

Report card for the Croppa Creek and Whalan Creek Water Source

Report card 5 of 13

Water source context

Water sharing plan:	NSW Border Rivers Unregulated River Water Sources 2024
Area:	7,683 km ²
Inflowing water source:	
Receiving water source:	NSW Border Rivers Regulated River
Approximate average annual rainfall:	504 mm at Mungindi post office

River flows

Flow records:	2011 to present (12 years) at Whalan at Euraba
Stream type:	Boomi River – non-perennial Whalan Creek - Ephemeral

Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	481 ML/year
Native title rights:	0 ML/year

Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	77.5 ML/year (12 licences) for Domestic and Stock access licences. 15,674 ML/year (22 licences) for Unregulated River access licences
Local water utilities entitlement:	0 ML/year, 0 Local water utility access licences

Rules

Table 1. Access rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Cease-to-pump	Take is not permitted when there is no visible flow at the pump site.	No change
Take from in-river pools	Take is not permitted when the in-river pool is below full containment volume.	No change
Take from in-river dam pools	Take is not permitted unless it is consistent with the water supply work approval.	No change
Take from off-river pools	Take is not permitted when the off-river pool is below full containment volume.	No change
Exemptions	Some exemptions apply to specific access rules for the water source, including for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and hygiene • Domestic use • Take from a run-off harvesting dam • Specific licences listed in Schedule 2 of the plan 	No change

Table 2. Rules for constructing surface water supply works

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
In-river dams	Not permitted in 3 rd order streams and above in this water source.	We have included an exemption for Town Water Supply purposes.
Protection for wetlands	Clause 48 (2) of the current Plan prohibits granting or amending of water supply works within significant wetlands listed in Schedules 5 and 6 the current Plan	<p>No new or amended works permitted within or 3km upstream of a Ramsar wetland.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>This rule does not apply to replacement works.</p> <p>The no minimal harm exemption applies to new significant wetlands listed in Table A of Schedule 4 only.</p>

Table 1. Trading (dealing) rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Into water source	Not permitted	No change
Within water source	Not permitted	No change
Interstate trade	Not permitted unless administrative arrangements have been agreed to and implemented by NSW and Qld.	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	Clause 59 (1) (a) and (b) prohibit trade into or within significant wetlands listed in Schedule 5 of the current Plan	Trades not permitted within or: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 km upstream of a Ramsar wetland. and into <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant wetlands listed in Schedule 4 of the draft Plan

Trading covers:

- 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).

Key factors for decisions

- The risk assessment indicated the Boomi River in the water source is at medium risk from extraction, and both Whalan Creek and Croppa Creek to be of low risk from extraction.
- The risk assessment also identified the Boomi River as having medium-high in-stream values and Whalan Creek and Croppa Creek to be of low in-stream value.
- The proposed changes to rules in this water source also address Natural Resource Commission recommendations to provide better protection for wetlands in the plan area and maintain the ecological character of significant wetlands (including Ramsar wetlands).
- There are no suitable stream flow gauges to link to access rules in this water source.

Improving protection of wetlands

- The draft plan identifies significant wetlands in the plan area. It improves 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.

- Significant wetlands are those wetlands:
 - listed in schedule 4 of the draft plan.
- 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
- More information on improving protection of wetlands is available in the fact sheet.

Town Water Supply

- The current plan prohibits new water supply works approvals in the Croppa Creek and Whalan Creek Water Source.
- It is proposed to include an exemption for in-river dam applications which are for town water supply purposes. This provides an opportunity for inland towns to consider in-river dams as an option to improve security, reliability and resilience of town water supplies. This is consistent with the State Water Strategy priority actions for town water supply.
- It should be noted applications for a new water supply works approval or to amend an existing approval is subject to a stringent assessment process that considers case-by-case the location and impact of the works being applied for. There is no guarantee an application will be approved as this is determined by the assessment process.

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 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 from a water source or traded out (sold). Total extraction from a work (pump, bore, 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 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.

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.

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 rules prohibiting new water supply works and trades within/near significant wetlands to be included in the plan.**

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

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