

Response in relation to the Peel Valley Regulated, Unregulated, Alluvial and Fractured Rock Water Sharing Plan.

The Woodburn Heights Estate Water Users Association Incorporated (hereafter called the Association) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Peel Valley Water Sharing Plan review, 2019.

Background:

The Association is a rural subdivision with a stock and domestic water licence on the outskirts of Tamworth, New South Wales. The bore water allocation as per the current Peel Valley Water Sharing Plan is the only reticulated water supply to the lot holders of the Association; there is no town water infrastructure.

The original subdivision was established in May 1973 with the provision of a reticulated water system and subsequently licenced with a registered bore with Office of Water and its predecessors. The Association has robust governance, is sustainable and financially viable and considers its members to be responsible water users within its modest capped allocation of water under the Peel Valley Water Sharing Plan. The Association has independently funded, equipped and installed a single shared fractured rock bore, storage tank and underground pipe supply lines on private property as well as an RFS compatible outlet for fire-fighting purposes in the area. Ongoing maintenance and planning are undertaken by the Association at no cost to any third-party organisation(s).

WHEWUA Submission:

The Association welcomes the 10-year review of the water sharing plan. Please find below a summary of the Association response:

Woodburn Heights Estate Water Association Incorporated support the Peel Valley Water Sharing Plan in its current format. The Association proposes that its activity contributes positively at a micro level to the successful implementation of the current Plan.

Individual lot holders of the Association have considered the 5 review questions in the context of how the Association and the Plan interact to contribute to the outcomes as sought under this review. Without the current water allocation under the shared water plan, the Association would not be able to contribute so effectively towards the Natural Resources Commissions goals.

1. Social outcomes

Association users regularly contribute both financial, and volunteer physical and labour assets, to ensure the water infrastructure for the Estate is maintained in adequate condition. In turn this collectively brings the community together through regular meetings, communications and working

bees, providing a stronger social adhesion and common bond than might not otherwise occur if users each had their own stock and domestic bores.

2. Environmental outcomes

Association users individually allocate a portion of their water supplies to assist local native flora, fauna and birdlife to survive during these drought conditions with surface water supplies having mostly dried up. At a micro level this assists with achieving the broader environmental outcomes of the Plan. The association has also been able to facilitate the self-funded installation of a Rural Fire Service compatible outlet.

3. Economic Outcomes

The Association is self-supporting and contributes 100% of funding from its members in maintaining and supporting this local water infrastructure. No State or Local Government funding is required allowing for scarce taxpayer and ratepayer funds to be allocated elsewhere under the Plan.

4. Meeting Objectives

The current Plan meets the needs of the Association at our micro level when considered as being just one very small component of the total water users within the Plan.

5. Improve Outcomes

In the context of extreme drought, the current Plan cannot meet all the needs of all the users all the time with vastly different allocations, water usage and sometimes conflicting priorities between urban supply, irrigation for food crops meant for direct human consumption, irrigation for crops for textile or animal feed, water for industry and water associated with mining plus allocations for environmental needs and tourism. The Association is confident that the current priority order is appropriate.