

# Report card for the Lower Wollondilly River Water Source

Report card 34 of 64

## Water source context

Water Sharing Plan:	Greater Metropolitan Region Unregulated River Water Sources
Extraction Management Unit:	Upper Nepean and Upstream Warragamba
Area:	2,556.5 ha
Inflowing water source:	Upper Wollondilly River Water Source Wingecarribee River Water Source
Receiving water source:	Lake Burragorang Water Source

## River flows

Low-flow index:	6.8 ML/day (80 <sup>th</sup> percentile flow)
Flow records:	Wollondilly River at Golden Valley gauge (212271)

## Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	3146.3 ML/yr
Native title rights:	0 ML/yr

## Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	5,410 ML/yr (299 domestic and stock licences, 511 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 no visible flow at the pump site.  Cease to pump when flows are in the very low flow class.	No change.

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<b>Flow classes</b>	Falling river: Very low flow class: $\leq 3$ ML/day A class: $> 3$ ML/day Rising river: Very low flow class: $\leq 5$ ML/day A class: $> 5$ ML/day	Falling river: Very low flow class: $\leq 4$ ML/day A class: $> 4$ ML/day Rising river: Very low flow class: $\leq 7$ ML/day A class: $> 7$ 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.
Water supply works generally	A water supply work must not be granted or amended in Mares Forest Creek at or above the confluence of Guineacor Creek	No change
Works near coastal wetlands listed under <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</i>	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
<p>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).</p>		
INTO water source	Prohibited	Permitted, from upstream water sources trading to a location downstream of the confluence of the two water sources.
WITHIN water source	Permitted except to Mares Forest Creek at and above the confluence of Guineacor Creek.	No change
Surface water to groundwater	Prohibited	No change
Groundwater to surface water	Prohibited	No change
Convert to high flow	Prohibited	Permitted, to a limit of 418 unit shares.

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## Key factors for decisions

- The Lower Wollondilly River Water Source has very high ecological values and medium likelihood of extraction from low flows impacting the ecological values, with overall high risk to low flows.
- We propose to change the flow class in the Lower Wollondilly River Water Source due to the high risk rating. The very low flow class has been increased from 3 ML/day (88th percentile) to 4 ML/day (85th percentile) on a rising river and from 5 ML/day (83rd percentile) to 7 ML/day (79th percentile) on a falling river. Unregulated river licence holders will only be able to take water when flows are above these levels, approximately 80% of the time. This change has been proposed to help mitigate risks to the environment.
- Conversion of access licences to high flows is being proposed as the Lower Wollondilly River Water Source has low likelihood that extraction is impacting in higher flows and there are no high flow dependant instream values (fish, intermittent opening and closing lakes or lagoon etc.) either in or downstream of this water source. Converting licences to only take from higher flows reduces pressure during lower flow periods
- It is proposed to allow trade into the water source so long as the trade occurs in a downstream direction. For example, the Lower Wollondilly River Water Source can receive water from the Wingecarribee River Water Source so long as it is to a location downstream of the confluence between the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee rivers. This considers the high likelihood in the water source with the downstream movement of entitlement maintaining or improving this metric.

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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](#).