

# Report card for the Maldon Weir Water Source

Report card 38 of 64

## Water source context

Water Sharing Plan:	Greater Metropolitan Region Unregulated River Water Sources
Extraction Management Unit:	Upper Nepean and Upstream Warragamba
Area:	24,128.4 ha
Inflowing water source:	Stonequarry Creek Water Source Upper Nepean Rivers Water Source
Receiving water source:	Mid Nepean River Weirs Water Source

## River flows

Low-flow index:	Dependent on inflows from dam releases and tributaries
Flow records:	Nepean River at Maldon Weir gauge (212208)

## Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	419.8 ML/yr
Native title rights:	0 ML/yr

## Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	669 ML/yr (6.5 ML/yr domestic and stock licences, 662.5 ML/yr unregulated 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, unregulated river and aquifer 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, unregulated river and aquifer 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
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.		
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
River flow can be viewed on <a href="#">WaterNSW Real-time Data website</a> . Search for a gauge under Rivers and Streams.		
Cease to pump	Cease to pump when flows are in the very low flow class.	No change.

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<b>Flow classes</b>	Very low flow class: The volume of water released in the prior 24-hour period from Pheasants Nest Weir), when the volume is greater than zero and the stage of the Maldon Weir is less than the signal stage.	Very low flow class: the sum of volume of water required to be released from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nepean Dam</li> <li>• Avon Dam</li> <li>• Cordeaux Dam</li> </ul> calculated at 8am multiplied by transmission loss.  The flow class will be announced daily through an online system.  Announcing a daily flow class will protect the variable daily environmental releases made from Nepean, Avon and Cordeaux dams allowing them to flow through the water source.
<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

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<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
<b>In-river dams</b>	Prohibited	No change.
<b>Works near coastal wetlands listed under <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</i></b>	No current rule.	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).		
<b>INTO water source</b>	Prohibited	No change
<b>WITHIN water source</b>	Permitted	No change
<b>Surface water to groundwater</b>	Prohibited	No change
<b>Groundwater to surface water</b>	Prohibited	No change
<b>Convert to high flow</b>	Permitted to a total combined limit of 134 ML/day.	Prohibited.

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## Key factors for decisions

- Maldon Weir Water Source has a high ecological value and medium likelihood of extraction from low flows impacting the ecological values, with an overall medium risk to low flows.
- Nepean, Avon and Cordeaux dams make variable daily releases for environmental purposes. The Maldon Weir Water Source is subject to complex access rules used to protect these releases. These rules will be implemented through a system that announces the daily flow class. Licence holders can use the announcement to determine if they can access water.
- Conversion of access licences to high flows will be prohibited as the Maldon Weir Water Source has very high environmental values.
- The current water sharing plan does not allow trade into the Maldon Weir Water Source. It is proposed to retain these rules due to the continuing high risk to low flows in this area. Trade out of the Maldon Weir Water Source is allowed and should help reduce the overall risk.
- This water source is outside of the drainage catchment for Warragamba Dam. Water sources outside this drainage catchment (Maldon's Weir, Maguires Crossing, Stonequarry Creek and Upper Nepean water sources) cannot trade to a water source in the drainage catchment. This will maintain the current level of entitlement within the drainage catchment and protect inflows to Warragamba Dam.

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## 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](#).