

# Proposal Statement

for the development of the

# Northern Adelaide Plains Water Allocation Plan

July 2004



**Northern Adelaide and  
Barossa Catchment Water  
Management Board**

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The Proposal Statement for the Northern Adelaide Plains Water Allocation Plan has been prepared by the Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Management Board in line with the requirements of Section 102 of the *Water Resources Act 1997*.

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**Government  
of South Australia**

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## **Appendix A – Map of the Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area**



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The *Water Resources Act 1997* requires the Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Management Board to prepare a water allocation plan for each of the prescribed water resources in its area. A water allocation plan is a statutory instrument that will be used for various purposes in the administration of the *Water Resources Act 1997* (the Act); in particular, to guide the granting of licences to take water and the transfer of a licence and/or water allocation.

Before preparing the draft water allocation plan, the Board must prepare a proposal statement in accordance with Section 102 (1) of the *Water Resources Act 1997*. The proposal statement must:

- set out, in general terms, the proposed content of the water allocation plan;
- specify matters to be investigated by the Board before preparation of the draft plan; and
- set out the proposals (if any) for consultation on the draft plan that are in addition to the requirements of the *Water Resources Act 1997*.

The proposal statement does not explore issues in detail, or provide solutions, as this will be done as part of the process to prepare the plan.

A Water Allocation Plan for the Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area was adopted on 22 December 2000 by the then Minister for Water Resources, Hon Mark Brindal MP. Under the Act, the Board is required to review this plan every five years. The Board has reviewed the original plan, and this proposal statement is the beginning of a two year process to prepare a new water allocation plan for the Northern Adelaide Plains, as recommended by the review process.

## 1.2 The Prescribed Water Resources of the Northern Adelaide Plains

The wells in the Northern Adelaide Plains were originally proclaimed on 13 May 1976 under the *Water Resources Act 1976*. This region is known as the Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area. The boundary of this area is currently being expanded to incorporate the area known as the Kangaroo Flat Restricted Area. The prescribed resource of the Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area covers the groundwater systems (in a number of different aquifers) as shown in Appendix A. The new water allocation plan will address the management of the groundwater resources of the entire expanded Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area, incorporating both the original Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area and the Kangaroo Flat Restricted Area. However this proposal statement only covers the current prescribed wells area. A separate proposal statement will be prepared for the Kangaroo Flat area.

## **2. Proposed Content of the Water Allocation Plan**

The process to develop this proposal statement for the prescribed groundwater resources of the Northern Adelaide Plains commenced in January 2004 with a call for public submissions through advertisements in the local media. A number of issues have been identified in preliminary consultation, which will be further investigated and considered during the development of the water allocation plan.

The proposed content of the draft Northern Adelaide Plains Water Allocation Plan has been developed based on this initial consultation process. Broadly the water allocation plan will include the following items.

### **2.1 Water Resource Management**

- Determine mechanisms for the regular monitoring, evaluation and publication of status reports on the condition of the aquifer.
- An assessment of the effect of taking and using water from the prescribed water resource.
- An assessment of the quantity and quality of water in the prescribed resource.
- Determination and setting of sustainable extraction volumes and the provision of a review mechanism.
- Appropriate monitoring and evaluation, including performance indicators and reporting requirements at a regional and property scale.
- Trigger mechanisms for highlighting changes to water resource conditions such as water level and salinity.
- The definition of any management area boundaries within the prescribed area.
- The impacts of past, present and future land use change on water quantity and quality.
- Impacts of the importation of water.

### **2.2 Water Use and Management**

- Identification of existing demands on the water resource.
- Sustainable use of the water resource.
- Efficient water use.
- Current water requirements of stock, domestic and recreation and conservation of the environment.

### **2.3 Water Policy**

- Access rights and equitable allocation of water from the prescribed resource.
- Method by which water is allocated.
- Methods by which water can be transferred (both temporary and permanent transfers).
- Definition of any management area boundaries within the prescribed area.
- Criteria for permits for water affecting activities, including Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and importation of water.

## **2.4 Ecosystems and Natural Resources**

- Identification of dependant ecosystems.
- Environmental impacts of water use within the prescribed area and downstream.
- Assessment of the needs of dependant ecosystems, both within the prescribed area and downstream.
- Provision for the water needs of dependant ecosystems.

## **2.5 Economic and Social Development**

- Impacts of water allocation, short and long-term.
- Consideration of social and economic values within the prescribed area for landholders and the wider community.
- Future water requirements of stock, domestic and recreation.
- Water requirements of industry.
- Capacity and value of land.

### **3. Detailed Investigations to be Undertaken**

Key issues for investigation have been identified during the review of the water allocation plan. These issues will be investigated before preparation of the new water allocation plan, and are outlined below.

Issues identified to date include:

- Identification of ecological characteristics of Northern Adelaide Plains region with particular reference to the needs and health of ecosystems dependent on the prescribed water resource.
- Identification of hydrogeological characteristics of the Northern Adelaide Plains including the influence of the Kangaroo Flat region.
- Further definition of the acceptable extraction rates of the groundwater resource of Northern Adelaide Plains that will reduce pressure on the resource and allow for the rehabilitation of the aquifers where they may be stressed.
- Assessment on the impact of imported Bolivar water on stress level of the T1 and T2 aquifers.
- Implications for water management in the region of introducing additional water via the Bolivar pipeline scheme and from other sources.
- Determination of appropriate management area boundaries.
- Assessment of current demands (social, economic and environmental) on the prescribed resource.
- Options for use of ASR within the prescribed area.

## 4. Development Plan Amendments

The *Water Resources Act 1997* provides the opportunity to propose amendments to the development plans of constituent councils to ensure consistency between development plans and the water allocation plan. At the time of preparing this proposal statement, there were no specific recommendations for changes defined. It is anticipated that any recommendations for changes will be determined through the developmental phase of the plan.

Any changes proposed to development plans will be defined in consultation with Local Government and will contribute to input to the *Development Act 1993* Section 30 Review.

## 5. Links to Other Legislation

The draft water allocation plan will have regard to the benefits of consistency with other relevant Acts including the *Environment Protection Act 1993*, *Soil Conservation and Land Care Act 1989* and other such plans and policies or guidelines as prescribed by regulation. It will also consider the directions emerging from strategic documents such as the Wetlands Strategy for South Australia which is to be released this year following a public consultation phase, and have regard to the proposed Natural Resource Management Legislation.

## 6. Water Allocation Plan Development and Additional Consultation

An indicative timeframe to develop the water allocation plan is provided below:

Actions Required	Timeframe
Invite public comment on the content of the proposal statement	January 2004
Receive submissions on the content of the proposal statement	January 2004
Prepare Proposal Statement	March-April 2004
Reach agreement with the Minister on the contents of the proposal statement	July 2004
Invite public comment on the proposal statement	July - Aug 2004
The Minister and the Board to consider all comments made and amend proposal statement if necessary	Aug 2004
Prepare Draft Water Allocation Plan, including consultation with the community and specialist studies	Sept 2004 - June 2005
Consult on the Draft Water Allocation Plan (invite public submissions, hold public meeting)	July 2005
Finalise Water Allocation Plan	October 2005
Adoption of new Water Allocation Plan by Minister	December 2005

### 6.1 Additional Consultation

In addition to the consultation required under the Act, the Board will seek to further strengthen its planning process through the following consultative mechanisms.

#### 6.1.1 Water Allocation Planning Committee

It is envisaged a Water Allocation Planning Committee will be established as a sub-committee to assist the Board and extend the consultative process for the development of the Water Allocation Plan. The committee will most likely have representation from the Board, community, industry associations, Virginia Horticulture Centre and the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation.

The role of the committee will most likely be limited to providing to the Board, for its consideration, a balanced and researched review of options and recommendations for groundwater resource management in the Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area to ensure economic, social and environmental viability.

#### 6.1.2 Discussion or Issue Papers

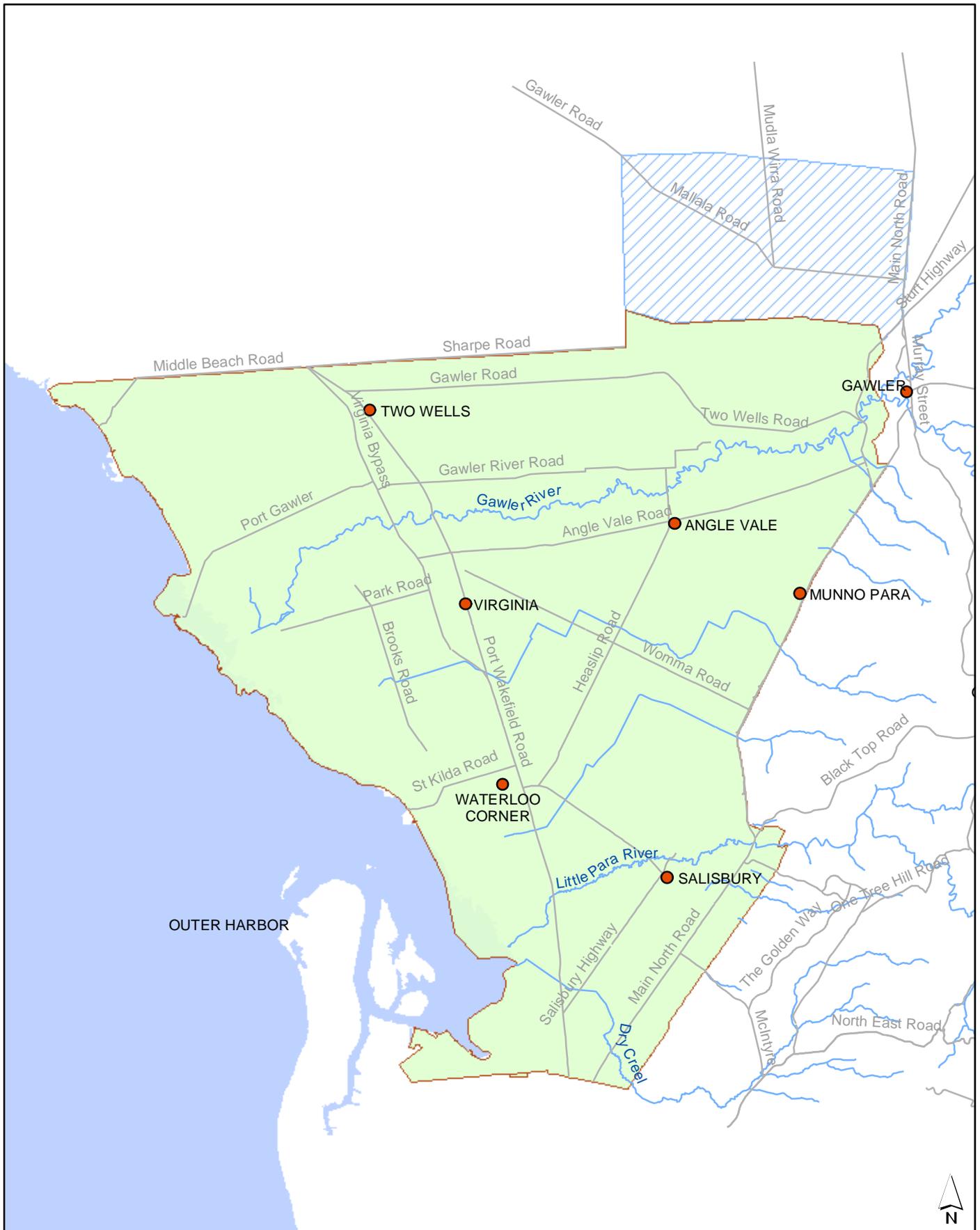
The Board will endeavour to develop a range of issue/topic papers for community information as a basis for consultation, particularly during the statutory consultation phase for the drafting of the Plan. This may include issues based workshops to discuss key elements of the water allocation plan.

### **6.1.3 Workshops**

The Board anticipates holding stakeholder group workshops to meet its statutory requirements during the development of the Water Allocation Plan.

# **Appendix A – Map of the Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area**





**Legend**

-  Kangaroo Flat Moratorium
-  Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells



**NORTHERN ADELAIDE PLAINS  
PREScribed WELLS AREA**

**AND KANGAROO FLAT  
MORATORIUM AREA**

**LOCATION PLAN**