
From:
Sent:
To: DPE W Regional Water Strategies Mailbox
Subject: Regional water

1. Information on confidentiality and privacy *

I give my permission for my submission to be publicly available on the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment website.

Yes No

I would like my personal details to be kept confidential.

Yes No

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment | Public Exhibition Submission Questionnaire

2. Your details

Do you identify as an Aboriginal person?

- Yes No

Are you an individual or representing an organisation?

- Individual Organisation

3. Organisation or business details

Who do you represent?

- Government:**
 Commonwealth New South Wales State other Local
- Local Water Utility**
- Peak representative organisation:**
 Environment Industry Business group or business chamber Community organisation
- Other**

Family Partnership

4. Draft regional water strategy objectives and vision

The draft Gwydir Regional Water Strategy is one of 13 strategies (12 regional water strategies and a Greater Sydney Water Strategy) being developed by the department. All regional water strategies are being developed in line with the following objectives.

- **Deliver and manage water for local communities**
- Improve water security, water quality and flood management for regional towns and communities.
- **Enable economic prosperity**
- Improve water access reliability for regional industries.
- **Recognise and protect Aboriginal water rights, interests and access to water**
- Including Aboriginal heritage assets.
- **Protect and enhance the environment**
- Improve the health and integrity of environmental systems and assets, including by improving water quality.
- **Affordability**
- Identify least cost policy and infrastructure options.

All draft regional water strategy options need to address at least one of the above objectives. Our vision for this strategy is to have healthy and resilient water resources (that withstand extreme events and adapt to these changes) for a liveable and prosperous Gwydir region.

To achieve this, we need to position the region so there is the right amount of water of the right quality, delivered in the right way to meet the future needs of Aboriginal people, towns, communities, industries and the environment.

Do you support this vision for the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy?

Yes No

If no, please outline your vision for the long term management of water resources in this region?

5. Information and modelling used to develop the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy

The draft Gwydir Regional Water Strategy packages the most up to date information and evidence with all the tools we have – policy, planning, behavioural, regulatory, technology and infrastructure solutions.

We have used the following information to develop the draft Gwydir Regional Water Strategy.

- **New climate data:**
 - Observed historical climate data - recorded rainfall, temperature and evaporation data.
 - Paleoclimate data - scientific reconstructed data using sources such as tree rings.
 - Climate drivers – key drivers of wet and dry periods.
- **Review of existing studies**
 - to identify drivers and risks for water resource management.
- **Community engagement:**
 - Local councils and joint council organisations.
 - Aboriginal peak bodies and Aboriginal community groups.
 - Review of previous water management consultations.

A) Do you have any comments about the information used to develop this strategy?

There has been no consultation with local community or key stakeholders in the farming community

B) Please provide details if there is additional information you think we should consider?

Consideration of farming practices in the area and the impact of adam on the farming community

6. Stochastic modelling method

We used a stochastic modelling method (based on the statistical characteristics of the new climate data) in order to get a dataset covering up to 10,000 years. This enables us to quantify the natural variability and extremes in the region with greater certainty.

A) Do you have any comments about the modelling method used to develop this strategy?

stochastic modelling not necessarily a true model for our region

B) Is there any additional information that you believe could help us assess the benefits and disadvantages of draft options?

option 2 will deliver minimal benefit to the system and is not feasible in terms of stakeholder acceptance or cost.

7. Opportunities and challenges for water management in the Gwydir region

During the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy drafting stage, the following opportunities, risks and challenges were identified.

- **Climate conditions place considerable stress on towns, communities, industries and ecosystems:**
 - Region moves between wet and dry period and droughts will be more frequent.
 - Record low inflows to Copeton Dam.
 - Towns and villages on single supply sources will have future water security challenges.
 - Average annual extraction for some water users could decline.
 - Large on-farm storages experience high evaporation losses.
- **Review how we manage, use and deliver water to meet future challenges:**
 - Use new climate modelling to review water allocations and river operations.
 - Managing floodplain harvesting to protect environmental and cultural assets.
 - Moree is expected to grow over the next 20 years.
 - Water reliability is critical to attract business and jobs.
- **Water is essential for Aboriginal people's health, wellbeing and connection to Country:**
 - Health of waterways impacts the wellbeing of the Traditional Owners and Custodians.
 - Provisions for accessing water for cultural purposes.
 - Improve Aboriginal people's involvement in water management.

- **Protecting critical environmental assets:**
 - Healthy water sources support the region's environment.
 - Water set aside for the environment has helped to maintain the fish community.
 - Management of environmental water in unregulated rivers.
 - Gwydir wetlands are a significant Aboriginal cultural site.
- **Better management of groundwater:**
 - Groundwater sources are critical for towns industries and ecosystems.
 - Declining aquifer levels in some areas.
 - More efficient and equitable use of groundwater.
 - More knowledge is needed about groundwater recharge rates.

A) Do you have any comments on the opportunities, risks and challenges identified?

The proposed model for a new dam is impractical in terms of water security, and cost and frequency of droughts

B) Are there any additional opportunities, risks and challenges that we should consider and what options could address these?

Lack of stakeholder acceptance and likelihood of low cost effective outcomes.

8. Draft Gwydir Regional Water Strategy options

We have developed a long list of options that could be included in the final Gwydir Regional Water Strategy. The options consider the opportunities and challenges facing the region and meet at least one regional water strategy objective.

The 40 options are grouped in different categories, being:

- maintaining and diversifying water supplies.
- protecting and enhancing natural ecosystems.
- supporting water use and delivery efficiency and water conservation.
- strengthening community preparedness for climate extremes.
- improving recognition of Aboriginal people's water rights, interests and access to water.

Only feasible options will be progressed to the final strategy stage – following a rigorous assessment process. We are seeking your feedback to inform the options assessment process.

Improving recognition of Aboriginal people's water rights, interests and access to water

33. Culturally appropriate water knowledge program	37. Regional Aboriginal Water Advisory Committee
34. Water-dependent cultural practices and site identification project	38. Water portfolio project for Aboriginal communities
35. Shared benefit project (environment and cultural outcomes)	39. Co-management investigation of Travelling Stock Reserves
36. Regional Cultural Water Officer employment program	40. Aboriginal cultural water access licence review

A) Which five (5) options do you think are most important?

Please list the option numbers in order of importance with the first option being most important

- Option Number
Option Number
Option Number
Option Number
Option Number

B) Please comment on why you think these options are most important?

We need to manage water storage and usage better

C) Which five (5) options do you think are least important (if any)?

Please list the option numbers in order of least importance with the first option being least important

- Option Number
Option Number
Option Number
Option Number
Option Number

D) Please comment on why you think these options are least important?

option 2 will be very expensive and will only have shallow water storage. It would be hugely detrimental to existing landholders

E) Do you have any comments on the draft options?

9. Option combinations

The option list provided in the draft strategy also identifies potential combinations of options. These combinations recognise that most options require associated works, further assessments and/or legislative, policy and planning changes to ensure they address the risks and challenges identified in the Gwydir region and do not have unintended impacts.

A) Do you have any thoughts on how the options could be combined with other options?

B) Are there additional options that we should consider?

There should be consideration of loss of homes and farmlands in the proposed dam area.

10. Other comments

Do you have any other comments about the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy?

Most important to consult with stakeholders and better assess cost efficiency.

11. How did you hear about the public exhibition of this strategy?

We are interested to know how you heard about the opportunity to make a submission. Please indicate the communication methods below:

- Newspaper
- Radio
- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment website
- Direct email
- Social media
- Have your say NSW Government website
- Communication from peak body
- Other

A neighbour


12. Additional information and submission process

If you would like to provide any supporting documents to help us understand your view, please either, email these from the same email you provided in this form, or attach supporting documents to this form if you are returning your submission by mail.

All submissions on the draft Gwydir Regional Water Strategy will be reviewed following the public exhibition period. Further targeted engagement will be undertaken along with the final phase of stakeholder engagement later in the year to review the final documents.

 Please email your completed submission and supporting documents to regionalwater.strategies@dpi.nsw.gov.au

 or post to Regional Water Strategies, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124 by 13 November, 2020.

 Further details on all regional water strategies can be found on our website <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/regional-water-strategies>

Thank you for your submission.

Sent from my iPhone