

Report card for the Towamba River Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Source

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Water source context

Water Sharing Plan:	Towamba River Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources
Extraction Management Unit (EMU):	Towamba River Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater
Area:	11.6 km ²
Inflowing water source:	Nil
Receiving water source:	Nil
Groundwater-dependent ecosystems:	Present at the commencement of the plan
Average rainfall:	834 mm/year

Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	18 ML/year
Native title rights:	0 ML/year
Harvestable rights	
estimated 10% rainfall runoff:	Not yet estimated
estimated current uptake:	Not yet estimated

Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	0 ML/year
Total groundwater entitlement:	0 ML/year
Local water utilities entitlement:	0 ML/year
Proportion of EMU:	N/A

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

Carryover is not permitted for aquifer access licences in this water source.

Table 1. Draft rules for granting access licences

Type	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 <i>Water Management Act General Regulation 2018</i>.</p>	
Aboriginal cultural access licence	Allowed up to 10 ML/yr
Aboriginal community development access licence	Allowed to a limit of 140 ML/yr

Note: Additional licence shares may be granted through a controlled allocation process as the current entitlement and basic landholder rights are well below the long-term average-annual extraction limit.

Table 2 Draft alluvial groundwater access rules

Type	Proposed rules
Cease to take	No access rules are proposed for this water source. Coastal floodplain alluvial groundwater is not considered to be highly connected to surface water.

Table 3 Draft rules for groundwater water supply works

Type	Proposed rules
<p>Rules to minimise interference between bores</p>	<p>Water supply works (bores) must not be granted or amended within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 m from a bore that is nominated on an aquifer access licence on another landholding • 200 m from a bore that is used to extract basic landholder rights on another landholding • 100 m from a property boundary (unless negotiated in writing with neighbour) • 500 m from a bore nominating a local or major water utility access licence • 100 m from a government monitoring bore. <p>These distance restrictions do not apply if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bore is used solely for basic landholder rights • the bore is a replacement bore • the bore is used for monitoring, environmental remediation activities or emergency services • the location of the bore at a lesser distance will have no more than minimal detrimental effect on existing extraction.
<p>Rules for bores located near contamination sources</p>	<p>Water supply works (bores) must not be granted or amended within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 m of a contamination source identified within the plan • 250 m from the edge of a plume of a contamination source listed in the plan • 250 m and 500 m from the edge of a plume associated with a contamination source identified within the plan, unless no drawdown of water will occur within 250 m of that plume • 250 m of an onsite sewage disposal system unless the water supply work is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — constructed with cement grout in the borehole annulus to a minimum depth of 20 m from the ground surface — located at a sufficient distance from the on-site sewage disposal system to prevent migration of septic contamination in the aquifer. <p>These distances restrictions do not apply if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the location of the bore is adequate to protect the water source, the environment and public health and safety • the bore is used for the purpose of monitoring, environmental remediation activities or emergency services.

Type	Proposed rules
<p>Rules for bores located near high priority groundwater-dependent ecosystems</p>	<p>Water supply works (bores) must not be granted or amended within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 m of the top of the high bank of a river • 40 m of a first-, second- or third-order stream • 200 m of any high-priority, groundwater-dependent ecosystem • 500 m of a Karst environment • the bed of a third-order or higher stream. <p>These distances restrictions do not apply if the bore is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • used for basic landholder rights • a replacement groundwater work • used for the purpose of monitoring, environmental remediation activities or emergency services. <p>A water supply work approval must not be granted or amended in this water source unless the minister’s opinion is that there will be no more than minimal harm to any wetland mapped under the <i>State Environment Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</i>.</p>
<p>Rules for bores located near potential acid sulfate soils</p>	<p>New bores cannot be in an area classed as having a high probability of the occurrence of acid sulfate soils if there is significant risk of acidification of the water sources.</p>
<p>Rules for bores located near groundwater-dependent, culturally significant sites</p>	<p>Water supply works (bores) must not be granted or amended within 200 m of groundwater-dependent, culturally significant sites.</p> <p>This location distance restriction does not apply if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bore is used solely for a basic landholder right • the bore is a replacement bore • the bore is used for monitoring, environmental remediation activities or emergency services • the location of the bore at a lesser distance will have no more than minimal harm to any groundwater-dependent, culturally significant sites.

Type	Proposed rules
<p>Rules for bores used solely for basic landholder rights</p>	<p>Water supply works (bores) used solely for basic landholder rights must not be granted or amended if the bore is located within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 m of a government monitoring bore • 40 m from the top of the high bank of a river • 100 m of any other high-priority, groundwater-dependent ecosystem • 100 m of a groundwater-dependent, culturally significant area. <p>These location distance restrictions do not apply if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bore is a replacement bore • a lesser distance would result in no more than minimal harm to any high-priority, groundwater-dependent ecosystem • a lesser distance would result in no more than minimal harm to any groundwater-dependent, culturally significant area.
<p>Replacement groundwater works</p>	<p>A replacement water supply work (bore) must be located within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 m of the existing bore • no closer to the river than the bore being replaced if within 40 m of the top of the high bank of the river. <p>The replacement bore must not have a greater internal diameter or excavation footprint than the existing bore, unless the existing bore's internal diameter is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no longer manufactured, in which case it may be no greater than 120 % of the current internal diameter • less than 100 mm, in which case the internal diameter must be no more than 100 mm.

Table 4 Draft water trading (dealing) rules

Type	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>	
<p>INTO water source</p>	<p>Not allowed</p>
<p>WITHIN water source</p>	<p>Allowed</p>
<p>Ground to surface</p>	<p>Not allowed</p>

Key factors for decisions

The Towamba River Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Source is a new water source. It is made up of alluvial groundwater downstream of the mangrove limit. This water was previously excluded from the plan. There are currently no licences in the water source.

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 Towamba River Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan and supporting fact sheets are available from the department's [Public Exhibition website](#).