

**IMPACTS OF THE WATER AMENDMENT (RESTORING OUR RIVERS) ACT
2023 ON NSW REGIONAL COMMUNITIES**

Organisation: Running Stream Water Users Association

Date Received: 14 April 2025



re: Submission to Inquiry into the *Impacts of the Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Act 2023* on NSW regional communities

Running Stream Water Users Association members are particularly concerned with Term of Reference (b) *[the risks to the effective implementation of the Federal Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Act 2023 including unlicensed take of water and options to address these risks such as rules for floodplain harvesting]* and the impact of the unlicensed take of clean and contaminated water in Excluded Works Exemptions.

Of particular concern is that NSW DPHI is recommending State Significant Developments without adequate water supplies.

All other water users must have licences. It is only through the issue of licenses that the Department of Water can know the amount of water extracted from the system and thus adequately plan for sustainable extraction and maintain the health of the system.

The NSW DPHI is not requiring State Significant Developments to provide licensed water for their needs. Unlicensed water is unmetered and unregulated and the NSW Government and its Agencies have not considered licensed water users or any other water users in their allowance of this rule.

Allowing State Significant Developments these exemptions makes a joke of the whole water licensing system.

Cumulative Impact of Unlicensed Water Take on the Murray Darling Basin

The NSW Government's Water Group is unable to provide the cumulative total of the contaminated water take in NSW and therefore the impact of this unlicensed take on the Murray-Darling Basin is unknown.

Proper planning cannot be done if the cumulative impact of extraction is not considered.

We ask the Committee to investigate the cumulative impact of the unlicensed capture of contaminated water on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and to ensure that it is included in the Sustainable Diversion Limits in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

Sincerely

Fiona Sim, Vice President
for the Running Stream Water Users Association