

New water sharing rules for active management in the Macquarie Bogan

This fact sheet has information about the new active management rules being introduced in the Macquarie Bogan.

From 1 July 2020, the water sharing plan for unregulated water sources in the Macquarie Bogan will include new rules for active management. Active management will ensure that releases of held environmental water and water from the Macquarie Environmental Water Allowance Sub-Allowance 2 (active) remain in the river to achieve intended environmental outcomes.

Active management changes when and how much licence holders can pump when held environmental water and releases from the Macquarie Environmental Water Allowance Sub-Allowance 2 (active) are present in the river system. It also changes how licence holders find out if, when and how much they can pump during an environmental water release.

Active management rules in the Macquarie apply in the Lower Macquarie River Water Source and Lower Marthaguy Creek management zones. Licence holders in these areas must note that:

- when only held environmental water or water from the Macquarie Environmental Water Allowance Sub-allowance 2 (active) is the only water present in the river, pumping will be **prohibited**
- when water from other sources is also present (such as tributary inflows) daily volumetric limits may apply
- WaterNSW will make announcements to let licence holders know if pumping is prohibited or if daily volumetric limits apply
- licence holders must monitor announcements from WaterNSW.

The new active management rules clarify when pumping is restricted for licence holders. They will also reduce the need for temporary water restrictions to protect environmental flows. You can read more in the [Active management fact sheet](#).

Starting dates for new rules

Although the amended water sharing plans will come into effect from 1 July 2020, the active management rules will start on 1 December 2020.

Licences will be issued with new mandatory conditions that reflect the new rules. Affected licence holders in the Lower Macquarie and Lower Marthaguy Creek must comply with the new rules from the date their new licence and works approval is issued.

Some conditions will stay the same

Some licence conditions will stay the same, including:

- the requirement to enter details about water take (such as dates, duration, volume, supply works approval number and actual take versus permitted take) into log books
- the volume of entitlements
- access rules when held environmental water is **not** present.

Purpose of active management

The Macquarie is an important river system with its own unique environment and wetlands. The NSW Government is committed to protecting the environment and improving river connectivity in the Macquarie.

We need active management because until now, access rules for licence holders in the unregulated rivers have not differentiated between flows from regular tributary inflows and dam releases specifically made to benefit the environment. Without active management, licence holders can pump when flows reach the commence-to-pump threshold, even if part of the flow was released to benefit the environment. This has resulted in held environmental water being extracted before it can benefit the environment as it was meant to.

Parts of a flow protected from extraction

Held environmental water and flows arising from the Macquarie Environmental Water Allowance Sub-allowance 2 (active) will be protected from extraction in the Lower Macquarie River and the Lower Marthaguy Creek Management Zone.

Held environmental water is water that is allocated to a water access licence to achieve environmental outcomes, such as improving the health of river, wetlands and floodplains. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment keeps a public register of water access licences held for environmental purposes. The register is available from the [Environmental Water Hub](#).

The environmental water manager decides when to order a release of held environmental water. In the Macquarie, the intended environmental improvements from held environmental water are documented in an annual environmental water plan, which is available [on the department's website](#). WaterNSW acts on requests by the environmental water managers to deliver held environmental water.

The Macquarie Environmental Water Allowance Sub-allowance 2 (active) is released from Burrendong Dam in the Macquarie and Cudgegong regulated rivers water source. This water is protected in accordance with rules outlined in the Macquarie Bogan unregulated water sharing plan.

Only the portion of flow made up by held environmental water and the Macquarie Environmental Water Allowance Sub-allowance 2 (active) will be protected from extraction.

More information

You can find more information about how to comply with the new rules in our 'How to comply' fact sheets for Gwydir, Macquarie and Barwon-Darling. You can also read our fact sheet, 'How to find out more'. Fact sheets are available on the department's [Environmental Water Hub](#).

Fact sheets in this series

What's new in the Gwydir (fact sheet 1)	What's new in the Macquarie (fact sheet 2)	What's new in the Barwon-Darling (fact sheet 3)
How to comply in the Gwydir (fact sheet 4)	How to comply in the Macquarie (fact sheet 5)	How to comply in the Barwon-Darling (fact sheet 6)
How to find out more (fact sheet 7)	Worked examples (fact sheet 8)	FAQ (fact sheet 9)

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