

MEDIA RELEASE

**Water Sharing Plan for the NSW Border Rivers
Regulated River Water Source**

Wednesday 1 July 2009

NSW Water Minister Phil Costa today announced the gazettal of a water sharing plan for the NSW Border Rivers Regulated River Water Source.

“The NSW Border Rivers water sharing plan will govern how water in the NSW half of the catchment can be pumped, stored and used,” Mr Costa said.

“The rules set down in this plan will balance the competing water needs of the environment and consumers for the next ten years.”

The Border Rivers Catchment lies west of the Great Dividing Range, and includes the border areas of Northern NSW and Southern Queensland.

“It is a critical water resource for the Murray-Darling Basin,” said Mr Costa.

“The development of the Plan has been aligned with the NSW – Qld Border Rivers Intergovernmental Agreement which was signed by the Premiers of NSW and Queensland in early 2009.

“This Agreement addresses and formalises water sharing arrangements between NSW and Queensland in the Border Rivers Catchment.”

“The Plan provides for the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement within NSW and brings the new water management regime of the *Water Management Act 2000* into effect for water users in the NSW Border Rivers Regulated River Water Source.”

“Queensland is now updating its water resource plan to ensure consistent and fair water sharing rules apply on both sides of the border.”

Mr Costa said that the plan restricts licensed water extraction within the limits agreed to under the Murray-Darling Basin Cap and sets water aside specifically for the environment.

“The plan ensures a portion of environmental water is held in Pindari Dam to protect, maintain and enhance the environmental assets of the Border Rivers catchment.”

“It also allocates water to meet the needs of the community, including water for town water supply, basic landholder rights, industries and agriculture.”

“Importantly, under the rules of the Plan, water trading may now commence between NSW and Queensland.”

“This will help support viable productive communities in both states by enabling licence holders to trade their water entitlements on the open market.”

Mr Costa said the Plan will maximise the social and economic benefits of water for communities in the NSW sections of the Border Rivers catchment.

A copy of the water sharing plan for the NSW Border Rivers Regulated River Water Source 2008 and background documents, can be obtained from the Department of Water and Energy’s website: www.dwe.nsw.gov.au

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