
From:
Sent: FW: 25/2/22 1.03PM CONFIDENTIAL SUBMISSIO NOT;
To: PERSONAL DETAILS CONFIDENTIAL HUNTER
Subject: FW: Submission for the draft remake water sharing plan Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial

From: digital.services=squiz.dpie.nsw.gov.au@squiz.regional.nsw.gov.au
<digital.services=squiz.dpie.nsw.gov.au@squiz.regional.nsw.gov.au> **On Behalf Of**
digital.services@squiz.dpie.nsw.gov.au
Sent: Friday, 25 February 2022 1:03 PM
To: DPIE Hunter Unregulated Water Plan Mailbox <hunterunreg.wsp@dpie.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Submission for the draft remake water sharing plan Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial

Permission

I would like my submission to be treated as confidential? No

I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential? Yes

Your details

Are you making a submission as an individual or on behalf of an organisation? Organisation

Which of the following best describes the kind of stakeholder you are? Irrigator/farmer

If you selected other, please state:

Email address:

Question 1.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 1.2

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 2.1

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?:

Question 2.2

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?:

Question 3.1

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?:

Question 4.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Some farmers rely on their licensed water to keep cattle or crops alive during dry times. Many of the water sources also have a large volume of underground flow. To stop farmers pumping when there is still ample water in the water source would be extremely detrimental to farming operations. This has the potential to lead to long term loss of farm productivity and the potential decimation of the local farming industry. We have seen this occur in other areas where water was unavailable during recent droughts and the eventual result is potential suicide for those involved. Whilst there is some merit in better management of water usage during dry times, many of the proposed measures for these water sources are not defined appropriately. The cease to pump in some cases is applied even through there is ample underground water still in the stream. The Lower Goulburn still had ample water even though the measuring bore was well below the proposed CTP level.

Question 4.2

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 4.3

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?: Similar issues to response for Q 4.1

Question 4.4

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 4.5

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 5.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 6.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 7.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 8.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan? Agree

Question 8.2

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 9.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 10.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 11.1

Comments on any aspect of the draft plan:

Based on feedback in one of the information sessions, it seems that licenses for stock and domestic will be restricted in cease to pump conditions such that they are only allowed 1000L/day for domestic and nil for stock. This is unreasonable as it is often very difficult to sell or relocate stock in dry times. It is imperative that stock water access is maintained. It has the potential to put farmers in the unenviable position of facing prosecution by the likes of RSPCA if they follow the plan rules vs breaching the water sharing plan if they follow stock welfare requirements.

Question 11.2

Upload a submission or any supporting documents:

No file uploaded

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Office use only	Submission number
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How to fill out this form

The department is seeking your comments on the draft replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022

For general background about the draft plan development, proposed changes and the finalisation process please refer to the background and proposed changes documents. For water source specific details including proposed rules, please see the water source report cards.

Key issues and changes have been summarised in this submission form, although comment on all aspects of the water sharing plan is welcome. For water source specific details including rules, please see the water source report cards. More detailed comments are welcomed as attachments.

Send completed submissions to:

Post: WSP Comments for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan,
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 26
Gosford NSW 2250

Email: hunterunreg.wsp@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Note: Submissions close 27 February 2022

Information on privacy and confidentiality

Submissions received by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for the proposed amendments will be considered by the department and the Coastal Water Planning and Policy Working Group to review and inform the draft amendments. The department values your input and accepts that information you provide may be private and personal.

If you would prefer your submission or your personal details to be treated as confidential, please indicate this by ticking the relevant box below.

If you do not make a request for confidentiality, the department may make your submission, including any personal details contained in the submission, available to the public.

Please note that, regardless of a request for confidentiality, the department may be required by law to release copies of submissions to third parties in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

I would like my submission to be treated as confidential	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

How to fill out this form

Name [Redacted]

Postal Address [Redacted]

Telephone [Redacted]

Email address [Redacted]

Stakeholder Group (please indicate which of the following best represents your interest by ticking one box)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Interests	<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Interest	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment Interests
	<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Interests	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Landholder	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Member
	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Govt./ Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	

If your comments refer to a specific water source, which one?

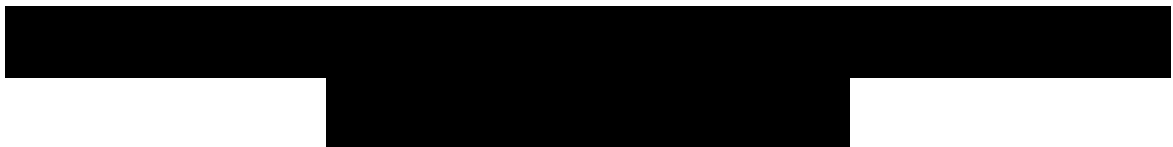
Attach extra pages if required *

* Refer attached 4x extra pages for submission.

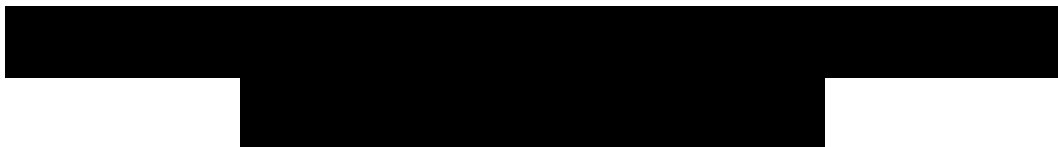
SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

By



And



Public Exhibition

February 2022

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 8 June 2022 3:00 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] 25/2/22 12.23 PM NOT CONFIDENTIAL HUNTER FW: Submission for the draft remake water sharing plan Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial
Attachments: Yancoal Submission - Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Source 2022.pdf

From: digital.services=squiz.dpie.nsw.gov.au@squiz.regional.nsw.gov.au
<digital.services=squiz.dpie.nsw.gov.au@squiz.regional.nsw.gov.au> **On Behalf Of**
digital.services@squiz.dpie.nsw.gov.au
Sent: Friday, 25 February 2022 12:23 PM
To: DPIE Hunter Unregulated Water Plan Mailbox <hunterunreg.wsp@dpie.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Submission for the draft remake water sharing plan Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial

Permission

I would like my submission to be treated as confidential? No

I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential? No

Your details

Are you making a submission as an individual or on behalf of an organisation? Organisation

Which of the following best describes the kind of stakeholder you are? Other

If you selected other, please state: Mining

Email address:

Question 1.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 1.2

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 2.1

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?:

Question 2.2

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?:

Question 3.1

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?:

Question 4.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 4.2

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 4.3

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 4.4

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 4.5

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 5.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 6.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 7.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 8.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

DPIEW's overall relaxation of trading rules and creation of larger connected trading zones within the draft replacement WSP is a positive step forward. However, the proposed rules are still restrictive in relation to upstream trade from water sources adjoining the Upper Goulburn. In [REDACTED] opinion, the restriction of upstream trade impacts the ability of the water market to operate in an efficient and effective way and is not consistent with beneficial outcome objective of the WSP. [REDACTED] have not been able to find a rationale for the restriction of upstream trade within the Upper Goulburn in the background documents, fact sheets or the report card for the draft replacement WSP. In terms of plan transparency and decision making, DPIEW has not explained the rationale as to why trade is only permissible downstream when mining operations are

returning significant volumes of treated water, via approved treatment facilities and under current EPLs, to the Upper Goulburn.

Question 8.2

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

In that context, it is [REDACTED] firm view that upstream trades should be permissible in the draft replacement WSP. We note that draft replacement WSP does permit trade, providing the sum of the share components of all access licences in the water source to which the rights are being traded doesn't increase above what exists at the commencement of the Plan. But again this 'no net gain' approach to trade within water sources makes opportunities to trade very limited given the depth of the market and size of the water source.

Question 9.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 10.1

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?:

Question 11.1

Comments on any aspect of the draft plan:

Structuring the draft replacement WSP for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources on the standard coastal unregulated plan template will not improve the water management outcomes for all users including the environment. [REDACTED] encourages DPIEW to take the opportunity to structure the plan to reflect the needs of the Hunter Unregulated users accordingly. DPIEW acknowledges that incidental take cannot be controlled and therefore cannot be subject to access rules, such as "cease to pump" thresholds. This is specifically addressed in Section 60I of the Water Management Act but clauses dealing with this have been removed from the draft replacement WSP. The exclusion of these clauses compromises the management of water under the WSP. It is [REDACTED] firm view that these clauses must be reinstated in the draft replacement WSP

Question 11.2

Upload a submission or any supporting documents:

[REDACTED] Submission - Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Source 2022.pdf, type application/pdf, 158.7 KB

Friday, 25 February 2022

Department of Planning, Industry & Environment – Water

DRAFT REPLACEMENT WATER SHARING PLAN FOR THE HUNTER UNREGULATED AND ALLUVIAL WATER SOURCES 2022

██████████ welcomes the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment – Water’s (DPIEW) draft replacement of the water sharing plan (WSP) for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022. ██████████ understands that DPIEW aim is to improve water sharing provisions and associated water management outcomes within the Hunter Valley.

██████████ owns and operates several coal mines in the Hunter Region. These mines employ approximately 3,700 people directly and support local Hunter communities through a diverse range of economic activity.

Water security is vital to support ██████████ operations and its ability to continue to contribute to the local, state and national economy.

The mining industry is subject to stringent regulation regarding our water use and reporting requirements.

██████████ is committed to best practice mine water management and seeks to minimise its reliance on external raw water supply at its mining operations as far as is reasonable and feasible. ██████████ reports its water use publicly and participates in the NSW Mineral Council’s Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue water accounting and reporting initiative.

██████████ is an active member of the NSW Minerals Council (NSWMC) and supports the submission by the NSWMC (on behalf of its members) on the draft replacement WSP for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022.

██████████ is in agreement with the issues raised in the NSWMC submission and provides the following comments:

1. Water Sharing Plan Structure

The Hunter Valley is unique in terms of water user profile, demand and market structure.

Structuring the draft replacement WSP for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources on the standard coastal unregulated plan template will not improve the water management outcomes for all users including the environment.

██████████ encourages DPIEW to take the opportunity to structure the plan to reflect the needs of the Hunter Unregulated users accordingly.

For example, ██████████ notes that no specific clarification or guidance was provided specific to mining as part of the replacement plan or supporting background information in relation to incidental take.

DPIEW acknowledges that incidental take cannot be controlled and therefore cannot be subject to access rules, such as “cease to pump” thresholds. This is specifically addressed in Section 60I of the Water Management Act but clauses dealing with this have been removed from the draft replacement WSP.

The exclusion of these clauses compromises the management of water under the WSP. It is ██████████ firm view that these clauses must be reinstated in the draft replacement WSP.

2. Trading/Dealing Rules

DPIEW’s overall relaxation of trading rules and creation of larger connected trading zones within the draft replacement WSP is a positive step forward.

However, the proposed rules are still restrictive in relation to upstream trade from water sources adjoining the Upper Goulburn. In [REDACTED] opinion, the restriction of upstream trade impacts the ability of the water market to operate in an efficient and effective way and is not consistent with beneficial outcome objective of the WSP.

[REDACTED] have not been able to find a rationale for the restriction of upstream trade within the Upper Goulburn in the background documents, fact sheets or the report card for the draft replacement WSP. In terms of plan transparency and decision making, DPIEW has not explained the rationale as to why trade is only permissible downstream when mining operations are returning significant volumes of treated water, via approved treatment facilities and under current EPLs, to the Upper Goulburn and the water market in the Upper Goulburn is significantly limited in terms of depth.

In that context, it is [REDACTED] firm view that upstream trades should be permissible in the draft replacement WSP.

We note that draft replacement WSP does permit trade, providing the sum of the share components of all access licences in the water source to which the rights are being traded doesn't increase above what exists at the commencement of the Plan. But again this 'no net gain' approach to trade within water sources makes opportunities to trade very limited given the depth of the market and size of the water source.

3. Water Markets and the Requirements for Mining Companies

[REDACTED] believes the water market will not function as intended in the draft replacement WSP, if mining operations are required to continue to secure licences to account for the "maximum predicted take". This requirement results in an inefficient use of the resource because multiple companies are required to hold allocations for peak take that occur at different times in the same water source. Mines are in competition with each other and are not commercially incentivised to trade with each other.

Rather than requiring mines to hold entitlements equal to the maximum predicted peak take, [REDACTED] suggests that permanent licenses only be required to be held for a percentage (e.g. 50%) of the maximum predicted take over the life of the operation. Surplus entitlement could then be held by government in a similar way to how surrendered licenses are managed, and annual shortfalls could be procured on a year by year basis as a temporary trade. The onus would still be on each operation to account for take but it would be on a year by year basis rather than acquiring the full entitlement for the life of the project.

This approach would free up year-by-year temporary trade as the plan intends and facilitate a more efficient market within the sustainability and systems constraints of the water source as per the plan objectives. It would also create another revenue stream for government which could be invested into better water management outcomes within the water source.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Office use only

Submission number

How to fill out this form

The department is seeking your comments on the draft replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022.

For general background about the draft plan development, proposed changes and the finalisation process please refer to the background and proposed changes documents. For water source specific details including proposed rules, please see the water source report cards.

Key issues and changes have been summarised in this submission form, although comment on all aspects of the water sharing plan is welcome. For water source specific details including rules, please see the water source report cards. More detailed comments are welcomed as attachments.

Send completed submissions to:

Post: WSP Comments for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan,
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 26
Gosford NSW 2250

Email: hunterunreg.wsp@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Note: Submissions close 27 February 2022

Information on privacy and confidentiality

Submissions received by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for the proposed amendments will be considered by the department and the Coastal Water Planning and Policy Working Group to review and inform the draft amendments. The department values your input and accepts that information you provide may be private and personal.

If you would prefer your submission or your personal details to be treated as confidential, please indicate this by ticking the relevant box below.

If you do not make a request for confidentiality, the department may make your submission, including any personal details contained in the submission, available to the public.

Please note that, regardless of a request for confidentiality, the department may be required by law to release copies of submissions to third parties in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

I would like my submission to be treated as confidential

Yes

No

I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential

Yes

No

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

How to fill out this form

Name	[REDACTED]		
Postal Address	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]		
Telephone	[REDACTED]		
Email address	[REDACTED]		
Stakeholder Group (please indicate which of the following best represents your interest by ticking one box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Local Govt./ Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Interest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Landholder <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member
If your comments refer to a specific water source, which one?	Paterson River Tidal Pool		

Attach extra pages if required

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

New Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Water Sources

The draft plan proposes to establish the Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater and the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater water sources. The long-term limits on extractions are proposed based on a proportion of recharge. Additional water for licensed take may be made available through controlled allocations in the future.

Further details relating to this change can be found in Part 1 of the draft plan, the background document as well as the report cards for the Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Water Source and the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Water Source.

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?

Long Term Average Annual Extraction Limit

The replacement plan creates two long term average annual extraction limits (LTAAELs).

- The Standard LTAAEL which sets a limit on extraction from all flows except for higher flows.
- The Higher flow LTAAEL that manages extractions that can only take from higher flows.

The reason for the two extraction limits is to limit extractions from all other flows and encourage extraction from higher flows.

The Standard LTAAEL includes all basic landholder rights extraction including from harvestable rights dams. If there is a growth in uptake of harvestable rights that increases total annual extraction to above the Standard LTAAEL by more than 5% then there will be reduced water allocated to licenced water users in the following year.

Further details relating to this change can be found in Part 4 of the draft plan, and the background document.

Do you think it is appropriate to have two LTAAEL's? Why / why not?

Do you think the proposed compliance of the LTAAELs are appropriate? Why / why not?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Managing the risks of increased harvestable rights

In 2022 the volume of water that can be captured in harvestable rights dams in coastal draining catchments will increase from 10% to 30% of rainfall runoff.

This could impact on the volume of flow that reaches rivers. The plan includes a requirement that the uptake of harvestable rights will be assessed at year 3 and then access, work approval and trade rules will be reviewed if the uptake is greater than 10% of rainfall runoff.

The amendment provision can be found in Part 11 of the draft Plan.

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?

Draft access rules based on groundwater levels

The draft plan proposes to establish access rules based on groundwater levels in Baerami Creek, Bylong River, Lower Goulburn River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Martindale Creek, and Widden Brook water sources and the Upper Middle Dart Brook, Lower Middle Brook and Kingdon Ponds, and Lower Dart Brook management zones of Dart Brook Water Source, and the Segenhoe Management Zone of the Pages River Water Source. The access rule define when a Cease to Pump (CtP) event would be triggered.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and "Proposed Management Rules" section of the relevant report cards.

How does the proposed **CtP** level in your water source impact on your current operations?

Do you think the **CtP** in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?

Do you think the **CtP** provides enough protection for ecological values such as Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem?

The **flow reference point** is the bore at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft access rules in the Hunter River Tidal Pool, Paterson River Tidal Pool and Wallis Creek Tidal Pool water sources

The draft plan proposes to establish access rules in Hunter River Tidal Pool, Paterson River Tidal Pool and Wallis Creek Tidal sources based on salinity levels at Green Rocks. The access rules define when a Cease to Pump (CtP) event would be triggered.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and "Proposed Management Rules" section of the relevant report cards.

<p>How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?</p>	<p>Our [REDACTED] Operation will be unable to maintain regular supply and become unviable.</p>
<p>Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?</p>	<p>As we only require Irrigation in dry times the CtP concept is totally impractical.</p>
<p>Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for low flows and ecological values? Why / why not?</p>	<p>The environment in the Tidal Pool has been irrevocably changed since the construction of Lostock Dam. The Ctp concept of what is of higher ecological value doesn't align with the natural environment that existed for millennia in these rivers. Prior to the construction of the Lostock Dam the rivers became dry in dry periods and the salinity fluctuated naturally. The protection of the ecology by controlling the low flows is incongruent with the natural state of these rivers.</p>
<p>The flow reference point is the point at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?</p>	<p>The concept is totally misconceived on any site and should be abandoned as a concept.</p>

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft changes to access rules in surface water sources and management zones

Changes to access rules are being proposed in: Black Creek, Halls Creek, Upper Goulburn River, Merriwa River, Pages River, Upper Wollombi Brook, Paterson/Allyn Rivers and Upper Hunter River water sources and in the Upper Dart Brook Management Zone of the Dart Brook Water Source.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and "Proposed Management Rules" section of the relevant report cards.

How does the proposed **CtP** level in your water source impact on your current operations?

Do you think the **CtP** in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?

Do you think the **CtP** provides enough protection for ecological values and low flows? Why / why not?

The **flow reference point** is the location at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft changes to access rules in the Isis River Water Source

The draft plan proposes to establish a new Upper Isis River Management Zone which will have new access rules.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and "Proposed Management Rules" section of the Isis River Water Source report card.

How does the proposed **CtP** level in your water source impact on your current operations?

Do you think the **CtP** in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?

Do you think the **CtP** provides enough protection for ecological values and low flows?

The **flow reference point** is the location at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft changes to access rules in the Williams River Water Source

The draft plan proposes to establish a new Upper Williams River Management Zone which will have new access rules and also proposes slight changes to the access rules in the Williams River Management Zone.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and "Proposed Management Rules" section of the Williams River Water Source report card.

How does the proposed **CtP** level in your water source impact on your current operations?

Do you think the **CtP** in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?

Do you think the **CtP** provides enough protection for ecological values and low flows

The **flow reference point** is the location at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?

Prohibition of in-river dams in additional water sources

The draft plan proposes prohibition of in-river dams on third order and larger streams in the following water sources: Williams River, Wallis Creek, Lower Wollombi Brook, Widden Brook, South Lake Macquarie and Munmurra River. These restrictions were not previously in place for these water sources, however the water sources were identified as having high ecological values

The following water sources will continue to prohibit new in-river dams on third order or larger streams: Dora Creek, Glennies, Upper Paterson, Merriwa River, Newcastle, Paterson/Allyn Rivers, Rouchel Brook, Upper Goulburn River, Upper Hunter River, Upper Wollombi Brook.

This section refers to Part 7 of the draft plan as well as in the relevant report cards.

How would this impact on your current operations?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

New restrictions for new or replacement water supply works near SEPP wetlands

Works such as pumps, pipes, bores and weirs used for extracting water under licence require a water supply works approval. Rules controlling the granting of water supply works approvals or the nomination of water supply works are included in the Plan to minimise impacts on existing extraction and sensitive areas.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018 (Coastal SEPP) identifies wetlands in order to protect their ecological values. There is a need for water sharing plans to recognise these same wetlands to ensure protection and alignment between regulatory objectives. The draft plan proposes to prohibit the granting of approvals for surface water or groundwater works if it would result in more than minimal harm to a wetland mapped under the Coastal SEPP.

Coastal wetlands have been identified in the Dora Creek, Newcastle, North Lake Macquarie, South Lake Macquarie, Williams River, Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater and Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater water sources.

This section refers to Part 7 of the draft plan

Do you think this is appropriate? If not, why?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

New restrictions for new or replacement groundwater water supply works

Works such as pumps, pipes, bores and weirs used for extracting water under licence require a water supply works approval. Rules controlling the granting of water supply works approvals or the nomination of water supply works are included in the Plan to minimise impacts on existing extraction and sensitive areas.

These distance rules are contained in Part 7 of the plan.

The draft plan proposes to expand protection of groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs) and includes a map that identifies potential high priority GDEs for which minimum setback distances may apply.

Do you think this is appropriate? If not, why?

The draft plan proposes rules that require new groundwater works to be greater than 500m from a contamination source and 200m from a culturally significant site.

Do you think this is appropriate? If not, why?

Have you noticed any **effects** from extraction on water levels in the groundwater source? If so, please specify.

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Changes to between water source trade provisions

The draft plan proposes to allow limited trade into some water sources. This change aims to improve the opportunity to trade into downstream water sources without increasing extractive stress to upstream and high-risk freshwater ecosystems that were identified in the risk assessment undertaken as part of the draft plan development process.

The changes would affect the following water sources:

Widden Brook, Wallis Creek, North Lake Macquarie, Lower Goulburn River, Upper Goulburn River, Merriwa River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Doyles Creek, Newcastle, Paterson/Allyn Rivers, Upper Paterson River, Rouchel Brook and Wybong Creek.

The trading rules are contained in Part 8 of the Plan and in the "Proposed Management Rules" section of the report cards.

Do you have any comment on the changes proposed to trade rules between water sources?

Changes to within water source trade provisions

The draft plan proposes to remove some of the trade restrictions within water sources. These changes aim to improve the opportunity to trade without increasing extractive stress to high risk freshwater ecosystems that were identified in the risk assessment undertaken as part of the draft plan development process.

The changes would affect the following water sources:

Rouchel Brook, Upper Goulburn River, Wybong Creek, Pages River, Dart Brook, Muswellbrook, Jerrys, Luskintyre, Newcastle and Black Creek.

The trading rules are contained in Part 8 of the Plan and in the "Proposed Management Rules" section of the report cards.

Do you have any comment on the changes proposed to trade rules between water sources?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Conversion to high flow access licences

It is proposed to allow conversion from a standard access licence to an access licence that can only extract from high flows in the Upper Hunter River Water Source only. If a conversion is to occur the licence share component would increase by 2 times.

The draft plan has removed the ability to convert to high flows in the Pages River, Isis River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Rouchel Brook and Paterson/Allyn Rivers water sources.

Further details relating to this change can be found in Part 8 of the draft plan and background document as well as the report card for the relevant water sources.

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?

Application for Aboriginal Community Development access licences

It is proposed to permit applications for specific purpose Aboriginal Community Development access licences in the Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater, the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater, Dart Brook, Pages River, Rouchel Brook, Upper Goulburn River, Lower Goulburn River, Lower Wollombi Brook, and Upper Hunter River water sources.

Further information can be found in Part 5 of the draft Plan

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?

Additional feedback

The above sections relate to the key proposed changes from the current water sharing plan. However, comments on all aspects of the plan are welcome and encouraged. Please use the space below, or attachments if required or preferred.

Do you have comments on any aspect of the draft plan? Please see attached document.

© State of New South Wales through Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (December 2021). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or the user's independent adviser.

DRAFT WATER SHARING PLAN FOR THE HUNTER UNREGULATED AND ALLUVIAL WATER SOURCES 2022

Submission from [REDACTED]

This submission addresses solely the Paterson River Tidal Pool and the limiting of water availability in dry times. Changes to the use of surplus water at other times is not disputed.

I have owned property supplied from the pool since [REDACTED] and resided at [REDACTED]. In all that time and even earlier I have seen and been involved in Irrigation/Cropping. As a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for many years I have a very good understanding of the adverse commercial impacts the proposed plans will create. Today my Family and I, own and operate a significant [REDACTED] Agricultural Business which is heavily reliant during the dry times on the irrigation opportunity created by Lostock dam and the Tidal pool.

Over such a long time I have become to know many in the farming community and understand the Social, Ecological and Commercial aspects of this broader Region.

While we have in total [REDACTED] used for [REDACTED] in the Region some [REDACTED] are today on the [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] they have large Irrigation licences from the Tidal Pool. At any one time we have [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at Woodville. Our key [REDACTED] product is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which we supply each month to a premium export market. In dryer times it is only possible to finish them with the use of irrigation. We also grow lucerne and make pasture Silage to maintain a year-round supply. While we haven't irrigated in recent times due to the good season the prior 3 years of drought saw almost continuous operation. [REDACTED] is the only part of our enterprise with this drought proofing capability to Irrigate from the tidal Pool in dry times, as such it's unique and it essentially unpins our commercial viability in dry times. Making feed to allow [REDACTED] to continue to be sold and cashflow therefore maintained along with allowing us to maintain our [REDACTED] herd. We have 10 full time employees with 3 each day involved with [REDACTED]. These 3 families live on the farm and in the adjacent Community.

In the [REDACTED] years of my involvement in using the Tidal Pool there has never been a single instance when we did not pump due to water quality i.e. Salinity. This has never resulted in any detriment to the Land/Ecology. Obviously, had the recent drought progressed for longer ultimately a situation where the water was no longer useable would arise, that by natural causes is unavoidable and understandable. The river flats adjacent the Tidal Pool are unique and very productive except, when in flood every few years. If you make them also unproductive in dry times, isn't it obvious that their commercial viability and value will be materially decreased.

The current system operation, credit to the creators of Lostock Dam is serving us well. To impose a restriction in dry times as proposed would be totally counterproductive in all respects and amount to unexpected, deliberate damage to people's commercial enterprises and way of life.

I THEREFORE SEEK THAT THE NSW GOVERNMENT

Abandon any attempt at reducing the amount of water available to Irrigators from the Paterson River Tidal Pool in Dry times. History clearly shows there is no surplus to be diverted in dry times and the limitations being proposed will definitely result in significant wilful economic damage to the existing farming community.

In the event that this reallocation of water in dry times goes ahead the NSW Government should provide significant financial compensation for the damage caused to the farmers/irrigators affected.

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]

22/2/2022

[REDACTED]

HUNTER UNREGULATED & ALLUVIAL WATER SHARING PLAN SUBMISSION
22nd February 2022

In making my submission on the Hunter Unregulated & Alluvial Water Sources Plan. I will firstly advise that I strongly support the stance of [REDACTED] and the Lower Hunter Agricultural Water Users Incorporated against the introduction of the new cease to pump rules.

The so called “salt wedge” in times of low flow periods has always been there however the irrigators have always managed it without the misguided interference of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. The same sentiment applies to my water source, the Allyn River. The Department and the Government seems to be fixated on the singular issue of protecting the environment with no care or consideration whatsoever given to any other third party or enterprise that has had a productive relationship with these rivers for many generations.

This focus on a singular issue ignores the fact that landholders and irrigators are all part of the environment and their needs should not be dismissed and totally excluded by short sighted and unrealistic decisions to literally cut their access to a water supply that their stock and crops need to survive.

If the Government and the Department are sincere in protecting the environment, they should be looking at ways to ensure a reliable water supply for the irrigation community. Lostock Dam was built for the exclusive purpose of providing a reliable irrigation supply for landholders on the Paterson River as the following excerpt from the Water NSW web page explains.

“Why the dam was built

Lostock Dam was built in the early 1970s to provide a reliable supply of water for agriculture in the Paterson Valley following the drought of 1964-66.

Dairying, cattle grazing and vegetables are the main agricultural industries supported by irrigation. Lostock Dam also provides water for town supplies, industry, domestic and stock use along the Paterson River, as well as environmental flows.”

<https://www.waternsw.com.au/supply/visit/lostock-dam>

Lostock Dam is a prime example of a proactive and successful approach to sustainable agriculture in the Hunter. Instead of protecting and embracing these successful and efficient methods of water management that have been proven to sustain the agricultural community through drought conditions, the Department is proposing to embark on a regulatory path that will effectively close down the agricultural activities that Lostock Dam has supported for some 50 years.

Working for a Better Environment

Disclaimer: [REDACTED] make all recommendations, advice and plant supply in good faith. Plants are a product of their surrounding environment & factors that contribute to that environment. Once clients accept delivery of plants, [REDACTED] relinquish all control over that environment & therefore any influence over the plants subsequent growth & production. [REDACTED] gives no warranty, expressed or implied as to the growth or productiveness of plants following receipt by the client, their agents or subcontractors.

During the drought of 2019, when farmers on the Allyn River were forced to sell their stock and watch their crops shrivel and die and the Platypus could be seen rolling in the mud puddles that were left in the river bed as every drop of water dried up, the farmers on the Paterson River continued to irrigate crops and produce milk for the Hunter Valley because Lostock Dam fulfilled its destiny.

The current proposal does not live up to its name of being a “Water Sharing” plan – it is a “Water Taking” plan that proposes that a Government agency be permitted to remove access to a vital resource from one section of the community and hand it over to another section of the community.

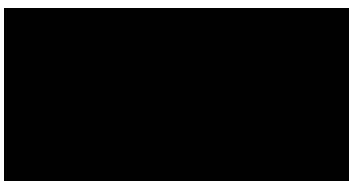
So in summary – in the 1970’s the bureaucrats of the day developed highly successful plans to minimise the impacts of disasters such as drought on the agricultural production areas of the Hunter Valley and 50 years on, the bureaucrats of the current day are intent on dismantling the successful and responsible water management innovations that have resulted in the literal survival of the agricultural industry in this Valley because ????? Well I cannot think of a valid point to finish that sentence.

This one sided mentality has got to stop. The practise of responding to issues with knee-jerk reactions and unbalanced solutions designed to placate and resolve a singular issue has always will led to the “pendulum swinging too far in the opposite direction”. Following the paths outlined in this document will inevitably lead to the failure of agriculture in the Hunter Region and no amount of hindsight in 20 years will return this region to its current level of productivity.

Solutions and improvements are notoriously slow to show results but that should not be an excuse to adopt irresponsible policies that will adversely affect other successful enterprises that have done nothing wrong other than exist successfully in a particular location for many generations.

In my lifetime, I have seen the benefits of the forward thinking that built Lostock Dam – we need to learn from the past and we need to adapt for the future – NOT DESTROY what has been built and proven to work extremely well.

Kind Regards



Working for a Better Environment

Disclaimer: Riverdene Nurseries make all recommendations, advice and plant supply in good faith. Plants are a product of their surrounding environment & factors that contribute to that environment. Once clients accept delivery of plants, Riverdene Nurseries relinquish all control over that environment & therefore any influence over the plants subsequent growth & production. Riverdene nurseries gives no warranty, expressed or implied as to the growth or productiveness of plants following receipt by the client, their agents or subcontractors.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 8 June 2022 2:51 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] 25/2/22 10.29 AM CONFIDENTIALITY NOT SPECIFIED HUNTER FW: Objection to Proposed Cease to Pump - Hunter River Tidal Pool

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 25 February 2022 10:29 AM
To: DPIE Hunter Unregulated Water Plan Mailbox <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Objection to Proposed Cease to Pump - Hunter River Tidal Pool

Ms [REDACTED],

On Friday 11th February I attended a public meeting of irrigators concerned about the proposed introduction of a cease pumping clause in the Draft Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources Plan 2022.

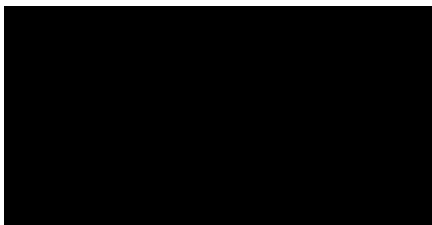
Speakers outlined the expected impacts due to the uncertainty of water availability upon the Paterson Golf Club and various businesses such as dairying, nurseries, horticulture, hay making and turf farms. Tocal Agricultural College would also be affected. The water users allege that if this clause been in place during the summers of 2018 and 2020 they would not have been able to extract water from the river. They claim that their businesses would become unviable.

Irrigators assert that there has been no adverse impact upon Wallis Creek and the Paterson & Hunter Rivers from their traditional activities and that salinity levels have not been too high for irrigation, even during the summers of 2018 and 2020.

The proposed salinity concentration of 4,000EC as measured in the Hunter River at Green Rocks would herald the requirement to cease pumping. This location only measures salinity in the Hunter and not the salinity of the tributaries including 26 KM of the Paterson River.

There is insufficient justification for the proposed cease to pump clause, which despite good intentions, lacks scientific rigor. The 2009 Plan required water quality monitoring but this has not taken place in order to provide the level of information that should be available now. The NSW Government has let the community down. On the one hand you want to support agriculture and on the other hand you would destroy it.

Considering it's far reaching impacts upon the local economy and the many businesses that rely upon irrigation, this cease to pump proposal should not be included until the necessary studies have been completed. [REDACTED]












Thursday, 24th February 2022





Department of Planning, Industry & Environment - Water
Locked Bag 26
Gosford NSW 2250

Att: 

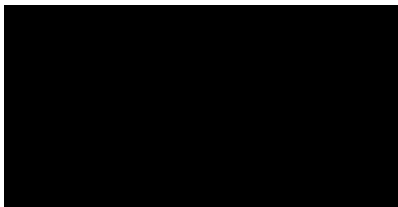
RE: WSP Comments for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan

Kindly see below a summary of key issues raised in our submission:

1. Firstly, allow us to start by confirming that of the three options available, **we find Option 2 to be the most suitable** for the environment as well as sustainable business operations, given our knowledge and experience of the conditions in the  Brook apropos.  has been owned by one family for  years, have been irrigators for a long period of time and have basically conducted the same business during this period. I have been employed for  years at  and have an intimate knowledge of our past irrigation requirements and feel this is the most appropriate option. We would be happy to take Option 3 if the Department saw fit, however we would be unable to work with Option 1 as the Creek traditionally dries up for 2 to 3 months each year, but there is plenty of underground water as evidenced by the graphs provided on ground water bore .
2. **Increase of Harvestable Rights from 10% to 30%:** We require clarity as to whether this increase will be accommodated within the current Long Term Average Extraction Limit (LTAAL). Regardless of where this increase is exercised within the Greater Hunter Extraction Management Unit, there could potentially be a detrimental impact on the amount of water available to license holders in the  Brook. **Given the trade restrictions already in place, this would be unacceptable to users in the  Valley.**
3. **Cease To Pump Rules & Triggers:** Due to the specific nature of CtP triggers and the possible detrimental effects on farms and businesses in the  Valley, we feel that extensive research and consultation is vitally important in determining these levels. Unfortunately, the limited timing means only one bore was used in the data modelling and this lack of information could lead to ineffective and adverse trigger mechanisms. Another important point in this respect is what is deemed to be ground water level, as this measurement differs substantially between the draft proposal and public forums, and we feel that clarity in this matter is essential.

We hereby object to Part 6, Division 3 and 4 of the draft plan. Under the current water sharing plan, the cease to pump rules do not apply to water taken under “Basic Landholder Rights”. However, in the draft plan, there is no specification that these rules apply only to water taken under an access licence. We therefore request that the cease to pump rules apply only to Access Licences in accordance with priorities of the Water Management Act (2000).  currently has 1x 5ML for stock and domestic over the whole of its 7000 acre property and has over 20 dwellings and staff in excess of 50 people. We also run a large volume of  with over  on the property over spring and summer, as well as having in excess of  at any one time. It is obvious our 5ML is insufficient for dwellings, staff and livestock. We would like clarification on this point.





4. **Surplus flow replenishment of livestock watering holes/dams:** Under the current plan, we have been able to replenish these during times of surplus water flow in the [REDACTED] Brook. What is proposed in the future for this activity?
5. **Metering System:** Kindly provide advice on how current 'domestic and stock' water use will be allowed in addition to our licenced allocation under the telemetered pump monitoring system that will come into effect in December 2023, as this is obviously critical given the nature of our business.

We trust that you will take the concerns raised in our submission into consideration when finalising the draft and thank you in advance for what we hope will be a favourable outcome for the [REDACTED] Brook Licence Holders.

We would appreciate a response to our questions in writing and I am available if you would like to discuss any points raised in this submission.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Office use only	Submission number
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How to fill out this form

The department is seeking your comments on the draft replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022.

For general background about the draft plan development, proposed changes and the finalisation process please refer to the background and proposed changes documents. For water source specific details including proposed rules, please see the water source report cards.

Key issues and changes have been summarised in this submission form, although comment on all aspects of the water sharing plan is welcome. For water source specific details including rules, please see the water source report cards. More detailed comments are welcomed as attachments.

Send completed submissions to:

Post: WSP Comments for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan,
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 26
Gosford NSW 2250

Email: hunterunreg.wsp@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Note: Submissions close 27 February 2022

Information on privacy and confidentiality

Submissions received by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for the proposed amendments will be considered by the department and the Coastal Water Planning and Policy Working Group to review and inform the draft amendments. The department values your input and accepts that information you provide may be private and personal.

If you would prefer your submission or your personal details to be treated as confidential, please indicate this by ticking the relevant box below.

If you do not make a request for confidentiality, the department may make your submission, including any personal details contained in the submission, available to the public.

Please note that, regardless of a request for confidentiality, the department may be required by law to release copies of submissions to third parties in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

I would like my submission to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

How to fill out this form			
Name			
Postal Address			
Telephone			
Email address			
Stakeholder Group <small>(please indicate which of the following best represents your interest by ticking one box)</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Local Govt./ Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Interest <input type="checkbox"/> Local Landholder <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member
If your comments refer to a specific water source, which one?			

Attach extra pages if required

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

New Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Water Sources

The draft plan proposes to establish the Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater and the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater water sources. The long-term limits on extractions are proposed based on a proportion of recharge. Additional water for licensed take may be made available through controlled allocations in the future.

Further details relating to this change can be found in Part 1 of the draft plan, the background document as well as the report cards for the Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Water Source and the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Water Source.

Do you have any comments on this aspect of the draft plan?	
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Long Term Average Annual Extraction Limit

The replacement plan creates two long term average annual extraction limits (LTAAELs).

- The Standard LTAAEL which sets a limit on extraction from all flows except for higher flows.
- The Higher flow LTAAEL that manages extractions that can only take from higher flows.

The reason for the two extraction limits is to limit extractions from all other flows and encourage extraction from higher flows.

The Standard LTAAEL includes all basic landholder rights extraction including from harvestable rights dams. If there is a growth in uptake of harvestable rights that increases total annual extraction to above the Standard LTAAEL by more than 5% then there will be reduced water allocated to licenced water users in the following year.

Further details relating to this change can be found in Part 4 of the draft plan, and the background document.

Do you think it is appropriate to have two LTAAEL's? Why / why not?	
---	--

Do you think the proposed compliance of the LTAAELs are appropriate? Why / why not?	
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Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Managing the risks of increased harvestable rights

In 2022 the volume of water that can be captured in harvestable rights dams in coastal draining catchments will increase from 10% to 30% of rainfall runoff.

This could impact on the volume of flow that reaches rivers. The plan includes a requirement that the uptake of harvestable rights will be assessed at year 3 and then access, work approval and trade rules will be reviewed if the uptake is greater than 10% of rainfall runoff.

The amendment provision can be found in Part 11 of the draft Plan.

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?	
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Draft access rules based on groundwater levels

The draft plan proposes to establish access rules based on groundwater levels in Baerami Creek, Bylong River, Lower Goulburn River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Martindale Creek, and Widden Brook water sources and the Upper Middle Dart Brook, Lower Middle Brook and Kingdon Ponds, and Lower Dart Brook management zones of Dart Brook Water Source, and the Segenhoe Management Zone of the Pages River Water Source. The access rule define when a Cease to Pump (CtP) event would be triggered.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and “Proposed Management Rules” section of the relevant report cards.

How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?	
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Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?	
--	--

Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for ecological values such as Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem?	
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The flow reference point is the bore at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?	
--	--

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft access rules in the Hunter River Tidal Pool, Paterson River Tidal Pool and Wallis Creek Tidal Pool water sources

The draft plan proposes to establish access rules in Hunter River Tidal Pool, Paterson River Tidal Pool and Wallis Creek Tidal sources based on salinity levels at Green Rocks. The access rules define when a Cease to Pump (CtP) event would be triggered.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and “Proposed Management Rules” section of the relevant report cards.

How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?	
Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?	
Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for low flows and ecological values? Why / why not?	
The flow reference point is the point at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?	

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft changes to access rules in surface water sources and management zones

Changes to access rules are being proposed in: Black Creek, Halls Creek, Upper Goulburn River, Merriwa River, Pages River, Upper Wollombi Brook, Paterson/Allyn Rivers and Upper Hunter River water sources and in the Upper Dart Brook Management Zone of the Dart Brook Water Source.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and “Proposed Management Rules” section of the relevant report cards.

How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?	
Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?	
Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for ecological values and low flows? Why / why not?	
The flow reference point is the location at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?	

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft changes to access rules in the Isis River Water Source

The draft plan proposes to establish a new Upper Isis River Management Zone which will have new access rules.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and “Proposed Management Rules” section of the Isis River Water Source report card.

How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?	
Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?	
Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for ecological values and low flows?	
The flow reference point is the location at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?	

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft changes to access rules in the Williams River Water Source

The draft plan proposes to establish a new Upper Williams River Management Zone which will have new access rules and also proposes slight changes to the access rules in the Williams River Management Zone.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and “Proposed Management Rules” section of the Williams River Water Source report card.

How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?	
Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?	
Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for ecological values and low flows	
The flow reference point is the location at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?	

Prohibition of in-river dams in additional water sources

The draft plan proposes prohibition of in-river dams on third order and larger streams in the following water sources: Williams River, Wallis Creek, Lower Wollombi Brook, Widden Brook, South Lake Macquarie and Munmurra River. These restrictions were not previously in place for these water sources, however the water sources were identified as having high ecological values

The following water sources will continue to prohibit new in-river dams on third order or larger streams: Dora Creek, Glennies, Upper Paterson, Merriwa River, Newcastle, Paterson/Allyn Rivers, Rouchel Brook, Upper Goulburn River, Upper Hunter River, Upper Wollombi Brook.

This section refers to Part 7 of the draft plan as well as in the relevant report cards.

How would this impact on your current operations?	
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Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

New restrictions for new or replacement water supply works near SEPP wetlands

Works such as pumps, pipes, bores and weirs used for extracting water under licence require a water supply works approval. Rules controlling the granting of water supply works approvals or the nomination of water supply works are included in the Plan to minimise impacts on existing extraction and sensitive areas.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018 (Coastal SEPP) identifies wetlands in order to protect their ecological values. There is a need for water sharing plans to recognise these same wetlands to ensure protection and alignment between regulatory objectives. The draft plan proposes to prohibit the granting of approvals for surface water or groundwater works if it would result in more than minimal harm to a wetland mapped under the Coastal SEPP.

Coastal wetlands have been identified in the Dora Creek, Newcastle, North Lake Macquarie, South Lake Macquarie, Williams River, Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater and Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater water sources.

This section refers to Part 7 of the draft plan

Do you think this is appropriate? If not, why?

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

New restrictions for new or replacement groundwater water supply works

Works such as pumps, pipes, bores and weirs used for extracting water under licence require a water supply works approval. Rules controlling the granting of water supply works approvals or the nomination of water supply works are included in the Plan to minimise impacts on existing extraction and sensitive areas.

These distance rules are contained in Part 7 of the plan.

The draft plan proposes to expand protection of groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs) and includes a map that identifies potential high priority GDEs for which minimum setback distances may apply.

Do you think this is appropriate? If not, why?

The draft plan proposes rules that require new groundwater works to be greater than 500m from a contamination source and 200m from a culturally significant site.

Do you think this is appropriate? If not, why?

Have you noticed any **effects** from extraction on water levels in the groundwater source? If so, please specify.

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Changes to between water source trade provisions

The draft plan proposes to allow limited trade into some water sources. This change aims to improve the opportunity to trade into downstream water sources without increasing extractive stress to upstream and high-risk freshwater ecosystems that were identified in the risk assessment undertaken as part of the draft plan development process.

The changes would affect the following water sources:
Widden Brook, Wallis Creek, North Lake Macquarie, Lower Goulburn River, Upper Goulburn River, Merriwa River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Doyles Creek, Newcastle, Paterson/Allyn Rivers, Upper Paterson River, Rouchel Brook and Wybong Creek.

The trading rules are contained in Part 8 of the Plan and in the “Proposed Management Rules” section of the report cards.

Do you have any comment on the changes proposed to trade rules between water sources?	
---	--

Changes to within water source trade provisions

The draft plan proposes to remove some of the trade restrictions within water sources. These changes aim to improve the opportunity to trade without increasing extractive stress to high risk freshwater ecosystems that were identified in the risk assessment undertaken as part of the draft plan development process.

The changes would affect the following water sources:
Rouchel Brook, Upper Goulburn River, Wybong Creek, Pages River, Dart Brook, Muswellbrook, Jerrys, Luskintyre, Newcastle and Black Creek.

The trading rules are contained in Part 8 of the Plan and in the “Proposed Management Rules” section of the report cards.

Do you have any comment on the changes proposed to trade rules between water sources?	
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Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Conversion to high flow access licences

It is proposed to allow conversion from a standard access licence to an access licence that can only extract from high flows in the Upper Hunter River Water Source only. If a conversion is to occur the licence share component would increase by 2 times.

The draft plan has removed the ability to convert to high flows in the Pages River, Isis River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Rouchel Brook and Paterson/Allyn Rivers water sources.

Further details relating to this change can be found in Part 8 of the draft plan and background document as well as the report card for the relevant water sources.

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?

Application for Aboriginal Community Development access licences

It is proposed to permit applications for specific purpose Aboriginal Community Development access licences in the Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater, the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater, Dart Brook, Pages River, Rouchel Brook, Upper Goulburn River, Lower Goulburn River, Lower Wollombi Brook, and Upper Hunter River water sources.

Further information can be found in Part 5 of the draft Plan

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?

Additional feedback

The above sections relate to the key proposed changes from the current water sharing plan. However, comments on all aspects of the plan are welcome and encouraged. Please use the space below, or attachments if required or preferred.

Do you have comments on any aspect of the draft plan?

© State of New South Wales through Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (December 2021). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or the user's independent adviser.

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Office use only

Submission number

How to fill out this form

The department is seeking your comments on the draft replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022.

For general background about the draft plan development, proposed changes and the finalisation process please refer to the background and proposed changes documents. For water source specific details including proposed rules, please see the water source report cards.

Key issues and changes have been summarised in this submission form, although comment on all aspects of the water sharing plan is welcome. For water source specific details including rules, please see the water source report cards. More detailed comments are welcomed as attachments.

Send completed submissions to:

Post: WSP Comments for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan,
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 26
Gosford NSW 2250

Email: hunterunreg.wsp@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Note: Submissions close 27 February 2022

Information on privacy and confidentiality

Submissions received by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for the proposed amendments will be considered by the department and the Coastal Water Planning and Policy Working Group to review and inform the draft amendments. The department values your input and accepts that information you provide may be private and personal.

If you would prefer your submission or your personal details to be treated as confidential, please indicate this by ticking the relevant box below.

If you do not make a request for confidentiality, the department may make your submission, including any personal details contained in the submission, available to the public.

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I would like my submission to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

How to fill out this form

Name

[Redacted]

Postal Address

[Redacted]

Martindale 2328

Telephone

[Redacted]

Email address

[Redacted]

Stakeholder Group

(please indicate which of the following best represents your interest by **ticking one box**)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Interests | <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Interest | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Interests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Interests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Landholder | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Govt./ Utilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) | |

If your comments refer to a specific water source, which one?

Martindale Creek

Attach extra pages if required

Submission for the water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water

I [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Martindale wish to strongly object to the WSP Cease to Pump on The Martindale Creek.

Measuring water depth with one monitoring bore at the Martindale Homestead to me demonstrates the lack of knowledge by the Department Planner to how the Martindale aquifers work.

During the millennium 2006 drought the water levels in the Martindale Creek varied quite considerably.

In our section of the creek approximately 1 km we have natural rock wears and clay bands which hold the water back and the clay banks hold water up in places and down in others.

If this CTP comes in this to me is ludicrous stopping farmers from making a living and carrying stock through the worst of a drought.

Stress and anxiety and depression loads are bad in a drought. This sort of nonsense is going to make these situations a lot worse.

I invite the people from the Department to visit Martindale meet the farmers and see what we have been doing to drought proof ourselves. New Haysheds to store hay which is grown on our farm. Investing in travelling irrigators so we can irrigate of a night so there is no evaporation etc.

I was bought up to believe if you take something from somebody you need to compensate them. I do not want this CTP to come into affect but if it does I will demand Compensation.

What would happen to the CTP if we had a natural occurrence such as a earthquake or more so a industry come to our area and water levels dropped out of character with Martindale Creek history.ie a very good supply of water in good and bad times.

We would be silenced with this CTP in place wouldn't we?

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Office use only

Submission number

How to fill out this form

The department is seeking your comments on the draft replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022.

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I would like my submission to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

How to fill out this form	
Name	[REDACTED]
Postal Address	[REDACTED]
Telephone	[REDACTED]
Email address	[REDACTED]
Stakeholder Group (please indicate which of the following best represents your interest by ticking one box)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Interests <input type="checkbox"/> Local Govt./ Utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Interest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Landholder <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Interests <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Member
If your comments refer to a specific water source, which one?	HUNTER RIVER

Attach extra pages if required

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Draft access rules in the Hunter River Tidal Pool, Paterson River Tidal Pool and Wallis Creek Tidal Pool water sources

The draft plan proposes to establish access rules in Hunter River Tidal Pool, Paterson River Tidal Pool and Wallis Creek Tidal sources based on salinity levels at Green Rocks. The access rules define when a Cease to Pump (CtP) event would be triggered.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and "Proposed Management Rules" section of the relevant report cards.

<p>How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?</p>	<p>THIS WOULD SHUT OUR FARM DOWN</p>
<p>Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?</p>	<p>NO. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT REALISTIC SALINITY LEVELS + WOULD END OUR FARM.</p>
<p>Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for low flows and ecological values? Why / why not?</p>	<p>WHAT DOES THIS MEAN. YOU HAVE PROVIDED <u>NO</u> DATA TO PROVE WHAT LEVELS ARE A PROBLEM + WHAT AREN'T</p>
<p>The flow reference point is the point at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?</p>	<p>NO CEASE TO PUMP ANYWHERE ADDRESS THE SALINITY PROBLEMS CREATED BY THE BIG IRRIGATORS, NOT THE SMALL FARMS THAT TAKE ONLY 3%</p>

Objection to "Cease to Pump" rule

We totally object to the "Cease to Pump" rule, and demand that it be abandoned in any form.

This rule will close down our [REDACTED] Farm if implemented.

Our [REDACTED] farm has operated successfully, supplying local customers, for over 20 years. Irrigation needs to be available for growth, but also to harvest the [REDACTED] as the correct moisture content is needed, and to irrigate in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at the correct times. We only irrigate when absolutely necessary as it is expensive. We monitor salt levels constantly and only irrigate at salt levels that are safe for the [REDACTED].

Without irrigation the [REDACTED] farm will be economically UNVIABLE. This will result in the LOSS OF 4 DIRECT JOBS and many more indirect (irrigation, chemical, fuel supplies).

The farm contributes to the general rural greenness and ambience of the Morpeth area that will also be lost.

The Department has provided no scientific monitoring and data collection to support the assumption of environmental impact to the river at the proposed salinity levels. How were these cut offs even arrived at? Yet our farm is being destroyed based on arbitrary, unproven salt levels. We small 'Mum and Dad" farmers use 3% of the irrigation water from the river, but are being forced to accept 100% of the punishment for alleged salinity levels. We aren't the ones creating the salinity, if indeed it is even an issue. The Department has not even explored other possible solutions to this alleged problem.

Based on the salinity levels recorded over the last 5 years, if this rule is introduced we would have been unable to irrigate on over 100 days each year, making the [REDACTED] farm completely unviable, and the turf dying.

SAVE OUR FARMS - NO "CEASE TO PUMP" RULE.

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Office use only	Submission number
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How to fill out this form

The department is seeking your comments on the draft replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022.

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I would like my submission to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
I would like my personal details to be treated as confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

How to fill out this form

Name

Postal Address

Telephone

Email address

Stakeholder Group

(please indicate which of the following best represents your interest by ticking one box)

Irrigation Interests

Fishing Interests

Local Govt./ Utilities

Aboriginal Interest

Local Landholder

Other (specify)

Environment Interests

Community Member

If your comments refer to a specific water source, which one?

Martindale Creek

Attach extra pages if required

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Managing the risks of increased harvestable rights

In 2022 the volume of water that can be captured in harvestable rights dams in coastal draining catchments will increase from 10% to 30% of rainfall runoff.

This could impact on the volume of flow that reaches rivers. The plan includes a requirement that the uptake of harvestable rights will be assessed at year 3 and then access, work approval and trade rules will be reviewed if the uptake is greater than 10% of rainfall runoff.

The amendment provision can be found in Part 11 of the draft Plan.

<p>Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?</p>	<p>It is much better than 10%.The amount of water that flows down all the creeks and rivers in times of heavy rainfall is a total waste of water.There should be more dams.</p>
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Draft access rules based on groundwater levels

The draft plan proposes to establish access rules based on groundwater levels in Baerami Creek, Bylong River, Lower Goulburn River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Martindale Creek, and Widden Brook water sources and the Upper Middle Dart Brook, Lower Middle Brook and Kingdon Ponds, and Lower Dart Brook management zones of Dart Brook Water Source, and the Segenhoe Management Zone of the Pages River Water Source. The access rule define when a Cease to Pump (CtP) event would be triggered.

This section refers to Part 6 of the Plan and "Proposed Management Rules" section of the relevant report cards.

<p>How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?</p>	<p>Our Income would be at a loss as we rely on the Martindale Creek to produce hay and to feed our cattle on.We did reduce our herd during the last drought but kept our core breeding herd alive with irrigation.</p>
<p>Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?</p>	<p>NO. We all self regulate allready.There are very few properties which are metered so the volume of water taken is not recorded.In the past Martindale used to be full of Dairies which irrigated regularly,today there are minimal properties irrigating .There is not the demand for water as in previous times.</p>
<p>Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for ecological values such as Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem?</p>	<p>Yes.What lives under 6.91 meters of sand.If we were to stop pumping in the drought there would have been a lot of wildlife straving for food and water as we were supplying them with trough water and green pastures to eat.The wildlife that came into our area was phenomenal eg Wallabies,kangaroos,wombats,many bird species,insects,bees.</p>
<p>The flow reference point is the bore at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?</p>	<p>NO. The monitoring bore is very unaccurate as the water takes up to 3 months to build up to creek level. Every property has differnt levels of water.This bore may not be even from the Martidale Creek source.There is another water soucre that it could be reading off such as Andies Gully.</p>

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022



Submission form

Conversion to high flow access licences

It is proposed to allow conversion from a standard access licence to an access licence that can only extract from high flows in the Upper Hunter River Water Source only. If a conversion is to occur the licence share component would increase by 2 times.

The draft plan has removed the ability to convert to high flows in the Pages River, Isis River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Rouchel Brook and Paterson/Allyn Rivers water sources.

Further details relating to this change can be found in Part 8 of the draft plan and background document as well as the report card for the relevant water sources.

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?

Application for Aboriginal Community Development access licences

It is proposed to permit applications for specific purpose Aboriginal Community Development access licences in the Hunter Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater, the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater, Dart Brook, Pages River, Rouchel Brook, Upper Goulburn River, Lower Goulburn River, Lower Wollombi Brook, and Upper Hunter River water sources.

Further information can be found in Part 5 of the draft Plan

Do you think this is appropriate? Why / why not?

Additional feedback

The above sections relate to the key proposed changes from the current water sharing plan. However, comments on all aspects of the plan are welcome and encouraged. Please use the space below, or attachments if required or preferred.

Do you have comments on any aspect of the draft plan?

Instead of a CTP, maybe we should be putting meters on all pumps so we know exactly how much water is extracted from Martindale Creek. This creek provides many with a income, provides feed for other produces in times of drought. CTP rules will increase farmers stress levels/poor mental health without the ability to cater for their livestock.

© State of New South Wales through Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (December 2021). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or the user's independent adviser.

If there was a CTP on Martindale Creek in the period of 09/09/2019 to 09/04/2020 there would have been 7 months where we couldn't have irrigated. This is in our growing season for Lucerne hay production which we make and store hay to feed our cattle and to sell hay. We have spent a significant amount of money in the last 5 years to improve our irrigation system with new spear points, pumps, underground mains, travelling irrigation to water at night to reduce water evaporation(saving water) and reduced electricity costs when not in peak times for energy savings. Built a new hayshed for storage of hay to prepare for dry periods to save our breeding herds.(Breeding since 1971)It is more profitable for us to produce our own feed rather than buying in feed to feed our cattle. Also it is very hard to source hay in these hard times.

How are we going to survive in the way of Income and saving our breeding herds if there is a CTP? Are we going to be compensated for the Loss of Income from CTP?

I have lived in Martindale for 50 years and everyone already regulates there pumping requirements.Eg.If the water level is dropping you self-regulate irrigation amounts as appropriate to your needs and to be fare on other water users. We irrigate regularly and have never run out of water.

As to this day all landholders conduct there pumping fairly so everyone gets a fair deal with water sharing. To my knowledge there has been NO farmer to farmer disagreements that I know of regarding water consumption. "if it ain't broke,don't fix it"

There is not the demand for water in Martindale as there was due to properties been subdivided into hobby farms /lifestyle blocks. I remember in my earlier days all the Dairies that were in Martindale that irrigated frequently, there are now no dairies .The number of properties that irrigate now are minimal and the demand for water has reduced.

This CTP will also reduce the value of our properties. Martindale is renowned for water availability.

Just on our property we have 3 extra gullies/creeks that supply water to Martindale Creek which pass through so how is this measured? Martindale Creek goes back over 40 kms in the Wollemi Park, there are hundreds of streams flowing into it. Martindale Creek is a sandy/sandstone creek which holds water very well at different levels throughout the valley.

The measuring Bore GW27102 is not accurate. If it's on the Martindale Creek Stream why does it not reflect the same measurements? It takes 3 months for the reading in the bore to activate when the water is flowing on top of the sand.

This bore could be one of hundreds of streams passing through and flowing into creek somewhere else.

As for conserving nature we and others provided water and feed for wildlife, which otherwise would have probably starved and died from the lack of feed and water. Yes some old oak trees died along creek but they don't live forever! There are plenty of new trees and existing trees growing along the creek. There are birds galore as we have bird

studies done every 3 months. Bird watches from all over the state come see them. This just shows how much this creek and surrounds is working.

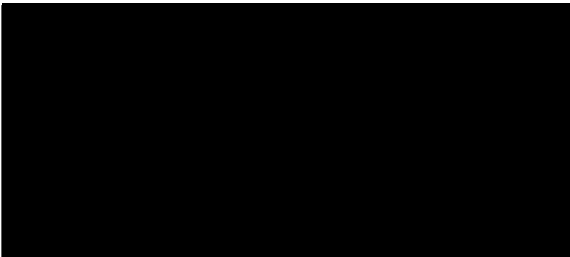
We have two sons and in particular one son would love to continue on farming, making Lucerne hay and breeding cattle in the future when we pass the family farm down onto them.

My family have been in this area of Jerrys Plains, Bureen and Martindale for over 100 years.

Agriculture is our business and lifestyle and hopefully for many years to come.

There are still some older generation people around that would be happy to discuss water information that they have witness over the years. They have been through many droughts and floods. Their knowledge is very valuable and should be taken in consideration when making such plans for the future.

Yours faithfully



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 8 June 2022 6:54 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: [REDACTED] 24/2/22 7.59 pm CONFIDENTIALITY NOT SPECIFIED
HUNTER FW: [REDACTED] SUBMISSION- Draft Water Sharing for the Hunter
Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 24 February 2022 7:59 PM
To: DPIE Hunter Unregulated Water Plan Mailbox <hunterunreg.wsp@dpi.e.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: [REDACTED] SUBMISSION- Draft Water Sharing for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022

Hi,

Please see submission for [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

Submission in regard to our affected area of Giants Creek (Halls Creek) in the draft water sharing for the hunter unregulated and alluvial water sources 2022.

How does the proposed CtP level in your water source impact on your current operations?

The Proposed CTP Level will be detrimental to our current operations on Giants Creek (Halls Creek) and will shut down our business. As what is proposed is not an underground level it's a surface water flow and Giants creek just does not flow it is a full underground water system, Giants creek will only flow for a couple of days after a large amount of rain therefor with what is currently purposed will mean as of 1st July our pumps will be required to be shut down and business shut down.

Do you think the CtP in your water source is practical to implement? Why / why not?

I do not believe that the current CTP is practical to implement at all. As like mentioned Giants creek does not flow. I believe there not to be enough research or data analysis done on our catchment here at Giants creek to back any of the proposed changes. I believe before any CTP measures are brought in we need to have meters fitted to all extraction points and extractions monitored to ensure correct amounts are being used by all we need to have an underground bore monitor installed to determine exact levels and until this is done, I believe what is proposed to be unlawful and very disadvantaging to underground water license holders of our catchment

Do you think the CtP provides enough protection for ecological values and low flows? Why / why not?

I believe what is proposed is way too extreme of a measure and unnecessary as after coming through one of the worst droughts on records we had very little change to our underground water. In this catchment. We were still running to the same irrigation volume right through the drought as we were pre and post drought with underground levels still at a high in both my wells. (for example, water level in my main well is only 2.3m below surface yet creek is still not flowing).

The flow reference point is the location at which a CtP will be measured. Do you think this site is appropriate? Why / why not?

As Mentioned, reference point for us is flow at creek closest to pump and Giants creek does not flow so it is very unappropriated. I have been told that the plan maybe to change the CTP rule to surface water flow at halls creek monitor I still believe that this is impractical to implement. I believe it to be unlawful to put a CTP on my [REDACTED] licence by using a Surface water monitor at Halls creek when all other creeks and rivers in the area have had underground bore monitors installed With CTP levels being put on an underground level. Why should my underground licence be stopped off river surface water flow when everyone else can pump down to 95% of unground levels all because there are no underground monitors in my catchment. This is a major disadvantage to me and unfair. I believe until there is sufficient data of my catchment through underground bore monitors with the same 10-year research done as all other rivers and creeks, we should not have a CTP put on our catchment or at very worst go off the Closest underground bore monitor to us which would be Goulburn.

Additional Feedback

I, once again want to make it clear, that what is currently being proposed, I believe to be unlawful and disadvantaging to myself and underground licence holders of our catchment, I have asked for data and 10 year flow plans of our catchment in which all other rivers and creek systems were given with responses that there is no data on our creek I don't believe these rules can be put in place with no data on actual effects as like I said I have seen no effects to underground water even in the drought. We purchased this property and underground water license with a lot of homework into the area and a good understanding of how good the underground water is in this particular area. What's proposed will shut our operation down with a massive financial burden to recover from in loss of property value and a worthless water licence. All our local spend will stop. As well as all our local businesses that purchase all our [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] will be left to find new suppliers. Last drought we were lucky enough to still have large amounts of underground water and with this were able to help out many of farmers, animal, and agriculture businesses from local and far a wide supplying them with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] while still [REDACTED] to supply our [REDACTED]. This was all due to us still having a good supply off underground water. Which makes it hard to swallow as well as hypocritical that with no data or research on our creek you want to 1. cease us to pump on flow at creek which never flows or option 2. Cease us to pump on a surface water monitor both in which do not reflect our underground water levels at all.

Please feel free to contact myself at any stage to discuss anything I have raised or to provide you with more information as we need what is proposed to be eased drastically.

Can you please confirm you have received our submission.

Thanks again

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

RE: Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated Alluvial Water Sources 2022

To whom it may concern

I am writing to raise my concerns regarding the proposed draft water sharing plan and in particular the cease to pump rule. As [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] I am concerned this will reduce access to irrigation and water at the times it is most needed particularly for the [REDACTED] Dairy Farm. My understanding is that this is likely to damage the viability of [REDACTED] dairy farm and its ability to attract future investment in infrastructure and technology, resulting in a negative impact on the [REDACTED] programs that rely on this farm.

The [REDACTED] dairy farm supplies more than 2.5 million litres of fresh milk into the market each year and provides a platform for research, training and industry development activities and Field Days. [REDACTED] has been operating a dairy farm since the beginning of its operation in [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] are a group of [REDACTED] people who are interested in all aspects of [REDACTED], including the Homestead heritage site and fundraising for projects of benefit to [REDACTED]. In particular it provides scholarships and services to the [REDACTED] community to encourage access and appreciation of the [REDACTED] property and its [REDACTED] training program.

I speak on behalf of all [REDACTED] members in raising our concerns regarding the damaging impact the proposed draft water sharing plan would have on the [REDACTED] farms and training programs.

I would ask that the Department of Environment and the Minister for Water reconsider their proposal and protect commercial farming operations in the Lower Hunter. This is crucial to the future of food production and the training of young people for careers in agriculture.

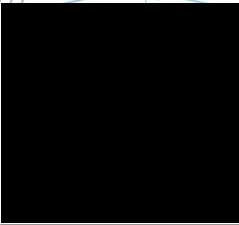
Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

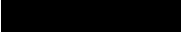
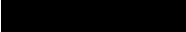
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



24 February 2022




Department of Planning and Environment–Water
Locked bag 26
GOSFORD NSW 2250


By email: hunterunreg.wsp@dpie.nsw.gov.au



Dear 

Subject: Comments - Draft Replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022.

 supports the water sharing plan process, and recognises the benefits this provides for protecting water resources within a regional context, and for providing equitable access to water resources for the community. It is important that the plan recognises and places a high value on environmental outcomes and associated community benefits.

 generally supports the objectives and provisions of the draft plan, and makes the following comments:

1. Water sharing planning could be improved by aligning water management more effectively with land use planning processes.
2. The groundwater dependent ecosystems identified in the mapping accompanying the plan should be more accurately defined.
3. For the  local government area and relevant water sources, inconsistencies have been noted between groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDE) mapping and  Council vegetation mapping. This indicates that the GDE mapping within the local government area is not reliable and will be difficult to apply in the implementation of the water sharing plan. It is suggested that GDE mapping for the local government area be available at a more accurate scale, and be reviewed to ensure consistency with local vegetation mapping, thereby enabling groundwater dependent ecosystems to be considered in strategic land use planning and development approvals.











4. The plan should specifically refer to five groundwater related listed threatened ecological communities occurring within the [REDACTED] local government area to avoid doubt and difficulty in interpreting the GDE map. These are:
 - (1) Freshwater Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains of the New South Wales North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions (NSW),
 - (2) River-Flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplains of the NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner bioregions (NSW),
 - (3) Coastal Swamp Oak (*Casuarina glauca*) Forest of New South Wales and South East Queensland ecological community (Commonwealth),
 - (4) River-flat eucalypt forest on coastal floodplains of southern New South Wales and eastern Victoria (Commonwealth), and
 - (5) Coastal Swamp Sclerophyll Forest of New South Wales and South East Queensland (Commonwealth).
5. Apparent connection between groundwater and surface water indicates that both should be taken into account in impacts on wetlands. Therefore, consideration should be given to including reference to the [REDACTED] Lower Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Source in Clause 50(1) of the draft plan.
6. Future climate change implications for regional water resources should be recognised in the draft water sharing plan review, including ongoing adaptive management needs.

If you require further information, please contact Council's Environmental Planner [REDACTED] on [REDACTED].

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

By



Public Exhibition

February 2022

Introduction:

My Business:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Endorsement of HVWUA Submission:

In addition to providing my personal feedback on the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan and how it affects me, I would also like to endorse the submission made by Hunter Valley Water Users' Association which addresses catchment wide issues on my behalf.

Key Issues:

Consultation Process

Public consultation and stakeholder feedback are a crucial component in developing an appropriate WSP. Given that WSPs set the rules 'for how water is allocated for the next 10 years', it is vital that we are given a reasonable amount of time to provide informed feedback on a complex regulatory instrument.

January and February are a very busy period, especially for me as I have been away at [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. As a participant with a business to operate, it is crucial I have sufficient time to analyse the materiality of each of these changes and assess the modelling data used. The limited consultation process is extremely disappointing considering the Department told us at a meeting in May 2021 that the draft WSP would be ready for public exhibition in September 2021 with ample time provided for submissions and consultation with stakeholders by February 2022.

I agree reinforce the following recommendation from HVWUA:

The public exhibition period for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Plan be extended to 40 business days, instead of 40 days, making the new end date 15 March.

My concerns with the current parameters that the latest WSP is being developed upon, for the Martindale catchment are:

- *CTP triggers are based on one monitoring well that is located at least 10 Kms from my property.
- *The location of the well does not allow for an accurate assessment of flow in the creek.
- *Any fair and equitable sharing of water must be based relative to an actual pre-existing metric across the whole waterway. To my knowledge, the only known and gazetted metric is the actual volume of the water allocations.

It is not reasonable to impose a CTP measure on a particular water source until the exact volume of extracted water is known. This volume then needs to be accessed in relation to the total allocation for the catchment and restrictions based on this percentile, should restrictions be warranted.

*I am in favour of the need to have all water extraction points metered. For smaller pump sites, inexpensive meters would be sufficient. After a period of 3 years Water NSW would have a clear and accurate record of the actual water that is being extracted for irrigation purposes. Only then can a fair and equitable WSP be implemented.

Cease-to-pump

Cease-to-pump (CTP) triggers are an extremely complex, personal, and crucial aspect of the proposed WSP across the catchment. Therefore, it is vital that DPIE conducts thorough, transparent and extensive consultation when undertaking decision surrounding this topic. Poorly developed CTP triggers in the catchment have the potential destroy our farming industry and negatively impact our local communities.

I agree with the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- Cease-to-pump triggers have no impact on the reliability of water access licences throughout the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial System.

Additionally, these access rule changes have the follow impacts on my business personally:

Current cease-to-pump: I purchased my property with no cease-to-pump requirements. In [redacted] years have I never been forced to stop pumping due to lack of water. During the last drought the water level at my property only dropped by 75 centimetres.

I bought the property due to the fact that it had a water licence that was free of any restrictions apart from the total extractable volume. This licence has a monetary value attached to it and in my case this value is considered in the bank's security over my mortgage. A diminished value of this licence could be seen as a reduction in security from the bank's perspective.

Proposed cease-to-pump:

This would decrease the monetary value of the licence and would have a negative impact on the value of my property.

Had the proposed CTP figures been in place throughout the last drought I would have been unable to pump for 237 consecutive days. 94 days of this period saw overland flows, prior to the monitoring bore level reaching 6.61 metres, (the proposed level to resume pumping)

Metering Conditions

Metering is a complex regulatory requirement that adds significant cost to my business although I understand the crucial role water users have as environmental custodians. It is important for my business that there are clear and concise regulation surrounding metering and I therefore support the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- The metering requirements of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan be brought inline with the NSW Non-Urban Metering Policy, including the minimum threshold of 100mm for water users to install AS4747 Meters.
- DPIE provide further clarification on:
 - The metering requirements for groundwater users
 - Clearly outline the definitions of wells and bores and their differing metering requirements.

Conclusion:

I hope that this Submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan 2022.

This plan, in its current form is unsubstantiated and lacks area specific parameters.

Kind regards,

[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]



SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

Introduction:

The Hunter Branch of NSW Farmers Association welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission in the Public Exhibition process on the *Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022*.

The Branch and its members see this as a valuable opportunity to provide expertise from our membership to inform the public exhibition process. Each member reserves the right to independent policy on issues that directly relate to their areas of operation, expertise, or any other issues that they deem relevant.

The NSW Farmers' Association (NSW Farmers) is Australia's largest state farming organisation (SFO) representing the interests of its farmer members. Our purpose is to build a profitable and sustainable New South Wales farming sector through promoting productivity, risk management and business continuity in individual farm enterprises.

Our state's diverse geography and climatic conditions mean a wide variety of crops and livestock can be cultivated here. Unlike most other SFOs, we represent the interests of farmers from a broad range of commodities – from avocados and tomatoes, apples, bananas and berries, through grains, pulses and lentils to oysters, cattle, dairy, goats, sheep, pigs and chickens and private native forestry.

From the outset, it is clear that our members are concerned about the river, and the estuaries contained within this plan, however it can be pointed out that many of these members are generational farmers, and that generational farmers do not exist without environmentally conscious decision making.

The Draft Plan:

NSW Farmers members have expressed significant challenges with the draft plan as it currently stands, in several areas, each addressed in turn.

Consultation:

The Department has conducted a number of online and digitally based consultations throughout the exhibition period, however, the overwhelming desire of members is to engage in a physical sense with those who would seek to inform the draft policy.

A physical meeting between affected farmers and those who would seek to inform the draft policy is seen as a crucial step in engaging and educating those who have influence on the draft policy, in the issues and the challenges and the impacts of the changes in the draft policy as it is currently exhibited. It would allow a visual and verbal explanation of the impacts and would be considerably more informative than a "desktop audit" which is the current approach of the departmental staff.



The benefits of such an in-person meeting cannot be underestimated, as recently during the review of the Central Coast Water Sharing Plan, physical in person meetings between departmental staff, and farmers affected by the changes were instrumental in altering some of the clauses in the draft plan as exhibited, and avoiding perverse outcomes, and improving triple bottom line outcomes as a result.

The NSW Farmers Hunter Branch has at all stages of this review been extending an opportunity to meet in person with departmental staff, only to have those meetings rebuffed, citing COVID travel protocols. We feel this has been somewhat of an attempt to subvert the public consultation process, and the necessary scrutiny and opportunities for correction that would come with robust in person consultation, citing public health protocols that could easily be mitigated.

The Cease-To-Take Condition

It is the cease to take condition that has caused the most serious concern with members.

Whilst members understand that this condition has been a part of the existing Water Sharing Plan since 2014, it is the proposed changes to this clause that have the potential to cause the most deleterious harm to agricultural businesses in the area.

Farming and its associated enterprises are a crucial part of the financial landscape of the Lower Hunter.

The changes to the CTT condition mean that there is a certainty of this being the cause of crop failures and a loss of income for the primary producer, and a resultant loss of income for the business supporting that primary producer.

To date, there have been no investigations of a Triple bottom line nature into the plausible effects of the change in this condition.

In fact, it has been pointed out by members that the measuring devices upon which these conditions are arbitrarily imposed, can sometimes be in an erroneous position, leading to a falsity of data collection, and a presumption that flows have stopped, when in fact, in the main tributary close by they have not. This is a perverse outcome, and one that could have been demonstrated had personnel been willing to travel and visit on site.

There has been no scientific conclusion drawn in this arbitrary rule that a cease to take provision will automatically ensure the health of the estuary, but it can be assured that it will lead to a deleterious outcome for primary production in the areas in which it applies.

Furthermore, there is a legitimate calculation that would apply in these circumstances deemed the Proof of Past Production Capacity, whereby the calculation on water rights was made using a premise that there must have been water available for production to occur, and that that water was calculated depending on the production system. It should be noted that the water calculations made under this tenet could be presumed to have been made available from groundwater sources, and so as the groundwater source, it would have been immune from a lack of visible flow, and therefore



should not be subject to the 'visible flow' criteria established under the CTT condition. This mode of calculation of proof of water availability has been the cornerstone of the calculations for the quantification of floodplain harvesting allocations by the Department, and it is a serious omission to ignore that method of proof of water supply in this Plan. The modelling of how to recognise this form of water availability **must** be included in the rationale explored in the need to implement CTT rules.

In addition, a CTT ruling based on salinity levels (measured as EC) is totally unacceptable trigger. Usage based on water quality levels for irrigation and Stock and domestic provisions are currently under the control of the producer within the bounds of their existing licence, and to mandate a CTT ruling based on EC will deny those who have carefully managed their water use the opportunity to reliable and frequent access to water for either crop irrigation, or Stock and Domestic use. It has been evidenced to us that there would be producers who would be without access to water for 120 days of the year should this provision be enacted.

Metering:

Put simply the requirement for metering is an unreasonable impost to be wholly placing on the water users alone. It is estimated that meters will cost an additional \$10,000 and that every pump will need one, this can be a significant outlay for many producers, and several members have been assured that they will require multiple meters, adding a significant bottom line cost to the business, which they will be unable to recoup.

In circumstances where government has imposed a mandate on consumers to adhere to regulation, government has implemented opportunities for assistance to business and consumers to meet these regulations, and even provided extended timelines to allow for compliance. There seems to be no such appetite for this approach as far as metering requirements are concerned.

Another issue with the proposed metering requirements surrounds the recording and maintenance of a logbook of water use. This is again, another impost on producers that is wholly unnecessary, after all, the production and maintenance of records should be wholly provisioned for in the application of the metering, and is only serving to be a duplication in both records and effort on behalf of the producer.

Summary:

The members of the Hunter Branch of NSW Farmers are wholly unhappy with the levels of consultation maintained throughout the exhibition period, and extend to the decision makers an open invite to attend in person, and to examine the impacts of the proposed changes to the Water Sharing Plan first hand, which will pave the way for a rigorous triple bottom line approach to the implementation of the Water sharing plan into the future.



Hunter
Branch

Branch Chair

Mrs Patricia Bestic

E: patricia@thebestics.com.au

M: 0400245154

Branch Hon Secretary

Mr Peter Dixon-Hughes

E: peterdixonhughes@gmail.com

M: 0429 135818

Furthermore, the provisions in the draft Plan are an impost on businesses that have carefully managed the most precious resource available to them during the timeline of the existing plan, noting that a great deal of that plan was subject to drought conditions, and still, the environment was uppermost in the minds of those users.

We welcome any and all consultation on the issues contained within.

Yours faithfully

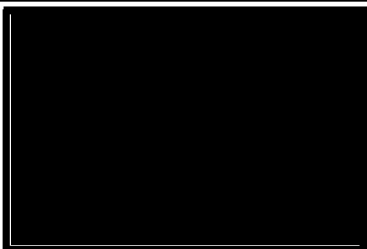
Patricia Bestic

Chair,

Hunter Branch



27 February 2022



[Redacted]
Project officer
Local Water Planner
[Redacted] & Environment, NSW Fisheries &
Department of Agriculture.
[Redacted]

Email: hunterunreg.wsp@dpi.nsw.gov.au and [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

SUBMISSION : Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated & Alluvial Water Sources 2022

[Redacted]ught in this brief submission to outline issues of [Redacted]ecting [Redacted] and support issues identified by the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association (HTBA) regarding the draft Water Sharing Plan (WSP).

[Redacted]e Upper Hunter’s surface and groundwater water systems to our industry and operations thorough [Redacted] and HTBA’s previous consultation with Government.

OUR OPERATIONS

[Redacted]

[Redacted] long and distinguished history in the Hunter Valley dating from the early 1820’s. [Redacted] long, continuous and uninterrupted history of thoroughbred breeding since that date: The area is a major component of the Upper Hunter Equine Critical Industry Cluster (Equine CIC); to [Redacted]s recognition as the Horse Capital of Australia; and as one of only 3 international centres of thoroughbred breeding excellen [Redacted] world (alongside Kentucky in the USA and Newmarket in the UK).

[Redacted] established its commercial breeding oper [Redacted] in recognition of [Redacted] bred breeding and racing.

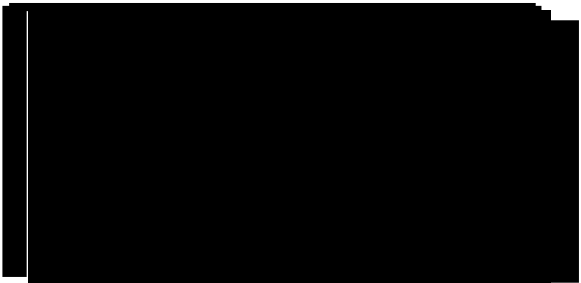
[Redacted] employs some 300 people in its Australian breeding, training and racing operations across [Redacted] facilities in NSW and Victoria, including over [Redacted] in the Hunter Valley across its two [Redacted] farms. These include horse handlers, bloodstock experts, gardeners, and others working in corporate functions including administration, finance, human r [Redacted] and marketing and sales.

[Redacted] hosts over 4,000 clients and visitors annually to our stud farms at [Redacted] and [Redacted]

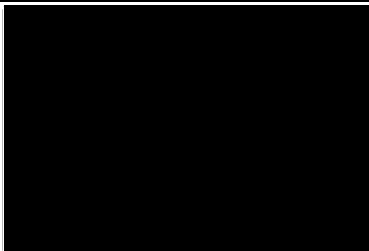
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[Redacted]





[Redacted]



Hunter Valley

[Redacted] historical [Redacted] in Aberdeen, Hunter Valley, was purchased. The property has since been developed into a world-class facility with capacity to stand [Redacted] stallions, comprehensive mare, racehorse spelling, yearling facilities and a world class [Redacted] n.

[Redacted] is "home" to many families and individuals -whereby they live and work on the farm, raising their families. Recreational facilities and accommodation form the community hub on the farm.

Operations

[Redacted] directly employ some 55 people year-round at [Redacted] with [Redacted] at different periods of the year when accommodating educational programs and additional seasonal staff.

[Redacted] incorporates the functions outlined above whereby thoroughbred breeding season [Redacted] es served per year, and a commercial cattle breeding operation of over 500 head.

[Redacted] educated locally, the school bus comes to the property, and the [Redacted] s of the local economy, social and sporting activities. Beyond the farm gate, the community is represented by a majority of private individuals and farming their communities.

[Redacted] seeks to take the lead in both the lifetime care of horses and in the professional development of people working in our industry. [Redacted] aims to have a positive long-lasting impact on the industry and communities local to where we operate, where our staff and families live and work. [Redacted] also [Redacted] to the national community and worldwide [Redacted] and [Redacted]

[Redacted] places a high value on collaborating with partners to help our local community and industry to [Redacted] sustainable and vibrant into the future. We [Redacted] joint charitable contributors with o [Redacted] industries, including mining companies and businesses in the area of Education, Health and community festivals that support the community's economic health. [Redacted] approach is not to advertise our work in the community, nor to seek these as promotional opportunities.

[Redacted] accessible to community groups, and our resources and equipment are provided off farm to support community activities.

ISSUES RELATING TO THE DRAFT WATER SHARING PLAN

[Redacted] endorse the submission made by HTBA which raises industry wide concerns and reflects some of the anticipated impacts on [Redacted] business.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is concerned [REDACTED] ss of engagement to date, has not allowed sufficient time and opportunity for affected parties to fully understand potential impacts. It must be understood by government agencies, that affected stakeholders are often run [REDACTED]. Therefore, dealing with significant matters such as water licensing requires dedicated time away from operating their business, [REDACTED] their livestock, generating an income.

[REDACTED] and informative public consultation and stakeholder feedback is a crucial component in developing an appropriate WSP. Given that WSPs set the rules for how water is allocated for the next 10 [REDACTED] vital that we are given a reasonable amount of time to be consulted and provide informed feedback on such a complex regulatory instrument.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

January and February are a very busy period for our operations, especially for us and our industry as the major sales season commences in December and continues through to early March. We also commence the [REDACTED] process for our yearlings. We all have businesses to operate, therefore it is crucial we [REDACTED] to understand and analyse the impacts of each proposed change and assess the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the opportunity as outlined by HTBA to be part of future consultation.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] complex and individual. Therefore, it is vital that DPIE conducts thorough, transparent, and extensive consultation to inform decision making on this matter. Poorly developed CTP [REDACTED] the catchment could have the potential to significantly negatively impact our business and local communities.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the potential to have both positive and negative environmental impacts. Extended periods without water can lead to a denuded and bare earth situation. The effect of soil erosion and [REDACTED] subsequent loss of carbon sequestration has obvious long-term ramifications on the landscape. It is vital therefore that both positive and negative impacts are [REDACTED] understood.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

We would be interested in the Department's assessment of the impact of the proposed changes in property value. Business models and property investments incorporate water access.

[REDACTED] understands the crucial role water users have as environmental custodians, given our significant [REDACTED] and efforts to understanding the impacts of mining on surface and underground water in the valley.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

We support HTBA's position that recognises the importance of enabling the farming community to be part of [Redacted] as opposed to a heavy-handed penalty regime for what is regarded as complex regulations.

[Redacted] supports HTBA's position on Long Term Average Annual Extraction Limit and Harvestable Rights.

[Redacted] consider our letter in support of HTBA submissions to ensure a credible Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan 2022 is further developed and can be supported by the community.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Endorsement of HVWUA SUBMISSION ;

Submission

Draft Water sharing plan for the HUNTER
unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

By

[REDACTED]

Public Exhibition

Introduction

My Business

Farming – [REDACTED] for our own farm.

I have been living and farming in this area since [REDACTED], my partner has been on the land in this area since she was born.

We support our local community by buying local seed , fertiliser, pesticides ect from local stores. WE sell our

I hope that this submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the hunter unregulated and alluvial water sharing plan 2022

This plan will have devastating issues with our farm . kind

Regards [REDACTED], [REDACTED] , [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] PHONE : [REDACTED] . Email

[REDACTED]

Endorsement of HVWUA SUBMISSION ;

informed feedback on a complex regulatory instrument.

January and February are a very busy time period ,especially for us as we are often irrigating ,ploughing and preparing for winter crops and pastures to be planted.As a volunteer participant with a business to operate ,it is crucial we have sufficient time to analyse the materiality of each of these changes and assess the modelling data used. The limited consultation process is extremely disappointing considering the Department told us at a meeting in May 2021 that the draft WSP would be ready for public exhibition in September 2021with ample time provided for submission and consultation with stakeholders by February 2022. I agree reinforce the following recommendations from HVWUA:

I hope that this submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the hunter unregulated and alluvial water sharing plan 2022

This plan will have devastating issues with our farm . kind

[REDACTED], [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Endorsement of HVWUA SUBMISSION ;

The public exhibiton period for the hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Plan be extended to 40 business days ,instead of 40 days ,making the new date 15March.

My concerns would be what impact would this bring to my farm, unable to water crops as they need it ,in turn no feed for our cattle plus water for my cattle with these two important issue ,what will happen to the sustainability of my farm.

Cease- to- pump

Cease -to-pump (CTP) triggers are an extremely complex ,personal and crucial aspect of the proposed WSP across the catchment. Therefore ,it is vital that DPIE conducts thoroughly ,and extensive consultation when undertaking decisions surrounding this topic. Poorly developed CTP triggers in the catchment has the potential to destroy our cattle and agricultural farming and negatively our local COMMUNITIES.

I hope that this submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the hunter unregulated and alluvial water sharing plan 2022

This plan will have devastating issues with our farm . kind

[REDACTED]

Endorsement of HVWUA SUBMISSION ;

I agree with following recommendations from HVWUA.

1. cease-to pump triggers have no impact on the reliability of water access licences throughout the Hunter unregulated and Alluvial systems.
2. DPEI apply clear and consistent cease-to- pump rules . across the catchment.
3. WaterNSW offer sms and email alert systems for cease-to-pump events as provided to many other regulated systems throughout NSW

Additionally , these access rules changes have the following impacts on my business personally:

We purchased our property with no cease- to -pump requirements .In [REDACTED] years we have never been forced to stop pumping , our wells are low yielding, therefore we need 3 to successfully irrigate this property.

Proposed cease-to-pump

Our number one concern is : no water no farm! How can we afford to buy seed ect , when we have now idea when

I hope that this submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the hunter unregulated and alluvial water sharing plan 2022

This plan will have devastating issues with our farm . kind

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Endorsement of HVWUA SUBMISSION ;

we can access our water, no feed no cattle ,no income, , we are concerned about the value of our property if this goes through .We have just been through a drought ,firers ,rat and mouse plague ,and floods and Covid which is still a huge issue , how do you think we could ever afford this , we are still hurting financially!

METERING CONDITIONS

Metering is a complex regulatory requirement that adds significant cost to my business although I understand the crucial role water users have as environmental custodians .It is important for my business that there are clear and concise regulations surrounding metering and I support the following recommendations from HVWUA

1. The metering requirement of the Hunter
Unregulated and Alluvial water sharing pan be brought inline with NSW non urban metering policy , including the minimum threshold of 100 mm for water users to install AS4747 meters.
2. DPIE provide further clarification on:

I hope that this submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the hunter unregulated and alluvial water sharing plan 2022

This plan will have devastating issues with our farm . kind

[REDACTED]

Endorsement of HVWUA SUBMISSION ;

3. The metering requirements for groundwater users
4. Clearly outline the definitions of wells and bores and their metering requirements.

Please ensure that I am notified at least 1 month prior to consultation sessions regarding this significant impact to my business and that I am given ample time to provide a separate submission on this matter.

Conclusion

I hope that this submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the hunter unregulated and alluvial water sharing plan 2022

This plan will have devastating issues with our farm . kind

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



SUBMISSION

WATER SHARING PLAN FOR THE HUNTER UNREGULATED AND ALLUVIAL WATER SOURCES 2022

Under the

WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2000

FEBRUARY 2022

Introduction

1. The [REDACTED] appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022 under the Water Management Act 2000 (Draft Water Sharing Plan).
2. The [REDACTED] represents Australia's multi-billion dollar thoroughbred breeding industry concentrated in the Hunter Valley and consisting of over 200 thoroughbred breeding operations and support industries.
3. Our members include small, medium and large thoroughbred stallion farms, broodmare agistment farms, lucerne and fodder producers, saddlers, agronomists, veterinarians and many other equine support industries.
4. The Hunter's thoroughbred breeding industry is the world's second largest concentration of thoroughbred studs, second only to Kentucky USA. It is Australia's largest supplier, exporter and producer of thoroughbred horses. Our economic contribution (\$5b nationally; \$2.6b state; and over half a billion regionally on an annual basis), in addition to being a significant national, state and regional employer, is one of the many reasons we are recognised as a Critical Industry Cluster and state and nationally significant industry by the NSW Government.
5. Water is the lifeblood of our industry and our community. A simple glance at the spread of our operations in the Upper Hunter demonstrates that our multi-billion dollar industry is dependent on the Hunter Valley's various river systems for its livelihood and that of the many thousands of people it employs directly and indirectly and the valuable bloodstock it produces. The majority of our farms are located either next to or close to water sources. (See Map).
6. Over the past decade we have seen significant variability in climatic conditions, including pronounced and prolonged droughts. We know from the Hunter Bioregional Assessment that the Hunter river systems and their tributaries are stressed and sensitive, the subject of significant competition between mining and agricultural and community users, and already in environmental deficit.
7. That is why, as far as possible, we need to be proactive, innovative, helpful and community minded so that we can get this once in a decade, water sharing plan right.

Summary of Key Issues:

8. Given the nature of our industry, the composition of our membership (both organisations and individual or family farms) its location and critical dependence on water for domestic, stock and irrigation purposes, this Draft Water Sharing plan can be complex and complicated, difficult to understand and difficult to assess the impacts at either corporate or individual level or both.
9. Submissions from organisations like ours and other affected stakeholders in the Upper Hunter would have benefitted from direct communication and clarification from the Department as part of a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy.
10. A relatively short consultation period during the one of the busiest times of the year for our industry when the major equine bloodstock sales are being held has not helped this process. Nor has misdirected, misunderstood and at times erroneous communications relating to the content, scope and impact of this Draft Water Sharing Plan.

11. We thank the Department, in particular [REDACTED] and her team, for their assistance and responsiveness to our queries. Regrettably this has been at the tail end of the consultation process and many participants in our industry, and indeed this submission, would have benefitted from attending an information/awareness raising session with [REDACTED] and her team to answer their questions and clarify any concerns. We trust that this can still occur during the course of the remaining period before legislation is finalised so that both our members and policy makers can make fully informed decisions.
12. In our submission we would like to constructively comment on issues that, so far, have been identified in this process. We trust that we can continue to work with the Department during the remainder of this process to address any other potential problematic areas.
13. The issues are:
 1. the consultation process;
 2. cease to pump rules, in particular understanding the full environmental and industry impacts of proposed cease to pump rules;
 3. proactive conservation - safeguarding water for the future without damaging agriculture, the environment and growth in these and any new industries;
 4. aiding compliance - rather than heavy handed penalties;
 5. the definition of long term average annual extraction limit; and
 6. harvestable rights.
14. As outlined above, due to the complex nature of this matter, the complex construct of our industry and individual members and the relatively short period of consultation we reserve the right to provide supplementary submissions during this process to help inform the nature of the final Water Sharing Plan and legislation.

Consultation Process

15. We understand efforts were made to contact water licence holders in the Upper Hunter in mid January this year to advise of this consultation process.
16. However we understand that those communications were impacted by misdirection (wrong email addresses) or late postal services. This alone truncated many valuable weeks from the consultation process.
17. This, in addition to the focus of our industry on the sale of its valuable bloodstock along the east coast of Australia during the months of January and February, has meant that there has been very little time to review and respond to what is a very complex regulatory regime for unregulated water in the Upper Hunter.
18. The matter was further complicated by third party misinformation relating to metering, which we understand is not part of this exercise.
19. As can be understood by the Department, matters relating to water management are inter-related and indivisible in the minds of farmers who must manage all their water affairs, be they for regulated or unregulated water sources, or the tools with which they must manage their water usage and storage.
20. During our interaction with the Department, we outlined that every farm may be impacted differently as a result of the Draft Water Sharing Plan depending on their location and situation. We both agreed it would be helpful to have direct

communication sessions for our catchments in the Upper Hunter so that our members can understand the impacts on their individual farms and contribute constructively to this consultation process.

21. We also agreed that such a consultation process would provide the Department first hand information on how people cope and survive during droughts.
22. We strongly encourage the Department to undertake these first hand, face to face consultations before the conclusion of this process to better inform the content of the legislation and to ensure that the legislation outlines the best possible plan for the decade to come.

Cease to Pump Rules

23. For many in our industry and in the region, cease to pump triggers can be complex, confusing and confronting. They can be critical to their livelihoods, their valuable bloodstock, and have potential flow on implications and unassessed impacts to both related industries and the environment.
24. For these reasons the impacts of cease to pump triggers proposed under this Draft Water Plan need to be better understood by affected landholders and to inform good government policy.
25. We understand that the Department will be receiving many examples from potentially affected stakeholders to illustrate how they will be affected under the new cease to pump rules. Included will be examples of those who will not be able to irrigate to provide valuable fodder and lucerne feed upstream to drought affected agricultural industries like ours, subjecting both farmers to the vagaries of pronounced and prolonged droughts, high cost drought feed (if it can be sourced at all) and potential considerations regarding the need to sell valuable breeding stock. This is not a situation that benefits anyone.
26. We understand that other examples will illustrate the potential impact on the environment, including water for trees or decarbonisation, which will also have impacts on farms and the environment and which we trust are being included in considerations of and calculations for cease to pump triggers.
27. Both these examples illustrate why we need a first hand understanding of the full environmental and industry impacts of the proposed cease to pump rules before they are enacted into legislation.

Proactive Conservation

28. The ██████ supports the vision and objectives of the Draft Water Sharing Plan including:
 1. The health and enhancement of the water sources and their dependent ecosystems;
 2. The continuing productive extraction of water for economic benefit;
 3. The social and cultural benefits to urban and rural communities that result from water;
 4. To protect and where possible enhance and restore the condition of the water sources and their water dependent eco-systems;
 5. To maintain and where possible improve access to water to optimise economic benefits for agriculture, water-dependent industries and local economies.

29. We note that the environment, agriculture, water use by Aboriginal peoples and future water needs for population growth, and growth in sustainable and new industries could be enhanced by proactively conserving water.
30. In this regard the Government has a role to play by acquiring or retaining the water licences of mining and energy operators that are either concluding or retiring their mining titles or, for those held by energy companies, that may no longer be required as the energy landscape changes in response to cheaper alternative energy sources, changes to address climate change or other socio-economic, trade or market drivers.
31. These additional water assets could be used to safeguard environmental flows while minimising or avoiding impacts on agricultural landholders and irrigators and maintaining enough water "in the bank" to cater for future population growth and the expansion or creation of new industries.
32. Water is a very unpredictable resource and not enough is known about the interconnectivity of our water resources to give reasonable assurance to current, let alone future landholders. Coupled with the advent of more prolonged and pronounced droughts, the need for water security is critical to all farmers and agricultural landholders throughout NSW.
33. Bioregional Assessments have demonstrated that our water systems in the Upper Hunter are already stressed and in deficit.
34. For these reasons alone the Government should make every effort and take every step to safeguard the Hunter's water security into the future. Proactively "banking" water assets from retiring mines and energy companies is just one, but very powerful and productive, mechanism to help achieve this goal – and indeed the visions and objectives of this Draft Water Sharing Plan.

Aiding Compliance

35. Proactive water monitoring, in addition to proactive water management, is critical to minimise or avoid unnecessarily triggering cease to pump rules or other actions that could adversely affect water flows to the farming community.
36. The farming community can be part of the solution if a culture of assisting farmers to comply with often complex regulations is adopted in place of an alternative heavy-handed post facto penalty regime.
37. Proactive assessments of water levels well in advance (at least 3 months) of cease to pump triggers may help avoid or minimise impacts on all stakeholders and would help inform government actions.
38. The use of a traffic light system, for example, to provide user-friendly information on real time monitoring of our water sources and water extraction limits could be helpful – for example: green – go; yellow – caution, close to cease to pump; red – stop. Push notification for all water users ahead of and for a cease to pump trigger would also provide a helpful and direct notification tool.
39. Heavy handed post-facto penalty regimes help no one, create more distress among affected parties, add additional financial and mental health burdens during times of extreme hardship and do nothing to avert or avoid damage to the environment and farming communities.
40. Assisting compliance, through proactive water monitoring, early reviews of water levels, sharing easy to access information, and proactive engagement with affected communities and appropriate notification of landholders/water users has the potential

to help all affected parties, conserve our water resources and potential avoid unnecessary hardship and environmental loss.

Long Term Average Annual Extraction Limit

41. We understand that there is a new definition for the long-term average annual extraction limit (LTAAEL) based on the recommendations of the Natural Resources Commission. It has been split into two components and includes harvestable rights extraction.
42. This definition has a long and complex history and remains a complex, but important element underpinning both extractions over the longer term and the Draft Water Sharing Plan.
43. Given the importance and complexity of this issue, and its interrelationship with harvestable rights, we recommend that if a review of harvestable rights were to occur that the findings of that review be factored into the construct of the definition and calculation of LTAAEL.

Harvestable Rights

44. We understand that a new limit (from 10 percent to 30 percent) and rules for costal harvestable rights will come into effect in early 2022 and that detailed assessments of each catchment will be conducted throughout 2022 to assess and confirm the 30 percent limit or to recommend a lower or higher limit for that catchment depending on its specific characteristics.
45. We support a detailed catchment by catchment assessment and confirmation to ensure that any increase in harvestable rights does not cause detriment to other water users in the catchment or region.
46. The [REDACTED] would like to be kept apprised of this exercise and be made aware of and be involved in any review of the Upper Hunter catchments that may affect our members.

Contacts

47. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Water Sharing Plan. We hope to continue this dialogue with you during the remainder of the process.
48. We trust we will have the opportunity of a first hand information session which can answer any further or residual questions and provide you with first hand information on our industry and how we cope with periods of drought.
49. Should you wish to contact us on this or any other query, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED] Director Policy & Public Affairs, ()

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

President

SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

Public Exhibition

February 2022

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Executive Summary:

██████████ makes the following recommendations in response to the 2022 Draft Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan on behalf of our members:

1. DPIE-Water, in the spirit of transparent consultation, provide the criteria used to assess KPI's, with the inclusion of specific strategies and management actions to specifically achieve objective 'b'.
2. The following clause should be added to the WSP:
 - a. Total extractions over the long-term will be considered 'underuse' less if:
 - i. The 3-year average standard extraction is less than the standard LTAAEL by 5% or more.
3. DPIE -Water undertake additional modelling to assess the ecological and economic benefits of the appropriate implementation high-flow conversion access licences.
4. DPIE-Water undertake further consultation with water users to understand barriers to uptake and provide solutions to overcome these identified barriers.
5. DPIE undertake further investigation for the appropriate trading mechanisms and trading zones to encourage active and liquid markets. These markets will aim to encourage the most efficient use of entitlements and allocations which will provide economic, social and ecological benefits throughout the Hunter Catchment.
6. The metering requirements of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan be brought in line with the NSW Non-Urban Metering Policy, including the minimum threshold of 100mm for water users to install AS4747 Meters.
7. DPIE provide further clarification on:
 - a. The metering requirements for groundwater users.
 - b. The definitions of wells and bores and their differing metering requirements.
8. DPIE-Water to provide a reliability impact assessment to either (i) demonstrate that changes to the CTP triggers will have no reduction on reliability, or (ii) quantify the extent of the reduction to the tidal pool and other impacted systems.
9. ██████████ rejects the use of Electrical Conductivity (EC) for cease-to-pump triggers in the tidal pools and believes DPIE should undertake further modelling and consultation on alternate options.
10. DPIE-Water changed all future Public Exhibition periods for WSPs to 40 business days in-length.
11. Water users be granted an additional consultation period to assess and respond to subsequent information provided by DPIE-Water on the Draft Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing provided after the initial start date of 17 January 2022.

Key Issues:

Objectives, strategies, and performance indicators

Water Sharing Plans (WSPs) are a crucial instrument for the appropriate of management of productive, environmental, critical supply and cultural water throughout the catchment. In [REDACTED] opinion these key stakeholders are clearly and appropriately identified throughout the objective in Part 2 S9 of the WSP:

The objectives of this Plan are as follows—

- a) to protect, and where possible enhance and restore, the condition of the water sources and their water-dependent ecosystems,*
- b) to maintain, and where possible improve, access to water to optimise economic benefits for agriculture, water-dependent industries and local economies,*
- c) to maintain, and where possible improve, the spiritual, social, customary and economic values and uses of water by Aboriginal people,*
- d) to provide access to water to support water-dependent social and cultural values*

However, throughout the consultation process members of [REDACTED] have felt that there has been an insufficient focus on strategies and mechanisms to realise objective 'b'. [REDACTED] members have historically been a crucial stakeholder in the natural resource management of the Hunter Unregulated system. The appropriate and sustainable management of the catchment is a crucial pillar for the success of our members, industries, and our communities.

Furthermore, during consultation session DPIE staff have referred to ecological risk and impact from irrigation with little to no specific detail as the reason for decisions that often oppose objective (b). [REDACTED] requests that DPIE release ecological impact study that holistically assess critical issues such as salt intrusion, their impact on ecology and identify all drivers. This is crucial for informed and appropriate management techniques rather than continued speculation that irrigation is the driving factor for ecological damage.

Recommendation:

DPIE-Water, in the spirit of transparent consultation, provide the criteria used to assess KPI's, with the inclusion of specific strategies and management actions to specifically achieve objective 'b'.

Conversion of High-flow Access Licenses

High-flow conversion is widely acknowledged, by DPIE and ecological studies, as a beneficial practice that overall improves the health of the riverine ecosystems.⁵ It is cost effective to only pump once directly from the rivers when there is a demand for the water, and not to store water. Virtually all the development of irrigation on the unregulated rivers has started out in this way. However, pumping into storages in high-flow scenarios not only improves reliability for water users but generally has less impact on the riverine ecosystem.

Therefore, the appropriate high-flow conversion access licences provide significant benefits to all stakeholders and adheres to specific of the proposed draft Water Sharing Plan:

- a) *to protect, and where possible enhance and restore, the condition of the water sources and their water -dependent ecosystems.*
- b) *to maintain, and where possible improve, access to water to optimise economic benefits for agriculture, water-dependent industries and local economies*

It is promising that the replacement WSP proposes to allow low-flow-to-high-flow conversion in Upper Hunter River Water Source, however, ██████████ would like to express its concern with DPIE proposal to remove high-flow access licenses from the Pages River, Isis River, Lower Wollombi Brook, Rouchel Brook or Paterson/Allyn rivers water sources.

High-flow conversion does have the potential to impact take opportunities for downstream users. It is vital when creating rules around the implementation of high-flow conversion that a reliability impact study should be undertaken to understand the impacts of high-flow access licences on water users and the environment.

██████████ acknowledges that there were no applications for high flow access licenses under the 2009 WSP. After consultation with our members there was significant support for high-flow conversion access licences, however, a lack of knowledge of the existence of such provisions and understanding of the application process were significant barriers to uptake.

Recommendation:

DPIE -Water undertake additional modelling to assess the ecological and economic benefits of the appropriate implementation high-flow conversion access licences.

Recommendation:

DPIE-Water undertake further consultation with water users to understand barriers to uptake and provide solutions to overcome these identified barriers.

Trade

Water markets and trading have become crucial component of NSW river catchments ensuring the efficient use of water entitlements and allocations.

However, ████████ acknowledges the current stifled nature of water trading and water markets in coastal areas. Coastal valleys have been broken down into small trading areas based on types of flows. This has resulted in limited trading taking place and led to a breakdown of the market system. As a result of limited trading, water prices are lower than normal.

████████ agrees in-principle with the objects of the National Water Initiative - the national blueprint for water reform agreed to by Commonwealth and State Governments – removing barriers to water trade is a key focus.

An objective (23)(v) of the NWI is:

progressive removal of barriers to trade in water and meeting other requirements to facilitate the broadening and deepening of the water market, with an open trading market to be in place;

Specifically, Section 58 (i) of the NWI outlines:

The States and Territories agree that their water market and trading arrangements will:

- 1. facilitate the operation of efficient water markets and the opportunities for trading, within and between States and Territories, where water systems are physically shared or hydrologic connections and water supply considerations will permit water trading.*

Furthermore, this position and the benefit of effective trading rules is further supported by the Final Report into the Murray–Darling Basin Water Markets Inquiry by the ACCC:

"Trading water rights can allow irrigators to supplement their water supply in the short and long term, expand production, develop new business models or free up capital that can be invested elsewhere in their businesses."

Whilst ████████ agrees areas of high ecological value should be protected it is concerning that DPIE would consider prohibiting trading throughout the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial WSP without a comprehensive investigation.

Recommendation:

DPIE undertake further investigation for the appropriate trading mechanisms and trading zones to encourage active and liquid markets. These markets will aim to encourage the most efficient use of entitlements and allocations which will provide economic, social and ecological benefits throughout the Hunter Catchment.

Metering Conditions

Metering regulations are a complex and multi-faceted. This makes it not only difficult for water users to comprehend, but expensive for small water users to comply. [REDACTED] simply request that all metering in the WSP be aligned with the NSW Non-Urban Metering Policy including no users under 100mm of any kind being required to install AS4747 pumps and all requires, groundwater and surface water requirements to be clearly outlined.

Recommendation:

The metering requirements of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan be brought in line with the NSW Non-Urban Metering Policy, including the minimum threshold of 100mm for water users to install AS4747 Meters.

Recommendation:

DPIE provide further clarification on:

- The metering requirements for groundwater users;
- The definitions of wells and bores and their differing metering requirements.

Cease-to-pump

Cease-to-pump (CTP) triggers are an extremely complex, personal, and crucial aspect of the proposed WSP across the catchment. Therefore, it is vital that DPIE conducts through, transparent and extensive consultation when undertaking decision surrounding this topic, particularly to justify and proposed changes. Poorly developed CTP triggers in the catchment has the potential destroy, or significantly hamper, key agricultural practices such as dairy, diminish reliability of access licences, inhibit property rights and negatively impact local communities.

██████ acknowledges the diverse nature of coastal systems, with the upper reaches of catchment requiring significantly different solutions that that of the lower tidal pools. Thus, ██████ refers to the Water Act 2007 (Cth) that CTP rules should not result in reduction of allocation reliability and any risks should be borne by the NSW Government, outlined under schedule 3A clause 50:

Governments are to bear the risks of any reduction or less reliable water allocation that is not previously provided for, arising from changes in government policy (for example, new environmental objectives). In such cases, governments may recover this water in accordance with the principles for assessing the most efficient and cost-effective measures for water recovery.

This principle should be applied in any instance where increased CTP triggers have resulted in an increase of CTP days, in particular the tidal pools throughout the catchment.

Further, reliability impact assessments are thus critical to quantify the impact of the reduction or less reliable water access, as a result of the changes, to give effect to the risk assignment framework (Sch 3A).

Our members have also raised serious concern surrounding the validity of the gauge data utilised in the modelling of CTP rules. Gauges such as Green Rocks only have 8.5 years of real-time data which is below the 10-year threshold required for valid gauging data as stated by WaterNSW. This has resulted in large discrepancies between the synthetic 110-year inflow time series data and gauge data which has water users questioning the accuracy of each data set.

Example: Proposed 4,000 EC CTP Rule at Green Rocks

Real-time data (Gauge): A mean daily EC of 4,000 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ was exceeded approximately 22% of the time over an 8.5-year period from June 2013 and November 2021 (all available data).

Modelled (Synthetic 110-year inflow time series): A mean daily EC of 4,000 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ was exceeded approximately 9% of the time over a 110-year modelled time period to date.

The two data points produce a 244% discrepancy in cease-to-pump days.

Additionally, ██████ request that WaterNSW offer SMS and an email alert system for cease-to-pump events as provided to many other regulated systems throughout NSW. This notification system will ensure that all water users clearly understand when and when not to pump in a timely fashion. This will result in a wider compliance to CTP rules and better outcomes for the catchment.

Recommendation:

DPIE-Water to provide a reliability impact assessment to either (i) demonstrate that changes to the CTP triggers will have no reduction on reliability, or (ii) quantify the extent of the reduction to the tidal pool and other impacted systems.

Recommendation:

█ rejects the use of Electrical Conductivity (EC) for cease-to-pump triggers in the tidal pools and believes DPIE should undertake further modelling and consultation on alternate options.

Consultation Process

Public consultation and stakeholder feedback are a crucial component in developing an appropriate WSP. Given that WSPs set the rules 'for how water is allocated for the next 10 years', it is vital that all stakeholders are given a reasonable amount of time to provide informed feedback on a complex regulatory instrument. This issue was initially raised with DPIE via letter by NSWIC on 25 January 2022.

January and February are a very busy period, especially so for farmers who are often harvesting, in addition to holiday periods. A comparison of the Draft WSP and the current 2009 WSP shows substantial changes. A significant period is required to analyse the materiality of each of these changes and assess the modelling data used. A significant amount of time that volunteer participants don't have available during the 40-day public exhibition period. Our members say the Department told water users at a meeting in May 2021 that the draft WSP would be ready for public exhibition in September 2021 with ample time provided for submissions and consultation with stakeholders by February 2022.

Whilst we acknowledge that 40 days satisfies minimum consultation timeframes, we do not believe that 40 days during this period of the year is adequate, nor is it in the spirit of genuine and meaningful consultation.

Recommendation:

DPIE-Water changed all future Public Exhibition periods for WSPs to 40 business days in-length.

Water users have requested a myriad of additional information from DPIE that includes CTP scenario modelling and data, ecological reports and explanatory notes in order to more holistically assess the proposed changes to the draft WSP. Additionally, DPIE have offered additional options to CTP such as an AWD. However, no exact modelling has been provided on alternate options to water users. This information only further adds to the time pressure placed on volunteer water users which can deter them from contributing to the consultation process or prevent them from providing an informed response.

Recommendation:

Water users be granted an additional consultation period to assess and respond to subsequent information provided by DPIE-Water on the Draft Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing provided after the initial start date of 17 January 2022.

Conclusion:

██████████ hopes that this feedback and recommendations provide valuable industry insight and assist with the creation and implementation of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan 2022.

██████████ and our members are available at your convenience if you have any questions or would like further information.

Kind regards,

██████████
██████████

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

By

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Public Exhibition

25th February 2022

[REDACTED]

26th February, 2022

[REDACTED]
WaterNSW
1PSQ, Level 14, 169 Macquarie Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

Dear [REDACTED],

Could you please read and forward our Submission to the Following Minister's and Members of the NSW Parliament.

The Honourable, Kevin Anderson, Minister for Water

The Honourable, James Griffin, Minister for Environment

The Honourable, David Layzell, Local Member.

Our Family operates a successful [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) along with a [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on our property [REDACTED].

Our Family purchased [REDACTED] Farm in [REDACTED] after having been [REDACTED], some years before from the [REDACTED].

I have spent a life time in Agriculture and involvement with the Hunter Valley since [REDACTED], when I attended [REDACTED] at Paterson in the Lower Hunter Valley, becoming [REDACTED] of my years there in [REDACTED].

My [REDACTED] who operates and manages [REDACTED] with his [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] who attend school in [REDACTED] also studied at [REDACTED].

Our time at [REDACTED] gave both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] an appreciation of sustainable Agriculture and the Environment.

Our business is very important to the Hunter Region and Scone.

Basically 90 % of everything we produce is sold outside the Hunter Valley area, or Exported Overseas bringing much needed revenue into the area, which then multiplies when spent in the local economy.

[REDACTED] are fattened and sold for export along with our [REDACTED] operation having being sold overseas and interstate bringing in revenue to the local community.

My [REDACTED] trains and races horses from [REDACTED]. His horses race at all local tracks which supports local communities. He helped to advertise the Hunter Valley Racing industry throughout

Australia by taking our [redacted] and which ran second in the [redacted].

[redacted] Farm has been a financial supporter to both [redacted] along with [redacted]. We also support and sponsor local sporting teams within the community.

[redacted] Employs 4 permanent and casual staff when required. Contractors are also contracted for Book Keeping / Fencing / Farming / Hay production / Plumbers / Builders and Truck Drivers.

My [redacted] and [redacted] who moved to Scone [redacted] years ago with their [redacted] who all attend [redacted] School in Scone. They play multiple sports in Scone and [redacted] in the local competitions. Contributing to the local community while [redacted] and [redacted] are also becoming more involved with the community with their [redacted] starting school at [redacted] and there other [redacted] attending [redacted] and [redacted] within Scone. [redacted] played both [redacted] and [redacted] for Scone. Their [redacted] within the community and will continue to support the community and its growth.

In addition to providing my personal feedback on the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan and how it affects me, I would also like to endorse the submission made by Hunter Valley Water Users' Association which addresses catchment wide issues on my behalf.

Public consultation and stakeholder feedback are a crucial component in developing an appropriate WSP. Given that WSPs set the rules 'for how water is allocated for the next 10 years', it is vital that we are given a reasonable amount of time to provide informed feedback on a complex regulatory instrument.

January and February are a very busy period, especially for us as we are often normally dry making Hay, Weaning [redacted] who need fresh green feed to develop in a time of the year which is. As a volunteer participant with a business to operate, it is crucial we have sufficient time to analyse the materiality of each of these changes and assess the modelling data used. The limited consultation process is extremely disappointing considering the Department told us at a meeting in May 2021 that the draft WSP would be ready for public exhibition in September 2021 with ample time provided for submissions and consultation with stakeholders by February 2022.

I agree to reinforce the following recommendation from HVWUA:

The public exhibition period for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Plan be extended to 40 business days, instead of 40 days, making the new end date 15 March.

Cease-to-pump (CTP) triggers are an extremely complex, personal, and crucial aspect of the proposed WSP across the catchment. Therefore, it is vital that DPIE conducts thorough, transparent and extensive consultation when undertaking decision surrounding this topic. Poorly developed CTP triggers in the catchment has the potential destroy our current business, productivity of our farm and negatively impact our local communities.

I agree with the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- Cease-to-pump triggers have no impact on the reliability of water access licences throughout the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial System.

- DPIE apply clear and consistent cease-to-pump rules across the catchment.
- WaterNSW offer SMS and email alert system for cease-to-pump events as provided to many other regulated systems throughout NSW

Additionally, these access rule changes have the follow impacts on my business personally:

We purchased our property over [REDACTED] years ago. With the 4 year long Drought a couple of years ago was a one in 150 year occurrence, we did not have to stop pumping. Our team decided to install smaller pumps so that we did not pump our wells out and also managed the area being watered so we could maintain a level of production although reduced to keep us viable and not having to rely on Government support which we did not have to access, because of our current water management.

If the Proposed New Water Plan is adopted it would not have enabled us to continue at all and we would have had too destock completely.

This would be at a huge cost to our family and the Government in the support they normally give in a drought. Whereas stated before we were able to continue without Government support and stay viable under the current usage plan.

The monitoring bore to be used for Cease-to-pump legislation is close to the current pages river, which in my opinion and I am sure backed up with data that I cannot access easily shows that the bore being on the current pages river does not reflect the true depth of water. That is why the pages is mainly dry with some water running under the current Pages water bed.

The original and historical Pages River which basically runs West and parallel with the current river is much deeper and carries much more water. This old stream is the last to go dry as it is the deepest.

The proposed cease-to-pump bore is not a true reflection of the pages underground water level.

Our property is [REDACTED] and we take measures to stop runoff of silt and help keep ground cover. Levee Banks and Contour Ripping to conserve moisture.

We have planted many trees in the last 20 years and struggled to keep them alive during the drought which would have died along with our Land being left bare without limited irrigation under our current usage rules.

Metering is a complex regulatory requirement that adds significant cost to my business although I understand the crucial role water users have as environmental custodians. It is important for my business that there are clear and concise regulation surrounding metering and I therefore support the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- The metering requirements of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan be brought inline with the NSW Non-Urban Metering Policy, including the minimum threshold of 100mm for water users to install AS4747 Meters.
- DPIE provide further clarification on:
 - The metering requirements for groundwater users
 - Clearly outline the definitions of wells and bores and their differing metering requirements.

Please ensure that I am notified at least one month prior to consultation sessions regarding this significant impact to my business and that I am given ample time to provide a separate submission on this matter.

THE [REDACTED] INDUSTRY WOULD BE DEVASTATED

If the proposed cease-to-pump rules are adopted the value of our property will be reduced substantially. We would no longer be able to [REDACTED] in the Hunter as without irrigation the [REDACTED] industry would relocate to higher Rainfall properties in Victoria and New Zealand.

I hope that this Submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan 2022.

This plan will make us change our production and probably sell our Farm and move our business to a higher rainfall area in Victoria or even New Zealand.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

By



Public Exhibition

February 2022

Introduction:

My Business:

██████████ is primarily a beef cattle operation. Although we are still in setup phase (only being in operation for ██████████), we look to diversify our enterprises to enable irrigation of our pastures to improve feed for our stock. Our goal is to produce top quality beef cattle to the local market for further breeding opportunities or human meat consumption. We will also irrigate our sewn crops to harvest as required, to ensure reliability of feed sources in dry times.

- Length in business - ██████████
- Enterprise details - Beef cattle production. We also Sow crops for pasture improvement for our stock as well as harvesting to store feed sources for future insurability of our healthy and nourished herd.
- Our business supports the meat production industry for human consumption as well as local farmers requiring quality fodder for drier times. Preparation for the environmental cycle for the valley is important, as we all rely upon one another. We employ local contracting services for spraying and sewing of our crops for feed production for our beef cattle production operation.
- Our consumers are Cattle farmers purchasing our stock for future breeding and to fatten for human consumption as well as large meat corporations that wish to purchase stock that has had

My community:

The Hunter valley region is a very close community who all rely upon and support each other in business.

- We are a ██████████ trying to establish our farm to help support our lifestyle and provide a quality of life for our ██████████. We take great pride in teaching our ██████████ to nurture our land and show how it can provide for us. We have ██████████ and would love to make our farming practice profitable so we can have it as our sole source of income. Our beef cattle production would love to be self sufficient through wet and dry times – allowing enough feed to continue feeding when the drier times come again. Beef cattle is our passion although we need the ability to irrigate for pasture improvement and quality of feed.
- Our local community is very important to us as we believe we all support one another and this is how we all deem success. We are active in all areas of our community and have strong values in our strong community bonds. ██████████
- Although small, our enterprise contributes to our local community by supplying quality stock for future breeding as well as meat production. Working together with our community and identifying gaps where we can assist is important to us and our business.

Endorsement of HVWUA Submission:

In addition to providing my personal feedback on the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan and how it affects me, I would also like to endorse the submission made by Hunter Valley Water Users' Association which addresses catchment wide issues on my behalf.

Key Issues:

Consultation Process

Public consultation and stakeholder feedback are a crucial component in developing an appropriate WSP. Given that WSPs set the rules 'for how water is allocated for the next 10 years', it is vital that we are given a reasonable amount of time to provide informed feedback on a complex regulatory instrument.

January and February are a very busy period, especially for us as we are often sowing crops in order to feed our beef cattle a nutritious supply of feed when they are calving. As with humans, we like to take the same care with our animals – sowing crops and being able to irrigate to nourish our beef cattle in the time of calving and when offspring hit the ground is imperative to quality bred cattle and the meat that we will ultimately consume ourselves. Preparing in the early parts of the year can provide the base for a successful year. We also rely upon others in our local area to do the same as we purchase fodder for storage as our land can only produce so much for the area size and our beef cattle enterprise.

As a volunteer participant with a business to operate, it is crucial we have sufficient time to analyse the materiality of each of these changes and assess the modelling data used. The limited consultation process is extremely disappointing considering the Department told us at a meeting in May 2021 that the draft WSP would be ready for public exhibition in September 2021 with ample time provided for submissions and consultation with stakeholders by February 2022.

I agree reinforce the following recommendation from HVWUA:

The public exhibition period for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Plan be extended to 40 business days, instead of 40 days, making the new end date 15 March.

Cease-to-pump

Cease-to-pump (CTP) triggers are an extremely complex, personal, and crucial aspect of the proposed WSP across the catchment. Therefore, it is vital that DPIE conducts thorough, transparent and extensive consultation when undertaking decision surrounding this topic. Poorly developed CTP triggers in the catchment has the potential destroy our Beef Cattle production and feed harvesting for our stock and negatively impact our local communities.

I agree with the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- Cease-to-pump triggers have no impact on the reliability of water access licences throughout the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial System.
- DPIE apply clear and consistent cease-to-pump rules across the catchment.
- WaterNSW offer SMS and email alert system for cease-to-pump events as provided to many other regulated systems throughout NSW

Additionally, these access rule changes have the follow impacts on my business personally:

IMPACT OF CEASE TO PUMP TO ABIGAIL OAKS

Current cease-to-pump: We purchased our property with no cease-to-pump requirements in place. In 2 years have never been forced to stop pumping. The recommended changes being imposed will have dire affects for us and neighbouring properties to supply quality feed to us and our local area and all of the industries that rely heavily on the feed supplied by the irrigation allowance.

Proposed cease-to-pump:

Our business plans (short/ medium and long term) for our beef cattle production will be hugely impacted if these rules are imposed. We require pumping from our well to irrigate paddocks to improve pasture and help germinate sewn crops. These crops are sewn to create a nourishing food source for our stock and to harvest as required to prepare our production for drier times. If we are forced to cease pumping from our water source it will have grave impacts on our business for our stock but also out family who rely on this income to educate our children and put food on the table and pay our bills, such as the mortgage we have on our land. We purchased this land █ years ago with a business plan in place – with a cease to pump arrangement this will impact our family and our business to the point of having to make some massive changes and potentially disabling our plans for our business.

Not only will it affect our stock and our family financially, it will also impact our care plan for our environment. It is our duty of care to our land to maintain and care for it. Leaving it with no ground cover is hugely detrimental to our land but also the local wildlife that use it as their homes. Being unable to irrigate also means that so many of our tree species will die out as we will be unable to maintain their water source.

Metering Conditions

Metering is a complex regulatory requirement that adds significant cost to my business although I understand the crucial role water users have as environmental custodians. It is important for my business that there are clear and concise regulation surrounding metering and I therefore support the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- The metering requirements of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan be brought inline with the NSW Non-Urban Metering Policy, including the minimum threshold of 100mm for water users to install AS4747 Meters.
- DPIE provide further clarification on:
 - The metering requirements for groundwater users
 - Clearly outline the definitions of wells and bores and their differing metering requirements.

Please ensure that I am notified at least one month prior to consultation sessions regarding this significant impact to my business and that I am given ample time to provide a separate submission on this matter.

I am very concerned on the value of our property being slashed if these rules come into place. We are young farmers looking to make a difference and have a plan to do so on our farm. If these rules are imposed we may have a property worth less then the debt we actually owe on it – this is a concern to us.

I am also concerned about the water trading changes as well as the cost of metering our wells. These changes and costs will be another major change that our business which is still in establishment phase will find it difficult to absorb and will affect our forward planning ability.

Conclusion:

I hope that this Submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan 2022.

This plan will have Impact on our beef cattle production - [REDACTED]

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION

Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Sources 2022

By



Public Exhibition

February 2022

Cease-to-pump

Cease-to-pump (CTP) triggers are an extremely complex, personal, and crucial aspect of the proposed WSP across the catchment. Therefore, it is vital that DPIE conducts thorough, transparent and extensive consultation when undertaking decision surrounding this topic. Poorly developed CTP triggers in the catchment has the potential destroy our Farm viability and negatively impact our local communities.

I agree with the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- Cease-to-pump triggers have no impact on the reliability of water access licences throughout the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial System.
- DPIE apply clear and consistent cease-to-pump rules across the catchment.
- Water NSW offer SMS and email alert system for cease-to-pump events as provided to many other regulated systems throughout NSW

Additionally, these access rule changes have the follow impacts on my business personally:

Example:

The Cease to Pump would further restrict the ability to provide water for fodder production when it would be most needed.

Current cease-to-pump: Is a practical solution where irrigators work together for a reasonable outcome in times of need.

Proposed cease-to-pump: Is a high handed approach that has no room for negotiation in order to only fix a problem that does not exist. Farmers are the best environmentalists. Why not use those skills to deliver practical processes.

Metering Conditions

Metering is a complex regulatory requirement that adds significant cost to my business although I understand the crucial role water users have as environmental custodians. It is important for my business that there are clear and concise regulation surrounding metering and I therefore support the following recommendations from HVWUA:

- The metering requirements of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan be brought in line with the NSW Non-Urban Metering Policy, including the minimum threshold of 100mm for water users to install AS4747 Meters.
- DPIE provide further clarification on:
 - The metering requirements for groundwater users
 - Clearly outline the definitions of wells and bores and their differing metering requirements.

The cost of making a living farming is a continual battle. If the measurement of water taken from the [REDACTED] Creek is so important then the cost of water metering devices should be borne by the authority that is mandating them and receiving income from that measurement.

Water trading is an important part of property development and maintaining property value. Therefore it needs to be encouraged so farmers wishing to further develop their enterprise and have a need for more water allocation should be able to purchase it on the open market from others who do not have as greater need for their full allocation.

Conclusion:

I hope that this Submission and that of HVWUA provides valuable insight that assists with the creation and implementation of the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan 2022.

This plan will have will have a huge impact on my families farming future. This enterprise and lands have been in the safe hands of my forbears since the early [REDACTED]. Please give us a chance to see these lands reach their full potential.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]