

Report card for the Campbells River Water Source

Report card 5 of 30

Water source context

Water Sharing Plan:	Macquarie/Wambuul Bogan Unregulated Rivers Water Sources 2025
Area:	1,076 km ²
Inflowing water source:	None
Receiving water source:	Macquarie River above Burrendong Water Source

River flows

Flow records:	Chifley dam storage gauge (563008)
Stream type:	Non-perennial

Basic landholder rights

Domestic and stock rights estimate:	340 ML/year
Native title rights estimate:	Nil at commencement of plan

Licensed water entitlements

Total surface water entitlement:	2,096 ML/year	(55 licences)
Unregulated River:	2,058 ML/year	(42 licences)
Domestic and Stock:	38 ML/year	(13 licences)

Table 1. Access rules for Campbells River Downstream Management Zone

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Cease to take	Take is not permitted when Chifley Dam is equal to or less than 22% capacity using the Chifley Dam storage gauge (563008).	Take is not permitted when Chifley Dam is equal to or less than 35% capacity using the Chifley Dam storage gauge (563008), or when there is no visible flow at the pump site.
Pumping restrictions	N/A	Take is not permitted when Chifley Dam is equal to or less than 45% capacity using the Chifley Dam storage gauge (563008) unless it is in the 24-hour period starting 18:00 on an even-numbered calendar day
Take from in-river pools	N/A	Take is not permitted when the in-river pool is less than full capacity.

Table 2. Access rules for Campbells River Tributaries Management Zone

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Cease to take	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 less than full capacity.	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 less than full capacity.	No change

Table 3. Access rules for whole water source

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
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 4 of the plan.	No change, however specific licences with exemptions are now listed in Schedule 2 of the plan.

Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
	The exemption for stock watering ceased to apply after year 5 of the 2012 plan.	

Table 4. 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. Exemption for applications for town water supply purposes only.	No change
Protection for wetlands	N/A	No new or amended works permitted within or 3 km upstream of a Ramsar wetland. No new or amended works permitted within wetlands indicated on the WSP Prescribed Wetlands Map 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 5. Water trading (dealing) rules

Management zone	Type	Current rules	Proposed rules
Campbells River Downstream Management Zone	INTO management zone	Permitted from the Macquarie River above Bathurst management zone.	No change
Campbells River Tributaries	INTO management zone	Not permitted	No change
Whole water source	WITHIN management zones	Permitted, subject to assessment	No change
Whole water source	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. Trade between licences within the same WSP prescribed wetland is permitted.

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 medium instream values and identified a high risk from extraction for zero flows and base/low flows.

Access rules

- The 2017-2020 drought placed pressure on town water supplies in the Bathurst region. River flows dropped significantly over this time and reliance on Chifley Dam became more critical to support Bathurst town water needs as well as the needs of downstream irrigators.
- As the drought progressed, higher levels of water restrictions on town water were implemented to reduce demand. This included level 3 restrictions at 57%. level 4 at 45% and level 5 at 30% dam capacity.

- In November 2019 dam storage dropped to 43% capacity which at the time was the lowest the dam had ever reached. In response the Minister for Water announced temporary water restrictions which applied to unregulated river access licences in the Fish River downstream of Lake Oberon and those between Chifley Dam and Bathurst.
- It was evident during this drought that the current access rule did not provide adequate security for Bathurst town water supply and should be reviewed.
- The proposed access rule will restrict access when Chifley Dam is equal to or less than 35% capacity, an increase from the current rule which is triggered at 22% capacity. This will apply to the Campbells River Downstream Management Zone and the Macquarie River above Bathurst Management Zone (Macquarie Rive above Burrendong Water Source).
- We are also proposing to introduce pumping restrictions on alternate days when Chifley Dam is equal to or less than 45% capacity. Pumping will only be permitted during the 24 -hour period starting 18:00 on an even-numbered calendar day (i.e. one day on, one day off).
- Pumping restrictions are intended to enable farm operations to continue whilst slowing the rate of dam depletion, provide more security to Bathurst's town water supply and achieve some equity between town residents (who would likely be on restrictions) and irrigators.
- We are seeking information from affected licences about water usage patterns and how the proposed access rules may affect existing irrigation operations. This information will allow us to better understand the potential impacts and help identify ways to mitigate those impacts where possible.
- A new gauge, Campbells River at Bidgeeribbin (42100202), was recently installed in the Campbells River which may enable gauge based access rules at some point in the future. An amendment provision has been included to allow access rules in the Campbells River Downstream Management Zone to be reviewed when there is sufficient flow data at the new gauge.

Improving protection of wetlands

- The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) have recommended the draft plan provide better protection for important wetlands. The department have developed criteria to identify specific 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.
- A map of the WSP prescribed wetlands identified for this plan is available on the department's website.
- More information on improving 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

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 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water seeks feedback from the public on the suitability of the proposed rules for this water source.

In particular, we seek your feedback on:

- **proposed commencement of cease to take and staged restrictions for Campbells River Downstream Management Zone**
- **proposed rules to protect WSP prescribed wetlands.**

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

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