

From: Robbie Pateman
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To: NRC
Subject: NRC Submission

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Water Sharing Plans Review for the Tweed River Area Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2010.

Dear Sir / Madam

I have written my response to the Water Sharing Plan regarding 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 has been a positive environmental outcome and I highly recommend this prohibition remains within the Water Sharing Plan.

The Byrrill Creek catchment area with its high riparian conservation status and numerous threatened species, in the Byrrill Creek Valley, two such Endangered ecological communities (EEC) are situated, as well as 45 Threatened Fauna and 26 threatened Flora species. Currently, 989 species of plants and animals, 49 populations and 107 ecological communities are listed as threatened in NSW legislation." (2012 NSW State of the Environment Report)

Byrrill Creek is home to the giant barred frog, the double-eyed fig parrot, spotted-tail quoll and the brush-tailed rock wallaby. There is also Koala food trees and habitation. All would be affected in a devastating way by the construction of a dam. It would inundate 400 hectares.

Indigenous Cultural Heritage sites, the Wildlife and Climate Change Corridor linking the two National Parks, Mt Warning and Mebbin are among the significant aspects of this unique area.

It is recognized that Tweed Council has already adopted raising Clarrie Hall Dam wall as the preferred option for water augmentation and also has a 20year moratorium that bans any dam proposal at Byrrill Creek until 16 May 2032.

I support the Tweed Council statement at its previous meeting on the 18 June 2020 that resolved:
Council maintains its long standing and scientific based opposition to the building of a dam at Byrrill Creek.

Environmental Water Flows

Tweed shire's river systems flow through and support an internationally significant highly biodiverse environment. Another local example of Biodiversity Offsets is if in the future flooding of 2 EECs, comprised of lowland Rainforest, for the proposed Byrrill Creek dam is not probable - National Parks consider them irreplaceable. There are no more areas where this vegetation exists.

I do not support reducing environmental flows on any stream or river, during low flows and drought

Environmental flows are a critical and positive outcome of the current water sharing plan.

1. From Clarrie Hall Dam

Environmental Water flow releases from Clarrie Hall Dam to feed Doon Doon Creek and the Tweed River should remain. It proved to be an important aquatic refuge during the recent drought, when the greater number of all creeks and the upper reaches of the South arm of the Tweed River ran dry. .

2. Fish Ladder Flows at Bray Park Weir

The Environmental flow releases for the Fish Ladder at Bray Park Weir should also remain to allow migration of native fish upstream.

3. Clause 43. Access rules for the taking of surface water

As the Tweed Council relies on flow releases from the Dam for the urban Tweed Water Supply, I would suggest that there be a reduced access/cease to pump the water from the river to properties with self regulated water licences drawing from the Tweed River during drought times. These irrigators need to be utilising best practise water efficiency measures, and accountable and monitored metered use of water extracted, if not a cease pump restriction, during drought times and extremely low flows.

4. Environmental Flows, Drought and Water Extraction Facilities

In addition these above restrictions, the reduced access/cease to pump, should also apply to all five water extraction and water bottling plants within Tweed Shire who are taking water from aquifers, when there are low flows in nearby creeks and rivers or during droughts.

Water Licences

There is a lack of scientific data of both above ground and groundwater sources in the Tweed which means the current Water Sharing Plan, is ineffective in making any future decisions on water licensing.

This requirement should be enforced (also funded) as soon as possible, and Climate change particularly needs to be taken into account.

Lack of compliance by many of the water users in the Tweed is inadequate to effectively manage and put the Water Sharing Plan into operation. The self regulation of water licenses is open to misconduct and has proved not accountable within the Water Sharing Plan or regulatory bodies.

Climate Change

A Water Sharing plan must address Climate Change more effectively. The Tweed has experienced its worst flooding event during Cyclone Debbie, March 2017, and its worst drought in 2019, and also the overtopping of the Bray Park Weir with saltwater inundation. These occurrences are predicted to become much more severe, this is imminent for our future.

Clause 14 of the existing WSP has provisions to manage the sharing of water based on long-term averages, however it needs to reflect these changes, particularly low flows.

During the 2019 drought the water supply to Tyalgum village was severely affected, with no flows into the weir and high pollution levels. Council did not have sufficient water for the village supplies and water was trucked in. An increased allocation, depending on river health is suggested.

Water is Life

Yours Sincerely

Robbie Pateman

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Contact Information]