

#### Licences and Water Trading

The rules for granting of licenses under the draft WAP and for the trading of licensed allocations is set out in detail in the draft WAP. All licences must meet the requirements of the *Water Act* and its regulations and associated approval forms. Licences will be granted for a period not exceeding 10 years and be renewable upon application after that period. Standard licence conditions, as outlined in the Water Regulations and associated approved forms, will be imposed to achieve the provisions in the draft WAP.

#### Review and Monitoring

In accordance with the *Water Act*, this WAP must be reviewed at intervals not longer than five years. The review will be generally informed by the outcomes of the monitoring program and research findings as well as community consultation. If necessary, the WAP can be modified or rewritten at the five year review.

#### Community Involvement

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

The community can comment on the water allocation planning process and make formal submissions on the draft WAP. All submissions will be considered and collated prior to the preparation of the final version of the Water Allocation Plan.

#### How to Provide Feedback

The draft WAP is open for community consultation until 15 July 2010. The entire draft WAP from which this Summary Paper was created is available at [www.nt.gov.au/consult](http://www.nt.gov.au/consult)

#### More Information

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## Summary Paper

# Western Davenport Water Control District

## Draft Water Allocation Plan 2010-2020





## Water Allocation Planning

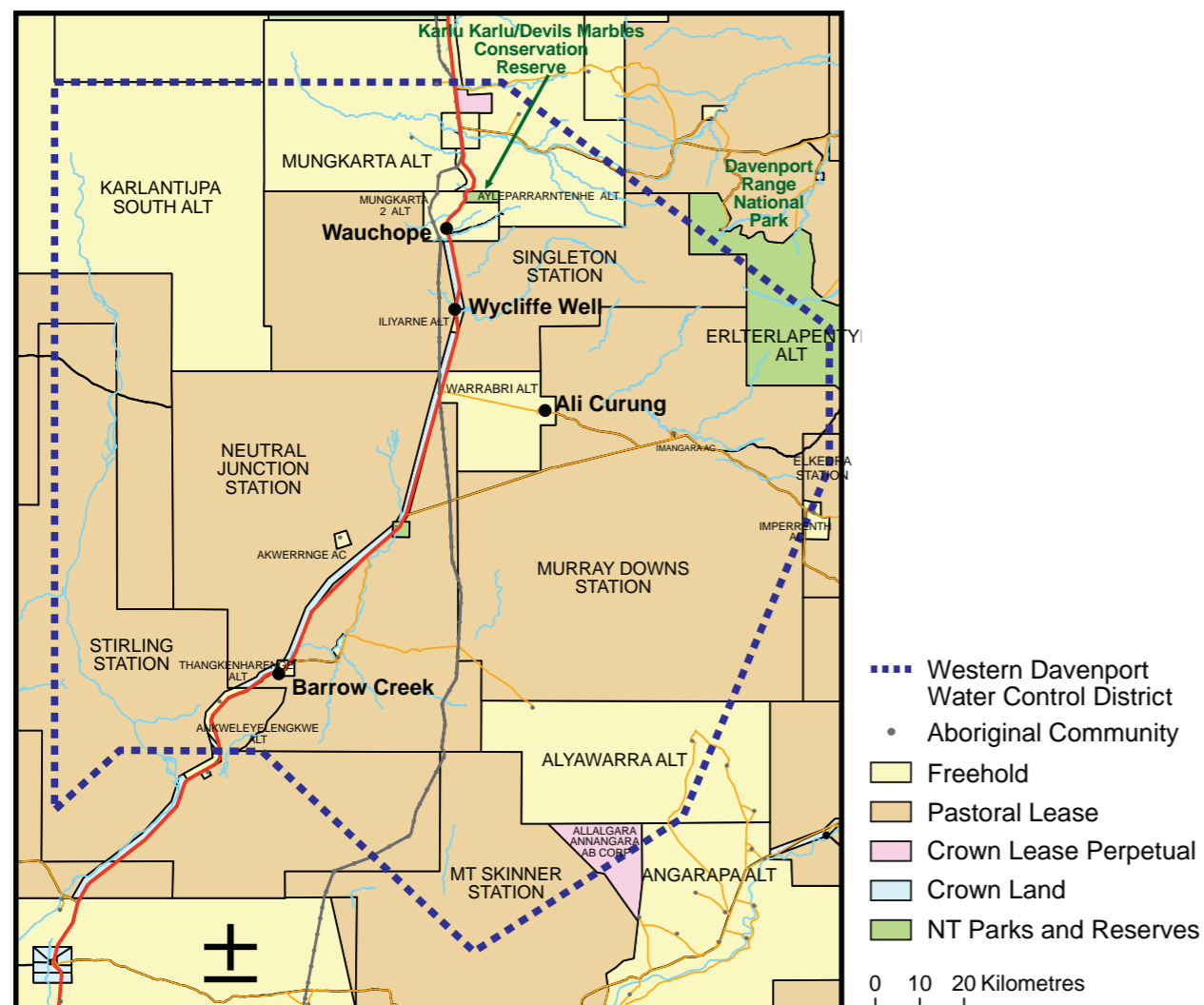
Water is a precious resource throughout the Northern Territory and crucial to the unique ecosystems, community and industries which it supports.

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

The water allocation planning process for the Western Davenport Water Control District (WCD) started in September 2009. The Water Allocation Plan (WAP) 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 Plan is intended to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of the water resources of the WCD.

## The Western Davenport District

The Western Davenport Water Control District extends over an area of 24 500 square kilometres stretching from Barrow Creek up to the Karlu Karlu/Devils Marbles Conservation Reserve and hosts significant water resources which are starting to be used for horticultural development, in addition to existing pastoral and community use.



## Water Allocation Plan Objectives

The four principal objectives of the draft WAP are to:

1. Maintain public water supply;
2. Ensure sustainable development;
3. Protect the environment; and
4. Support Indigenous culture and communities.

## The Resource

There are presently no known or significant surface water extraction activities in the Western Davenport WCD and the estimated total of the current groundwater extraction per year is less than 0.004% of estimated storage, which is approximately 29 000GL. Therefore the water resources of the WCD are currently considered to be in pristine health and condition.

Surface water in the WCD is ephemeral and there is not the issue of connectivity such as rises in temperate or tropical climates in terms of groundwater supplying base flow to the permanent watercourses of the area. There are a series of significant ephemeral rivers and creeks, swamps, claypans and floodouts in the WCD. These are important for the biodiversity of the area, are often associated with Indigenous cultural values and form a point of recharge to the groundwater system.

Underneath the Western Davenport WCD there are large groundwater resources with significant recharge from periodic runoff from the adjacent ranges and hills. These groundwater resources are found in two large extensive aquifers underlying the central sand plane of the WCD and much smaller multiple local aquifers mainly associated with the ranges.

## Future Use of the Water

Further groundwater extraction licence applications are anticipated for the WCD's horticultural enterprises in the next decade. Most will be to enable horticultural development on land under licence from Aboriginal Land Trusts. It is also possible that there will be some fodder cropping established on some cattle stations within the WCD. Preliminary indications by stakeholders are that groundwater extraction licence applications could be made for use on both Indigenous owned and pastoral land for up to 35 GL/yr in the next 10 years.

## Water Allocations

There are five management zones within the WCD which will be considered separately in terms of available allocation and trading. This draft WAP will make 80% of estimated annualised groundwater recharge into each management zone (as an estimation of sustainable yield) available for licensed extraction. This makes available about 44GL/yr of water for the whole of the WCD.

Also under this draft WAP, 95% of all surface water in the WCD is allocated to the environment and the remaining 5% is allocated to other beneficial uses.

Under the draft WAP, 80% of estimated annualised recharge to groundwater is allocated to the consumptive uses of agriculture, aquaculture, public water supply, industry and rural stock and domestic purposes (total 44GL/yr). The remainder of groundwater in the WCD is allocated to non-consumptive cultural needs and the environment.