

Water Sharing Plan: Tweed River Area Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2010

Dear Sir /Madam

I would like to comment on the above Water Sharing Plan in relationship to the following points

**To what extent do you feel the plan has contributed to environmental outcomes?
What changes do you feel are needed to the water sharing plan to improve outcomes?**

Clause 48(1)Byrrill Creek dam

The current prohibition of a dam within Byrrill Creek Water Source is a positive environmental outcome. This prohibition needs to remain in the Water Sharing Plan. Another dam is not needed because The Tweed Shire Council, after independent review, has already adopted raising Clarrie Hall Dam wall as the preferred option for water augmentation. It has also declared a 20 year moratorium that bans any dam proposal at Byrrill Creek until 16 May 2032.

We live in a time of reduced wildlife habitat, climate change and alarming species extinction, all underlined by the summer's unprecedented bushfires. Byrrill Creek catchment, with its high riparian conservation status and numerous threatened species is a highly valuable asset that must be protected. Additionally it is an important corridor linking Mt Warning & Mebbin National Parks. The area is also of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage.

I therefore strongly support the Tweed Council resolution at its meeting of 18 June 2020 that:
'Council maintains its long standing and scientifically based opposition to the building of a dam at Byrrill Creek.'

Environmental Water Flows

Environmental flows are a critical and positive part of the current water sharing plan. Tweed Shire river systems flow through and support an area which is one of the three top biodiversity hot spots in Australia. It is a region of international significance. Environmental flows on streams or rivers during low flows & drought must therefore be maintained. During the recent drought environmental water flow releases from Clarrie Hall Dam to Doon Doon Creek & the Tweed River were an essential aquatic refuge during the recent drought when most creeks & the upper reaches of the South arm of the Tweed River ran dry. The environmental flow releases for the Fish Ladder at Bray Park Weir also allowed crucial migration of native fish upstream. This aspect of the water sharing plan is definitely successful

However, during drought times, the water sharing plan needs to allow for irrigators with self regulated water licences to receive reduced (or ceased) water extraction. Irrigators should also be required to monitor water amounts extracted from the rivers.

Water Licences

The recent state report into water licences showed there is a lack of scientific data of both above ground & groundwater sources in the Tweed. This needs to be remedied (and funded) as soon as possible and climate change needs to be taken into account. The self regulating of water licenses is open to abuse and monitoring and compliance needs to be implemented regarding so important a resource.

Yours Sincerely,


Nola Firth

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