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HOLBROOK SEEDS PTY LTD

December 16, 2010

Committee Secretariat
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a water user on the 014 Billabong Creek Groundwater Alluvium.

I represent other waters users on this alluvium.

I am very concerned at the proposed reduction in the proposed draft report issued by NSW Office of Water, which I have attached.

The aquifer is not over allocated, is very well managed and has never been over used.

The recharge is 12,500 ml/yr
The annual average extraction is 3,567 ml/yr
The licences entitlement for irrigation is 3,680 ml/yr
The proposed landholder rights is 650 ml/yr

This is a reduction of 83% to irrigators.

We would suggest a 70% allocation of 12,500 ml/yr recharge to be more equitable and sustainable.

Yours sincerely,

SG Finlay

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Draft Report card for the Billabong Creek Alluvial Groundwater Source

Groundwater Source description	
<p>The Billabong Creek Alluvial Groundwater source (also known as the Billabong Creek Alluvium – Groundwater Management Area 014) is defined as the unconsolidated alluvial deposits associated with the Billabong Creek extending from Little Billabong in the east, to past Rand in the west where it meets the Lower Murray Alluvium Groundwater Management Area -016</p> <p>There are 3 main productive zones (aquifers) where groundwater occurs up to a depth of about 100m in alluvial formations. They are generally located between 10-20m (Upper Cowra formation), 20-40m (Lower Cowra formation) and 60-100m (Lachlan formation).</p> <p>The most productive aquifer is the deeper Lachlan formation aquifer. Generally all the aquifers are hydraulically connected to a varying degree so the groundwater source is managed as one aquifer system with management rules equally applying to all aquifers.</p> <p>The Billabong Creek Alluvial water source is recharged by rainfall, streamflow, and flood events. Salinity in the shallow aquifer is lowest in the upper part of the catchment or in sand lenses close to the creek but in the lower part of the catchment the salinities are medium to high. In the deeper Lachlan aquifer salinity is relatively low.</p> <p>The water source is used predominantly for irrigation and town water supply, being the main source of water supply to Holbrook, Cúlcairn, Walla Walla and Walbundrie townships. There is a salt interception scheme at Morgan's Lookout and there is some use of the aquifer for industrial purposes.</p>	
Area	
765 km ²	Area of the Groundwater Source
Recharge	
12,500 ML/yr	<p>The amount of water that percolates into the aquifer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recharge from rainfall based on infiltration rate of 3% = 12,500 ML/yr
Planned environmental water	
8,956 ML/yr	<p>The volume of groundwater proposed to be preserved for the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The volume of recharge in excess of the long-term average annual extraction limit (LTAAEL) The total volume of groundwater in storage
Long-term average annual extraction limit	
3,567 ML/yr	<p>Current estimate as defined by the sum of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> average annual extractions over the period from 2000/01 to 2009/10 for those entitlements issued under Part 5 of the <i>Water Act 1912</i> in this water source that were metered = 2,894 ML/yr Made up of – 634ML/yr of Town Water Supply, 1500ML/yr Salt Interception Scheme, 760 ML for all other users an estimate of usage of unmetered licences (those less than 20ML/yr) – 23ML/yr an estimate of annual water requirements for domestic and stock rights and native title rights in this water source = 650 ML/yr.



Groundwater basic landholder rights	
650ML/yr	<p>The volume of groundwater set aside to meet all existing basic landholder rights (BLR).</p> <p>This volume may increase during the term of the plan if there is growth in access to BLR.</p>
Total licensed groundwater entitlement	
7,217 ML/yr	<p>The existing volume of groundwater licensed for extraction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51% of this volume is licensed for irrigation purposes, 21% (1505ML/yr) for town water supply purposes, 21% (1500ML/yr) for a salt interception scheme, and 7% for Industrial. • 47 groundwater licences currently exist.
Connectivity	
Highly connected/ Less highly connected	<p>Degree of connectivity between groundwater and surface water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water sources are defined as 'highly connected' if 70% or more of groundwater pumped in an irrigation season is derived from streamflow • Billabong Creek Alluvial groundwater source is not considered to be highly connected to the unregulated Billabong Creek.