

Report card for the Mid Lachlan Unregulated Water Source

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Water source context

Water Sharing Plan:	Lachlan Unregulated River Water Sources 2025
Area:	3,068 km ²
Inflowing water source:	Humbug Creek, Bogandillon and Manna Creeks, Mt Hope Area, Gunningbland and Yarrabandi, Goobang Billabong Creeks, Naradhan Area and Lachlan Regulated River Water Sources
Receiving water source:	Lachlan Regulated River Water Sources

River flows

Flow records:	2005 to present Booberoi Creek at the Return (Canons Bridge) (412192)
Stream type:	Non-perennial

Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	144 ML/year
Native title rights estimate:	Ngemba, Ngiyampaa, Wangaaypuwan and Wayilwan People (Native Title Tribunal reference NCD2024/002)

Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	12,821 ML/year (15 licences)
Local water utilities entitlement:	5 ML/year (1 licence)
Unregulated River:	12,765 ML/year (7 licences)
Domestic and Stock:	51 ML/year (7 licences)

Table 1. Access rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Cease to take (excluding Booberoi Creek)	Take is not permitted when there is no visible flow at the pump site.	No change

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Cease to take (for Booberoi Creek)	Take is not permitted when: - the flow is less than or equal to 3 ML/day at Booberoi Creek at the Return (Canons Bridge) (412192) - there is no visible flow at the point where the water is to be taken. The Minister may not permit pumping unless the following requirements are met: - the licence holder has written to the Minister requesting access - replenishment flows have been provided for in the Water Sharing Plan for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source 2016 (the Lachlan Regulated plan) - a visible flow is being maintained in the Lachlan River at Geramy - all orders in the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source, downstream of the Booberoi Creek off-take, have been met - Lake Cargelligo and Lake Brewster are at full capacity - daily environmental releases are not being made from Wyangala Dam - releases are not being made from the environmental contingency allowance held in Wyangala Dam or the water quality allowance.	No change
Take from in-river pools excluding those within Booberoi Creek	Take is not permitted when the in-river pool is less than full capacity.	No change
Take from in-river pools within Booberoi Creek	Take is not permitted when the in-river pool is less than full capacity.	Comply with the gauge-based access rule AND Take is not permitted when the in-river pool is below full capacity

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
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 less than full capacity.	No change
Exemptions	Some exemptions apply to specific access rules for the water source, including for: • 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	Permitted in third or higher order streams in this water source.	Not permitted. The construction of in-river dams will be prohibited to protect high instream values. An exemption for applications for town water supply purposes has been included.
Protection for wetlands	N/A	No new or amended works permitted within or 3km upstream of a Ramsar wetland. No new or amended works permitted within wetlands indicated on the WSP Prescribed Wetlands Map unless there will be no more than minimal harm to the wetland concerned. This rule does not apply to replacement works.

Table 3. Water trading (dealing) rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
INTO water source	Not permitted	No change
WITHIN water source	Permitted, subject to assessment, excluding onto Booberoi Creek.	No change

Protection for wetlands	N/A	Not permitted into or within 3 km upstream of a Ramsar wetland. Not permitted into WSP Prescribed Wetlands identified in the WSP Prescribed Wetlands Map of the draft plan. Trade between licences within the same WSP Prescribed Wetland is permitted.
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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 indicates that the water source has high in-stream value. The identified possible risk from extraction is low for zero flow periods and medium for base-flows and low flows. Based on this information access rules were considered appropriate for the water source.

Improving protection of wetlands

- The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) have recommended the replacement plan provide better protection for important wetlands. The department has developed criteria to identify specific wetlands in the water sharing 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 on 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, Endangered Ecological Communities and any existing list in the current 2012 water sharing plan.
- A map of the WSP Prescribed Wetlands identified for this draft plan is available on the department's website.
- More information on improving the protection of wetlands is available in a fact sheet.

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

Unregulated river access licences

For 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.

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.

Domestic and stock and Local Water Utility licences

For domestic and stock and local water utility access licence accounts, carryover of water remaining in an account is not permitted.

The maximum water account debit in a given water year is:

- the volume of water allocated to the account that year 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 seeks feedback from the public on the suitability of the proposed rules for this water source.

In particular, we seek your feedback on:

- **proposed rules to protect WSP Prescribed Wetlands including prohibiting new water supply works and trades within or near WSP prescribed wetlands**
- **proposed changes to rules for constructing surface water supply works – In-river dams**

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

To read the draft *Water Sharing Plan for the Lachlan Unregulated River Water Sources 2025* and supporting fact sheets, please visit the department's [Public Exhibition website](#).