

## **[REDACTED] – Trangie Station**

*Water Sharing Plan for the Macquarie and Cudgegong Regulated Rivers Water Source 2016: Review.*

Submissions close 10th March 2025.

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The Water Sharing Plan (WSP), and in particular Flood Plain Harvesting (FPH) has decimated my access to the water that was historically available to “Trangie Station”.

The Trangie Cowal is a part of the Backwater Boggy Cowal system, and as such comes under the control of the WSP.

From its origin just to the North of Narromine, it once flowed Northwest over gently undulating country feeding many permanent and semi-permanent water holes, the two streams that make up the system then combined at a property called “King Hit” before winding its way through “Trangie Station” and continuing Northwest to the Trangie Agricultural Research Station and beyond.

One waterway branched off Trangie Cowal at “King Hit”, and when flows were sufficient, it overflowed into the Goan Waterhole at Trangie and its resultant wetlands and waterways further downstream.

When FPH was introduced and FPH licences were handed out there was no consideration for the existing extraction license for 140 ML held by “Trangie Station”.

Roughly 1,200 ML was licensed to upstream farms without due consideration to the pre-existing extraction licenses held by their downstream neighbour “Trangie Station”.

The review of the WSP would finally allow DCCEEW to rectify a situation that has plagued my family for three generations, this is the only way that water could ever be returned to Trangie Cowal and “Trangie Station”.

The WSP must enforce a Basic Landholder Right to a legally purchased Water Access License and quarantine water from upstream users in high rainfall or minor flooding events to satisfy that licensee’s requirements.

WaterNSW gave FPH licenses to upstream extractors despite the existence of my WAL.

WaterNSW gifted my licensed extraction to FPH without thought or any offer of compensation, in fact they suggested that I surrender my license.

The Trangie Cowal and the waterhole at “Trangie Station” are an important part of the survivability of my farm but also the environment, as many species call the waterhole home when water is available.

“Trangie Station” is also an important asset to the local Aboriginal people of Trangie and the Trangie Local Aboriginal Land Council members regularly visit to catalogue the many scar and carved trees along its banks. The members also monitor the stone artifacts that have been left where they have been found by my family for four generations.

I have tried to make people see sense with this, but you may be my last hope. Please help.

1. **Water Access License.** I am the original holder of a license to extract an allocation of 140 Megalitres from Trangie Cowal, but my section of Trangie Cowal flows no-more. A “Bywash” dam built by the upstream neighbour and “Recirculating” pump now take all the natural flows before they reach my property or any other downstream water user.
2. **Historic flows.** WaterNSW issued my water license based on available flows (they could not have approved a license unless the water was available) and then afterwards they approved the works up-stream that now blocks all flows down Trangie Cowal.
3. **Bywash dam.** The original “Bywash” dam couldn’t contain all the flows down Trangie Cowal, and some would still happen in high rainfall events. However, the new enlarged dam can now capture about 30% more water thanks to the WaterNSW/NRAR approved works. This allows the operator more time to extract flows before the dam wall can overflow down Trangie Cowal.
4. **Pump upgrade.** WaterNSW approved an increase to the pump size along with the increased dam capacity. This allows the operator to empty the Bywash Dam faster than rain fall can fill it, meaning all the water is now extracted and stored in the main “Reservoir”, including “recirculated” irrigation water and all rainfall events. A simple limit on pump use or quarantining the first flush would fix all these problems.
5. **Flood Plain Harvesting.** The recent approval of Flood Plain Harvesting and the gifting of a license to my upstream neighbour means that Trangie Cowal will slowly die, and many people and the environment will suffer, and there doesn’t seem to be anyone in charge that cares enough to even try to fix these problems.
6. **“Black water”.** Due to the loss of historic flows down Trangie Cowal any rare future event such as an overland flow direct from the river will bring with it toxic “Black Water” due to the extremely rare “wetting” of the Trangie Cowal riparian zone. Black water events usually result in environmental catastrophe, including fish kills and disastrous impacts on other water dependant species.
7. **Litigation.** A lack of investigators to personally visit and assess situations such as mine, means that “Desk top reviews” are the norm these days. There are not enough compliance officers to visit all complainants, and assess all objections in person, so objectors are forced into litigation (if they can afford it) to have their problems resolved, or at least fairly heard.
8. **Financial impacts.** My income and my ability to drought proof the farm have been severely limited by these newly approved works as I can no-longer grow irrigated pasture to supplement the dry-land feed, due to the loss of access to the natural flows down Trangie Cowal.
9. **Knock-on effects.** Instead of working on-farm to support my family and the bank manager, I now have to work off-farm to supplement my income and put money into Trangie Station, just to keep the farm going. Ironically this means I am not eligible for some farm grants as 100% of my income is not derived from farming on Trangie Station.
10. **Family legacy.** Agriland, WaterNSW and NRAR have combined to allow my water to be extracted upstream instead of considering my legal entitlement to access my full allocation. I will be handing down to the fifth generation a financial burden, instead of a mildly successful mixed farming business.