

Report Card for Isis River Water Source

FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Water Source Context	River Flows
<p>Area: 550.1 km² (27% forested) Average Annual Rainfall 787 mm Inflowing water source: Nil Receiving water source: Pages River, Hunter River Regulated System, Hunter River Tidal Pool</p>	<p>Low flow Index: (80thile in December of days with flow) = 11.6 ML/day Flow records: 1963 to 1982 (19 yrs) This estimate is based on flows measured at Isis River at Lower Timor gauge (210070) adjusted for longer term climate.</p>

Licensed Water use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total surface water entitlement: 1932 ML/year (94% used for irrigation purposes) • 27 surface water licenses - Peak Daily Demand=27.6 ML/day • 1.04 % of total Hunter Extraction Management Unit entitlement

Background information		
Water Source attributes	Rating	Justification
Relative Instream Value (within catchment)	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 threatened amphibian species • moderate fish community integrity, • the ecology value of the river for invertebrates is deemed to be moderate
Hydrological Stress	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peak extraction demand exceeds available flows in December
Relative Economic Significance of Irrigation (within catchment)	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medium economic dependence of the local community on water extracted for irrigation
Risk to Instream Value (from extraction)	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instream values are at medium risk of being impacted by extractions within the water source

Existing Access Arrangements During Dry Conditions	
Water User Association (WUA)	yes - Upper Isis and part of Lower Pages WUA
Licensed Cease to Pump (CtP)	visible flow on some licences

Proposed Recommendations for Isis River Water Source

Draft Access Rules	
Cease to Pump (CtP) A class	Cease to pump is when there is no visible flow at Isis River at Stick Me Up Bridge gauge. Cease to pump level may be amended to flow up to the 95 th ile or 1.5ML/day, whichever is the higher, by year six of the plan based on further studies.
Cease to Pump (CtP) B class	Cease to pump is when flows are less than or equal to 31 ML/day at Pages River at Gundy Recorder gauge.
Reference Point	Isis River at Stick Me Up Bridge gauge (A class) Pages River at Gundy Recorder gauge (B class)

Draft Trading Rules	
INTO water source	No trading into or out of the water source. The plan allows amendment for the staged introduction of no net transfers as management systems become available.
WITHIN water source	Trading permitted throughout the water source.
Conversion to High Flow Access Licence	Permitted with conversion rate of 1:2 for share components from unregulated river to unregulated high flow access licence.
Conversion to Aquifer Access Licence	Not permitted

Key Factors for Panel Decision

Classification

- Gaining stream type
- Medium instream value, high hydrological stress, medium risk to instream value, medium economic dependence.
- The Regional Panel revised the instream value from low to medium as portions of the Isis River are in relatively good condition.

Rules

- Staged introduction of the trading rules identified through the classification process.
- Access rules identified by the classification process were adopted by the Regional Panel, to commence by year six of the plan, with a visible flow rule to apply until then.

Matters raised during targeted consultation

- Based on submissions received from water users, the Regional Panel had initially proposed amendment of the proposed access rules within the draft plan. These included;
 - a commence to pump flow level at 3ML/day, and
 - an amendment of the proposed cease to pump level from visible flow to 1.5ML/day.
- However, based on concerns raised by water users in regard to the period that these rules would apply the amendment will not apply. In moving to a cease to pump up to the 95th %ile flow level by year six of the plan, the original flow levels proposed by water users will be reconsidered.

Aboriginal Cultural Values

- The initial consultation with local Aboriginal communities indicate that they consider healthy rivers with natural flows and good biodiversity as being important. Further feedback is being sought from Aboriginal communities about values in their area.

For more information about the macro planning process for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources refer to the "Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources – Background Document" on the Department's website: www.dwe.nsw.gov.au

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