



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW MURRAY-DARLING BASIN WATER SHARING PLANS APPROVED

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson today announced the commencement of two new water sharing plans covering NSW Murray-Darling Basin groundwater sources.

“These two plans, the *NSW Murray-Darling Basin Porous Rock Groundwater Sources* and the *NSW Murray Darling Basin Fractured Rock Groundwater Sources*, outline how water will be shared between users and the environment over the next 10 years,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The plans will provide a secure and sustainable water supply for all users and improve the health of our connected riverine and groundwater dependent ecosystems by addressing current needs, future requirements and the setting aside of environmental water.

“It is only by taking care of the environment that we can guarantee clean healthy water supplies for a range of needs and users, particularly for future generations.”

Ms Hodgkinson said the development of the water sharing plans involved extensive consultation and recommendations from a wide range of water users and community groups.

“These water sharing plans are essential for the sustainable management of groundwater resources, and providing the community, environment, towns, agriculture and industry with security and certainty of access.

“In essence, these water sharing plans are about protecting the water sources, establishing environmental water rules, setting limits on extractions, enhancing trading and ensuring basic landholder rights to access water,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

The plans cover porous rock and fractured rock groundwater aquifers that are within the NSW section of the Murray-Darling Basin and are not covered by other specific surface water and alluvial groundwater plans. Along with alluvial plans and the water sharing plan for the groundwater sources overlying the Great Artesian Basin, which are under development, these plans bring all groundwater within the Murray Darling Basin under the provisions of the *Water Management Act 2000*.

“All water licence holders affected by these plans will shortly receive information on what the plan means to their respective activities for accessing water,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

Copies of the water sharing plans are available on the NSW Office of Water website - www.water.nsw.gov.au