



Water Resource Plan

Lower Darling Alluvium (GS23)

Pooncarie Targeted Consultation Session

Darling Alluvium Water Resource Plan Area GW7

July – August 2019

Water resource plans – achieving Basin

Plan outcomes



Communities with sufficient and reliable water supplies that are fit for a range of intended purposes, including domestic, recreational and cultural use



Productive and resilient water-dependent industries, and communities with confidence in their long-term future



Healthy and resilient ecosystems with rivers and creeks regularly connected to their floodplains and, ultimately, the ocean.

NSW context – WRPs and NSW Water Sharing Plans

NSW Water Management Act 2000

Water sharing plans

Specify the rules for sharing water to maintain the health, sustainability and productivity of surface water and groundwater sources across all of NSW.

Relevant parts of a water sharing plan are assessed by the MDBA, accredited by the Commonwealth Minister and form part of the water resource plan.

Commonwealth Water Act 2007 Murray–Darling Basin Plan 2012

Water resource plans

Specify the rules for diverting water within specified areas of the Murray–Darling Basin.

Elements include:

- Compliance with the sustainable diversion limits and water trade rules
- Protection of water for the environment
- Water quality and salinity objectives
- Aboriginal values and uses
- Measuring and monitoring
- Arrangements for extreme events

Water Sharing Plans remain the primary statutory instruments for water sharing in NSW

Process for developing the water resource plan

DEVELOP



Status
& Issues
paper

May 2017

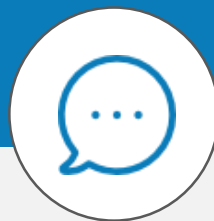


Strategy
& rule
development



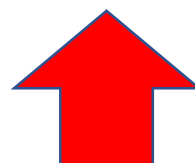
Draft
WRP

CONSULT



Public
exhibition
WRP

July/August
2019



Final
WRP

APPROVE & ACCREDIT



Ministerial
approval



MDBA
assessment &
Commonwealth
Minister
accreditation

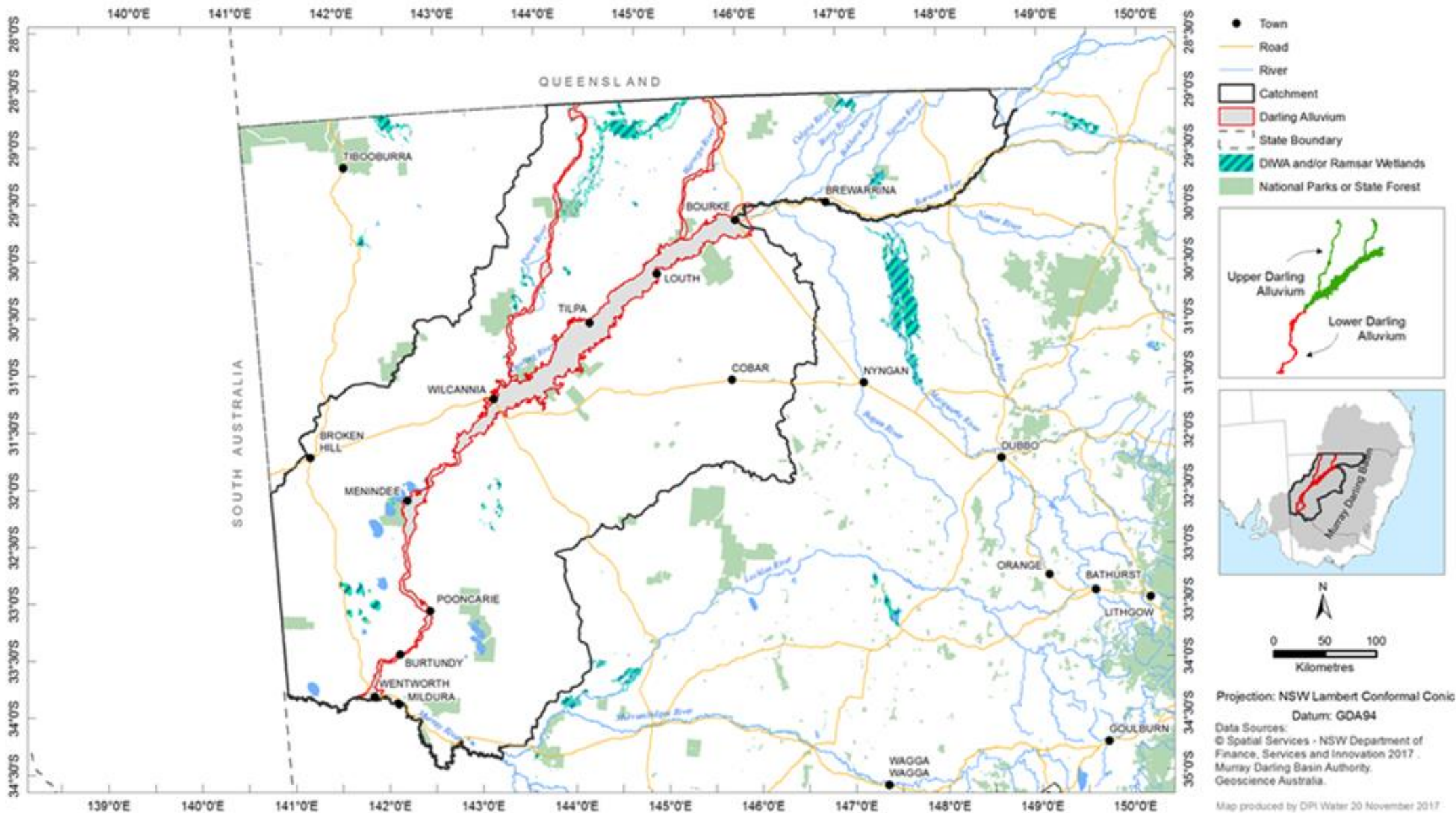
IMPLEMENT



WRP
Commences

2020

The Darling Alluvium water resource plan



Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



The plan has been revised to:

- Align with requirements of the Basin Plan and the water resource plan
- Be more 'readable'
- Be more legally robust
- Include all alluvial groundwater sources of the Darling catchment
- Address inconsistencies between similar water sources

Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



- **Align long term average annual extraction limits to Basin Plan sustainable diversion limits**
- The Lower Darling long-term average annual extraction limit has increased to include a volume for salinity management (salt interception scheme).
 - LTAAEL was 1,529 ML now 2,230 ML

Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



Additional provisions for assessing compliance

- At **end** of each water year – 2 assessments of compliance:
- First as per current arrangements comparing five year rolling average use with LTAAEL (long term average annual extraction limit in WSP).
- Second comparing extraction in the previous year to a theoretical and retrospectively calculated '*annual permitted take*' as required under Basin Plan provisions to assess compliance with the sustainable diversion limit (SDL).

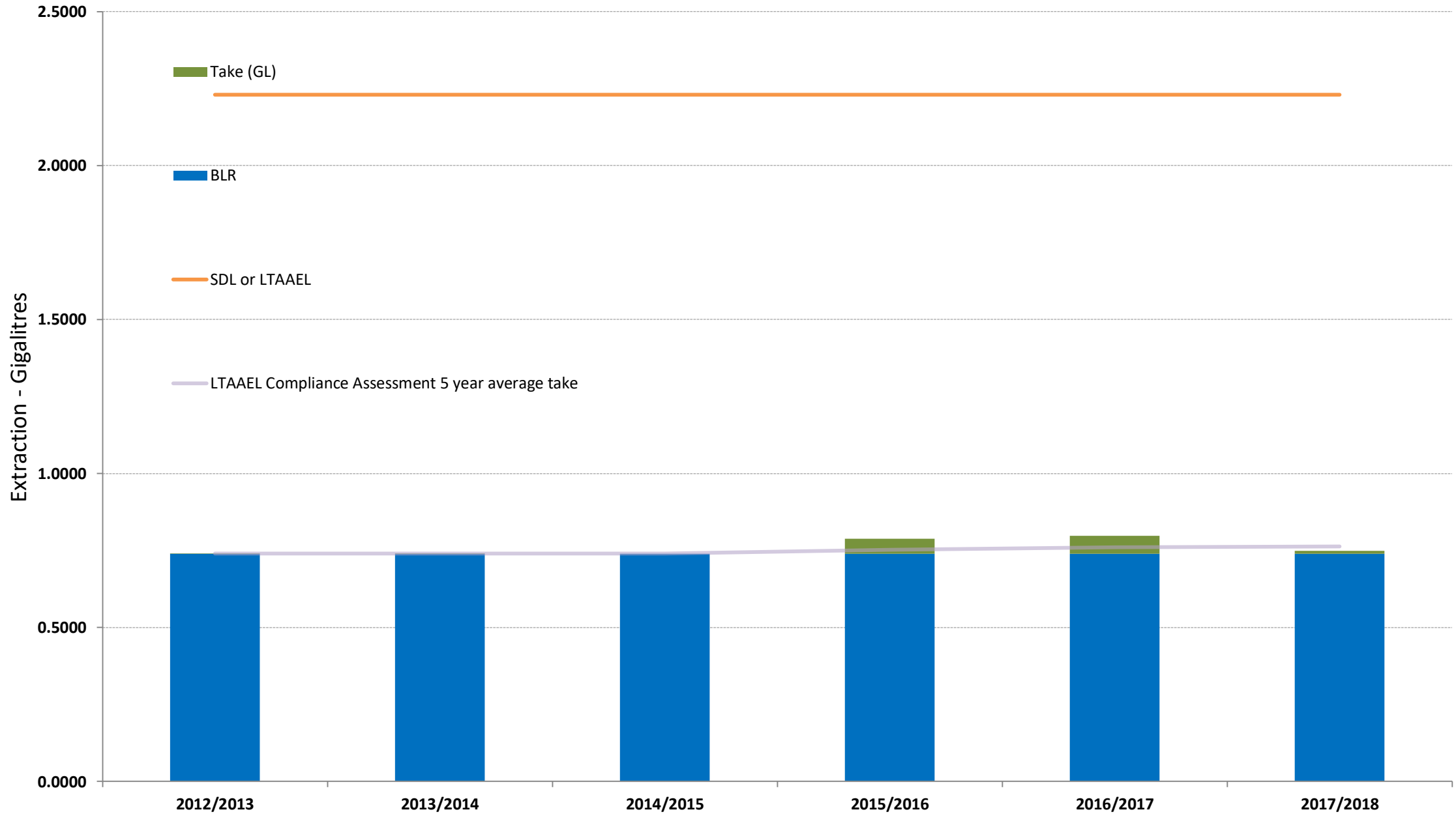
Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



Additional provisions for assessing compliance with the sustainable diversion limits under the Basin Plan

- Directly references compliance provisions in the Basin Plan
- Running balance of 'credits' and 'debits' accumulating for each year
- Compliance triggered if running balance is 20% below the Basin Plan 'sustainable diversion limit'

Lower Darling Alluvium extraction



Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



If long term average annual extraction limit or sustainable diversion limit is breached the Minister can:

- Reduce the available water determination for aquifer access licences the following year (as per current water sharing plan), and/or
- Limit the water allocation that can be taken, assigned under section 71T of the Commonwealth *Water Act 2007*, or otherwise debited or withdrawn from a water allocation account of an aquifer access licence.
- Only makes a difference in groundwater sources where allocations can be 'carried over' from one water year to the next. Access licences in the Darling Alluvium do not permit carryover.

Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



Groundwater dependent ecosystems

- Additional high probability, high priority groundwater dependent ecosystems mapped for all areas and included as a Schedule in the water sharing plan.
 - See map available for inspection at this meeting.

Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



Rules to minimise interference between users

Distance from:	Production bores
Neighbours works (production and basic rights)	400m
Neighbours works (boundary - without consent)	200m
A water utility bore (unless consent provided)	500m

Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



Additional rules to reduce risks to groundwater from contamination sources

Unless bores are constructed to be isolated from contamination source

- Distances of new bores from edge of plumes.
- Distances from septics.

Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



Amendment provisions

- Allowing for inter-state trading rules to be developed and implemented. This can only occur if and when appropriate administrative arrangements are in place.
- Allowing for modifications to sustainable diversion limits and long-term average annual extraction limits to be modified as a result of better information or change in factors used to set limit.

Proposed changes to the water sharing plan



Access rules

- Rule for groundwater access to provide for survival of permanent plantings when low surface water allocations.
- Feedback from stakeholders is that the provisions as currently written prevent access at critical times.
- Further feedback is sought on how these rules may be amended to improve workability while still achieving the original intent.

Have your say

- Water Resource Plan Public Exhibition period until **23 August 2019**.
- Feedback being sought from the public and water users
- Online submission process on Department of Industry website:
<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/plans-programs/water-resource-plans/drafts/darling-alluvium>
- By email: darling.gw.wrp@dpi.nsw.gov.au