

Report card for the Gara River Water Source

Water source context		River flows	
Area	41,486 hectares (13% forested)	Low flow index* (for December)	80th%ile = 0 ML/day (Source. Gara River Gauge at Gara (206004) NOW 2012. (discontinued))
Average annual rainfall	815 mm	Flow records	60 years of data (1924 to 1985) from Gara River gauge @ Gara (discontinued).
Inflowing water source	Commissioners Waters, Malpas Dam	Stream type	Gaining
Receiving water source	Salisbury Waters	* 80 per cent of the time average daily flow exceeds 0 ML/day and this represents low flows	

Background Information		
Water Source Attributes	Rating	Justification
Relative Instream Value (within catchment)	MEDIUM	- 3 threatened frog species. - significant area of National Park.
Hydrologic Stress	HIGH	- within water source = high. - cumulative stress = high.
Relative Economic Significance of Irrigation (within catchment)	MEDIUM	- medium economic dependence of the local community on water extracted for irrigation. - high value of production from irrigation.
Risk to Instream Value (from extraction)	LOW	- instream values are at low risk of being impacted by extractions within the water source.
Licensed water entitlement		
Total surface water entitlement	1,561 ML/year.	
Licensed purpose	99% used for irrigation, 1% stock.	
Proportion of extraction management unit	7% of total Extraction Management Unit entitlement.	
These figures and estimates were made in September 2012.		
Existing access arrangements during dry conditions		
Pumping restrictions	No existing access arrangements.	
Cease to pump	No existing cease to pump.	
Reference point	No existing reference point.	
Water user association	None.	

Recommendations

Draft access rules for surface waters	
Cease to pump	<p>Pumping is not permitted from natural pools when the water level in the pool is lower than its full capacity.</p> <p>Note: The NOW recognises that there may be licence holders that have traditionally extracted water from the weir pool when the weir pool is less than full capacity. The access rule being proposed will not allow this to continue. The NOW pools policy allows for some draw down of pools where a history of use is demonstrated. Persons that can demonstrate history of use are encouraged to contact the NOW to discuss the matter and, as required, make application in writing to be considered for a pool draw down provision.</p> <p>Note: 'Full capacity' can be approximated by the pool water level at the point where there is no visible flow into and out of that pool.</p> <p>Note: Natural pools include in-river pools found within the channels of rivers and creeks and off-river pools located on flood runners, floodplains and effluents e.g. lakes, lagoons and billabongs.</p> <p>Note: For the minority of pump sites not within a natural pool, these licences will be required to cease to pump when there is no visible flow at that pump site.</p>
Reference point	Individual natural pool.
<p>Note: Existing <i>Water Act 1912</i> licence conditions that are more stringent than these access rules will be carried forward.</p> <p>Note: These access rules do not apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local water utility access licences - Town water supply access licences - Stock and domestic licences for the first three years of the plan (provided that extraction for stock purposes does not exceed 14 litres per hectare of grazeable area per day) - Water taken from existing dams. Any existing licence conditions associated with a dam will be carried over when the licence is converted under the <i>Water Management Act 2000</i>. 	
Draft trading rules	
INTO water source	Permitted, only if the total licensed entitlement in the water source does not increase (no net gain) from, Apsley Gorge, Apsley River, Bakers Creek, Blue Mountain Creek, Chandler Gorge, Chandler River, Christmas Creek, Coastal Macleay, Collombatti Creek, Dungay Creek, Dyke Creek, Euroka Creek, Five Day Creek, Gara River, Georges River, Gills Bridge Creek, Green Gully, Hickeys Creek, Kunderang Creek, Macleay Gorges, Macleay Valley, Mungay Creek, Nulla Nulla Creek, Oaky River, Salisbury Waters, Stockyard Creek, Styx River, Tia River, Toorumbree Creek, Warbro Creek, Yarrowitch River, Malpas Dam or Commissioners Waters water sources (upstream water sources).
WITHIN water source	Permitted.

Draft rules for granting access licences	
In-river dams	Permitted, subject to assessment. Note: Dams require a licence if they are located on a permanent (spring fed) first or second order stream, a third order (or greater) stream, or if they exceed the maximum harvestable right dam capacity for the property.
Aboriginal community development	Not permitted due to the absence of a gauge (the gauge has been discontinued).
Conversion to high flows	Not permitted due to the absence of a gauge (the gauge has been discontinued).
Conversion to alluvial aquifer access licence	N/A.

Key factors for decisions

- Medium instream value, high hydrologic stress, low risk to instream value and medium economic dependence.
- The most basic access rule proposed due to no suitable reference point other than the pump site in the water source.
- The high cumulative hydrologic stress is a result of the town water supply extractions from the water source upstream.

Public exhibition

Feedback is particularly sought on the suitability of the proposed access and trading rules.

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