water			

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	source			these would also be met at Brewarrina, and possibly Bourke, in the Barwon Darling. Flows were not forecast to move further downstream of Bourke at this stage.
	Etoo and Talluba water source			Flows were predicted to reach Walgett, and critical environmental needs in channel were being met, or forecast to be met, through most of the Namoi. Unregulated take from these water sources was deemed to not materially impact on these flows.
	Lower Namoi water source			
	Baradine water source			

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