

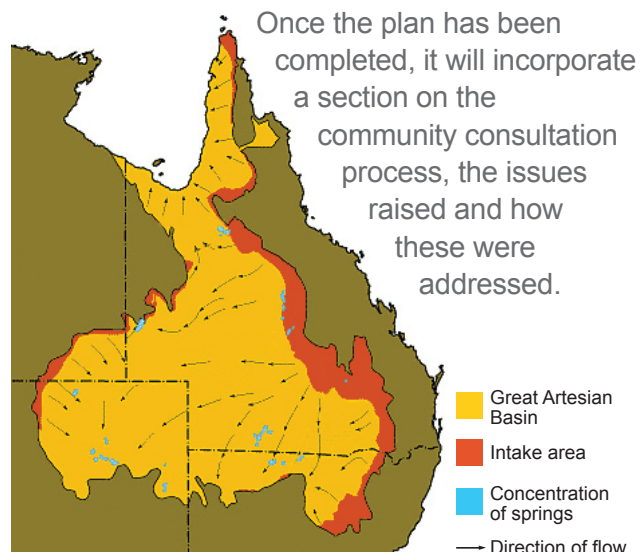


Community Consultation

The Territory Government recognises that community values and beliefs are an integral component of the water allocation planning process.

The community will have the opportunity to be involved in the regions water allocation planning at a number of levels ensuring an equitable and transparent process.

Information gathered and developed during the community consultation process will be freely accessible on a dedicated webpage. Members of the public are encouraged to comment on the water allocation planning process and to make formal submissions before and after a draft plan is released. All submissions will be considered and collated prior to the preparation of the draft plan and the final version.



Community Involvement

Community participation is vital in the water planning process. To ensure the GAB WAP is developed in a way that incorporates community values and needs, the Territory Government is encouraging the community to get involved.

You can:

Attend a community information session: Which will provide an overview about the water resources in the region, water allocation planning and how you can get involved.

Provide feedback: You can make suggestions anytime throughout the process by sending emails to alicewaterplan@nt.gov.au

Before the Plan is finalised a draft version will be publicly released for a formal submission period. This will give everyone the opportunity to review the proposed plan and provide feedback.

Stay informed: Talk to a Water Resources representative, visit the website for the latest information or register your details online so you can be included on the email newsgroup.

More Information

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Water Allocation Planning

Great Artesian Basin Water Control District





Water Allocation Planning

Water is a precious resource throughout the Northern Territory and crucial to the unique ecosystems, community and industries which it supports.

The *Water Act (NT) 1992* (the Water Act) is the legislation which provides for the investigation, allocation for use, and management of water resources by the Territory Government. This includes the protection of water supply for environmental, economic, recreational, social and cultural uses.

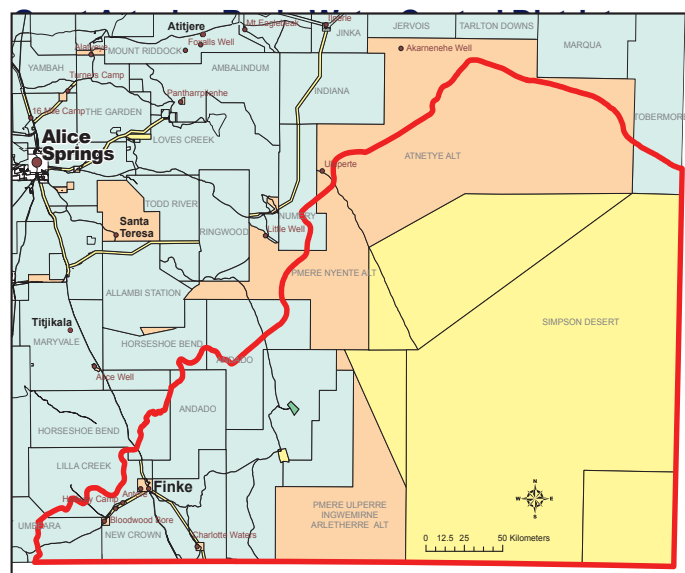
The Great Artesian Basin (GAB) Water Control District was declared in January 2010. The commencement of the water allocation planning process for the Great Artesian Basin Water Control District was declared by the Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and Heritage in July 2010. The Water Allocation Plan will establish a framework to share water between human and environmental needs and once finalised will be in place for up to ten years.

The Aquifer

The GAB underlies 22 per cent of Australian land mass and has been estimated to store between 10 (NSW) to 65 (QLD) million gigalitres of water. Around 5 per cent of the Basin underlies the Northern Territory with the main aquifer in this portion being in the De Souza Sandstone. The De Souza Sandstone consists of fine to coarse grained sandstone.

The overlying Rumbalara Shale acts as the confining layer and contains claystone.

The water quality in the De Souza Sandstone is generally very good and groundwater extracted from this resource in the Territory, is predominantly used for domestic use and to water stock. Poorer quality water occurs within thin sandstone layers at the base of the Rumbalara Shale.



The demand on water resources in the GAB Water Control District region is increasing with the growth of mining and exploration activities.

A Water Allocation Plan (WAP) will ensure equitable management of water in the the Territory portion of the GAB and provide for the environment while maintaining growth and sustainability. WAPs are already in place for the Queensland, South Australian and New South Wales portions of the GAB.

The Great Artesian Basin Water Control District

The GAB Water Control District occupies the southeast corner of the Northern Territory. Currently most water extracted in the District is used for pastoral and domestic purposes. However it is possible mining operations may commence in the district in the next five years resulting in much higher extraction rates which may have a significant impact on the resource.

The development of a WAP is of vital importance to people in this region who depend on its water resources. The WAP is being developed to provide security for water users and to define the rules which will enable developments that depend on ground water to proceed in a sustainable manner.

The WAP ensures the protection of our natural assets and will assist in maintaining environmental and Indigenous cultural values for future generations.

The GAB (NT) WAP will apply to all water contained within the water control district (see map). As the demand for water grows within the GAB Water Control District, the competing demand between the environment and human needs will influence the way groundwater from the Northern Territory portion of the GAB is managed.