

AUGUST 2023

Latest update on the Barossa Water Allocation Plan amendment

The Barossa Water Allocation Plan (WAP) is a legal document that aims to protect water as a natural resource for all users and water-dependent ecosystems. An amendment to the Barossa WAP is currently in progress with public consultation on the draft Plan to occur in early 2024.



What's happened

The Barossa WAP Project Team, which includes staff from the Northern and Yorke Landscape Board and Department for Environment and Water (DEW), have worked closely with the WAP Advisory Group, a team of stakeholder representatives, to consider the future of our water resources. The broader community, licensees and other stakeholders have been invited to contribute to the objectives of the amended Plan, view the scientific data and consider potential management options through:

- Monthly Advisory Group meetings
- An in-person, open forum held at The Barossa Cellar conference centre in November 2022
- An online webinar in January 2023, with presentations uploaded to the [Board's website](#)
- YourSAy webpage with reference material and an online survey – January to April 2023
- Sharing information via stakeholder networks such as local government, Regional Development Australia, Barossa Australia, Barossa Improved Grazing Group and Primary Producers SA
- Engagement activities with three First Nations, including development of the inaugural First Nations Heritage Water chapter and establishing the cultural objectives and values to be incorporated in the Plan.

Resources

A series of resources have supported this engagement and are available on the Board's Barossa WAP webpage at <https://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/ny/water/water-allocation-plans/barossa-wap>.

Presentations from the public forums and fact sheets on the following topics are available.

- unbundled water licensing
- surface and groundwater status
- ecological condition
- issues and management options

Common themes from feedback

The community and stakeholders were invited to have their say on 8 proposed options for managing Barossa's water resources. The feedback revealed:

- High regard for protecting the environment and water resources
- Concern about the potential economic impacts and water security
- A sense of urgency to manage water resources mixed with the need for advanced notice to support business planning
- Majority support for management actions that apply to all areas rather than a targeted approach
- General agreement on the need for a flexible and adaptable management approach that can respond in an appropriate timeframe to the climate conditions and their impacts on water

Summary of support for management options

The overall objectives of the Barossa WAP were generally supported. Here is a summary of the level of support for each of the [proposed management options](#):

Option	Description	Level of support
1	Include thresholds that represent 'unacceptable' resource condition	Majority
2	Adaptive allocations in line with resource condition	Majority
3	Provision of additional flows through the system	Majority
4	Threshold flow rates for watercourse extractions	Majority
5	Encourage voluntary actions that may improve flows via activities outside of the plan	Majority
6	Reduce water access entitlements to reflect reduced capacity of the resource	Approx. 50:50
7	Dam volume reductions	Approx. 50:50
8	Dam removals	Approx. 50:50

What's next

Following completion of the updated draft Plan it will be submitted for legal review in 2023. It will then be presented for public consultation in early 2024 over a period of at least 2 months. To keep up-to-date, subscribe to Northern and Yorke Landscape Board's [Yakka newsletter](#) or visit the Board's website: [landscape.sa.gov.au/ny](https://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/ny).