

# Report card for the Tooma Water Source

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## Water source context

Water sharing plan:	Murray Unregulated River Water Sources 2024
Area:	650 km <sup>2</sup>
Inflowing water sources:	Mannus, Maragle and Tumbarumba
Receiving water source:	Upper Murray River
Approximate average annual rainfall:	1,340 mm

## River flows

Flow records:	1955 to present (68 years) at Tooma River at Pinegrove gauge (401014)
Stream type:	Perennial, gaining

## Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	81 ML/year
Native title rights:	0 ML/year

## Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	7 ML/year (1 licence) for Domestic and Stock access licences 1390 ML/year (16 licences) for Unregulated River access licences
Local water utilities entitlement:	None

## Rules

Table 1. Access rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<b>Tooma River Management Zone</b>		
<b>Cease-to-pump (A Class)</b>	Take is not permitted when flows are less than or equal to 79 ML/day at Tooma River at Pinegrove gauge (401014).	No change
<b>Cease-to-pump (B Class)</b>	Take is not permitted when flows are less than or equal to 297 ML/day at Tooma River at Pinegrove gauge (401014).	No change
<b>Take from in-river pools</b>	Take is not permitted when flows are less than or equal to 79 ML/day at Tooma River at Pinegrove gauge (401014).	No change
<b>Tooma Tributaries Management Zone – the water source apart from Tooma River</b>		
<b>Cease-to-pump</b>	Take is not permitted when there is flow less than full flow through a 200 mm pipe* at the pump site.	No change
<b>Take from in-river pools</b>	Take is not permitted when the in-river pool is below full containment volume.	No change
<b>Both management zones – whole water source</b>		
<b>Take from in-river dam pools</b>	Take is not permitted unless it is consistent with the water supply work approval.	No change
<b>Take from off-river pools</b>	Take is not permitted when the off-river pool is below 80% of full containment volume.	No change
<b>Exemptions</b>	Some exemptions apply to specific access rules for the water source, including for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and hygiene</li> <li>• Domestic use</li> <li>• Take from a run-off harvesting dam</li> <li>• Specific licences listed in Schedule 2 of the plan.</li> </ul>	No change

\* This flow is equivalent to around 0.5 ML/day.

Table 2. Rules for constructing surface water supply works (both management zones)

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
In-river dams	Permitted	No change
Protection for wetlands	n/a	No new or amended works permitted into or within 3 km upstream of a Ramsar wetland. No new or amended works permitted within significant wetlands listed in Schedule 4 of the draft plan unless there will be no more than minimal harm to the wetland concerned. This rule does not apply to replacement works.

Table 1. Trading (dealing) rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
<b>Tooma River Management Zone</b>		
Into management zone	Not permitted from other water sources or the Tooma Tributaries Management Zone, except up to an additional 2,177 unit shares of unregulated river (high flow) access licence	Retain the current rules for unregulated river (high flow) access licences. Additional 202 ML of other unregulated river access licence permitted.
<b>Tooma Tributaries Management Zone</b>		
Into management zone	Not permitted	Additional 10 ML of other unregulated river access licence permitted.
<b>Both management zones</b>		
Within management zone	Permitted, subject to assessment	No change
Interstate trade	Not permitted, unless an unregulated river (high flow) access licence and unless administrative arrangements have been agreed to and implemented by NSW and the other State or Territory.	Removed from the Plan; however, there is no change to intent because the interstate trade rule requiring administrative arrangements to be in place is covered under sections 71U and 71V of the <i>Water Management Act 2000</i> .
Protection for wetlands	n/a	Not permitted into or within 3 km upstream of a Ramsar wetland. Not permitted into significant wetlands listed in Schedule 4 of the draft Plan.

Trading covers:

- conversion of access licence to a new category (for example, from unregulated river to unregulated river (high flow) access licence)
- 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)
- water supply works dealings (relocation of an extraction point).

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## Key factors for decisions

- The risk assessment indicated that flows in the water source are at low risk from extraction and that this water has medium in-stream value.

### Trading

- Limited trade in of high flow licence is permitted but no trades of this kind have taken place since commencement of the original water sharing plan. It is proposed to keep the current rules allowing permanent and temporary trade into the management zones of unregulated river (high flow) access licence, up to an additional limit of 2,177 unit shares in Tooma River Management Zone.
- Trading of unregulated river access licence and domestic and stock access licence is currently only permitted within the management zones. A limited increase in entitlement of 202 ML into the Tooma River Management Zone and 10 ML into the Tooma Tributaries Management Zone is unlikely to impact current instream values and risk from extraction. Trades into the water source may benefit access licence holders by increasing opportunity and flexibility and potentially reduce hydrologic stress in other water sources.

### Improving protection of wetlands

- The NRC have recommended the replacement plan provide better protection for significant wetlands. DPE Water have developed criteria to identify significant wetlands in the plan area. It is proposed to include rules to improve their protection by prohibiting new water supply works and restricting trades into or upstream of these areas. The prohibition of new works will not apply to replacement works.
- Wetlands identified for improved protection were drawn from multiple datasets including the Long-Term Water Plan, Floodplain Management Plan, Ramsar listing, Directory of Important Wetlands of Australia and Endangered Ecological Communities.
- The significant wetlands identified for this plan are listed in schedule 4 of the draft plan.
- More information on improving protection of wetlands is available in the fact sheet.

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## Other key rules – no change proposed

### Managing access licences

Each water access licence has its own share component (volume of the licence) and a water allocation 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 another licence holder.
- Water is debited from the account when water is extracted from a water source or traded out (sold). Total extraction from a work (pump, diversion channel, etc.) will be measured through metering or logbooks.

### Carryover and individual account limits

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

For 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.

### Rules for granting access licences

There are limited purposes for which a new licence will be granted. We anticipate that users who need more water will source it from the market. One reason a licence may be granted is for Aboriginal cultural purposes. Aboriginal Cultural Access Licences are permitted to be granted up to a maximum volume of 10 ML/year per licence, subject to assessment.

Other reasons are identified in Section 10 of the *Water Management (General) Regulation 2018*.

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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. **In particular, we seek your feedback on:**

- **the proposed trade rules**
- **proposed rules to protect significant wetlands including prohibiting new water supply works and trades within or near significant wetlands.**

A submission form is available on the department's website.

To read the draft *Water Sharing Plan for the Murray Unregulated River Water Sources 2024* and supporting fact sheets, please visit the department's [Public Exhibition website](#).