

# Report card for the Fitzroy Falls Water Source

Report card 15 of 64

## Water source context

Water Sharing Plan:	Greater Metropolitan Region Unregulated River Water Sources
Extraction Management Unit:	Shoalhaven River Extraction Management Unit
Area:	2,926.7 ha
Inflowing water source:	Nil
Receiving water source:	Yarrunga Creek Water Source

## River flows

Low-flow index:	2.5 ML/day (80 <sup>th</sup> percentile flow)
Flow records:	Yarrunga Creek at Wildes Meadow gauge (215233)

## Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	36.5 ML/yr
Native title rights:	0 ML/yr

## Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	524.5 ML/yr (10.5 ML/yr domestic and stock licences, 514 ML/yr unregulated river access licences)
Local water utilities entitlement:	0 ML/yr
Major utilities entitlement:	0 ML/yr
Proportion of extraction management unit:	<1%

## Rules

### Managing access licences

Each water access licence has its own share component (volume of the licence) and a water allocation account that acts like a bank account where water is credited or debited.

- Water is credited to an account by an available water determination or if water is traded in (purchased) during the year from other licence holders
- Water is debited from the account when water is extracted or traded out (sold). Total extraction from a work (pump, bore, etc.) will be measured via metering or logbooks.

### Carryover and individual account limits

For a major water utility access licence account – carryover is not permitted.

Domestic and stock and unregulated river access licence accounts - carryover is permitted up to 1 ML per unit share or 100% of share component (where expressed in ML) at the end of each water year.

Domestic and stock and unregulated river access licences - the maximum water account debit in any 3 consecutive water years is the volume of water allocated to the account over those 3 years from available water determinations plus any adjustments made for allocation assignments (trades) or water allocation re-credited into the account.

Table 1. Draft rules for granting access licences

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<p>There are limited purposes for which a new licence will be granted. It is anticipated that most water needs will be sourced from the market. One reason a licence may be granted is for Aboriginal cultural purposes. Other reasons are identified in Clause 10 of the Water Management Act General Regulation 2018.</p>		
Aboriginal cultural access licence	Permitted to a limit of 10 ML/yr.	No change.
Aboriginal community development access licence	Prohibited.	No change.

Table 2. Draft surface water access rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<p>River flow can be viewed on <a href="#">WaterNSW Real-time Data website</a>. Search for a gauge under Rivers and Streams.</p>		
Cease to pump	<p>Cease to pump when no visible flow at the pump site.</p> <p>Cease to pump when flows are in the very low flow class.</p>	No change.

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<b>Flow classes</b>	Very Low Flow Class: ≤0.4 ML/day A Class: >0.4 ML/day	Very Low Flow Class ≤1.3 ML/day A Class >1.3 ML/day
<b>Extraction from an in-river pool</b>	Must cease pumping if the in-river pool is below full capacity.	No change.
<b>Extraction from an authorised in-river dam pool</b>	Rules specified on the water supply work approval for the in-river dam.	No change
<b>Off-river pools (natural pools, lakes or lagoons)</b>	Extraction from natural pools can only occur if the pool is 100% full.	No change.

Table 3. Exemptions from surface water access rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<b>Health and hygiene</b>	For an access licence specified in Schedule 2 of the plan, no more than 20 kl/day for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fruit washing</li> <li>• cleaning of dairy plant and equipment for the purposes of hygiene</li> <li>• poultry watering and misting</li> <li>• cleaning of enclosures used for intensive animal production for the purposes of hygiene.</li> </ul>	Exemption now applies to both fruit and vegetable washing
<b>Domestic use</b>	For domestic consumption under a domestic and stock access licence, up to 1 kl/day.	No change.
<b>Harvestable rights</b>	From a run-off harvesting dam.	No change.
<b>Specific purpose</b>	For an access licence specified in Schedule 2 of the plan.	No change.

Table 4. Draft rules for constructing surface water supply works

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
In-river dams	Prohibited.	No change.
Works near coastal wetlands listed under the <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</i>	No rule in current plan.	Prohibited within 3km upstream of a Ramsar wetland or 200m of a coastal wetland identified on the Coastal Wetlands and Littoral Rainforest Area Map available on the NSW Planning Portal at <a href="http://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au">www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au</a> .

Table 5. Draft water trading (dealing) rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Trading covers conversion of access licence to a new category (for example from unregulated river to aquifer), assignment of rights dealings (trading of a licence), share component dealings between water sources (trading of entitlement between water sources), water allocation dealings (trading an annual allocation) and water supply works dealings (relocation of an extraction point).		
INTO water source	Prohibited.	No change.
WITHIN water source	Permitted.	No change
Surface to ground	Prohibited	No change.
Ground to surface	Prohibited.	No change.
Convert to high flow	Prohibited	No change.

## Key factors for decisions

- Fitzroy Falls Water Source has medium ecological values and high likelihood that water extraction will impact on low flows with an overall high risk to low flows.
- We propose to change the flow class in the Fitzroy Falls Water Source due to the high risk rating. The very low flow class has been increased from 0.4 ML/day (98th percentile) to 1.3 ML/day (90th percentile). Unregulated river licence holders will only be able to take water when flows are above this level, approximately 90% of the time. This change has been proposed to help mitigate risks to the environment.
- The current water sharing plan does not allow trade into the Fitzroy Falls Water Source. It is proposed to retain these rules due to the continuing high risk to low flows in this area. Downstream trade out of the Fitzroy Falls Water Source is allowed and should help reduce the overall risk.

---

## Public exhibition

The Department of Planning and Environment seeks feedback from the public on the suitability of the proposed rules for this water source.

The draft Greater Metropolitan Region Unregulated River Water Sharing Plan and supporting fact sheets are available from the department's [Public Exhibition website](#).