

Report card for the Lake Forbes and Back Yamma Creek Water Source

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Water source context

Water Sharing Plan:	Lachlan Unregulated River Water Sources 2025
Area:	1,611 km ²
Inflowing water source:	Goobang and Billabong Creeks, Bogandillon and Manna Creeks, Ooma Creeks and Tributaries, Goonigal and Kangarooby Creeks, Mandagery Creek and Lachlan Regulated River water sources
Receiving water source:	Lachlan Regulated River and Mid-Lachlan Unregulated water sources.

River flows

Flow records:	None for this water source
Stream type:	Non-perennial

Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	190 ML/year
Native title rights estimate:	Nil at commencement of plan

Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	170 ML/year	(4 licences)
Unregulated River:	170 ML/year	(4 licences)

Table 1. Access rules

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Cease to take	Take is not permitted when there is no visible flow at the pump site.	No change
Cease to take for Lake Forbes	Take is not permitted when the water level in Lake Forbes is 50% below the Lake's full capacity.	No change
Take from in-river pools	Take is not permitted when the in-river pool is less than full capacity.	No change

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	Not permitted in third or higher order streams in this water source.	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	Limited trade in (up to an additional 26 ML), provided entitlement cap is not exceeded.
WITHIN water source	Permitted, subject to assessment, except onto off-river pools.	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 on 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 indicated the water source has low in-stream values and identified a low risk from extraction to zero flow periods and base/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.

Permit limited trade in

- Limited trade in is being proposed based on 15% of current entitlement or 10 ML, whichever is greater. This is considered a conservative approach for water sources that are not at high risk from extraction.

Drawdown of Lake Forbes

- The NRC recommended considering the suitability of, and to phase out, the drawdown rule for Lake Forbes.

- Current rules allow Lake Forbes to be drawn down to 50% of its full capacity. The department understands that Lake Forbes is managed to an artificial level and primarily used to provide social benefits. We are proposing to retain the 50% drawdown rule at this time.

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**
- **'limited trade in' now permitted into this water source.**

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](#).