

From: [Redacted]  
 To: [State Water Strategy Mailbox](mailto:State Water Strategy Mailbox)  
 Subject: recycled water for the northern rivers  
 Date: [Redacted]

Recycled purified water is the preferred future water supply to cater for new development in the northern rivers. This is because there is a significant supply of waste water from our council managed sewerage treatment plants to cater for anticipated demand. Waste water is a sustainable resource, even in times of drought when dams have reduced capacity due to lack of rainfall.

The northern rivers community and councils have spent a decade investigating future water options with water industry experts. We are committed to utilising established groundwater sources in the short term and gaining regulatory approval for recycled purified water in the long term. These options are affordable, can be provided when needed and are sustainable. The regional water authority seeks state government support to build and operate a pilot recycled water plant to demonstrate the practicality of this strategy and educate our community about its effectiveness.

**Future water strategy**

As an elected councillor since 2004 at Lismore City and a representative since 2008 on Rous County Council, our regional water authority, I have a thorough understanding of the water issues in the Northern Rivers region.

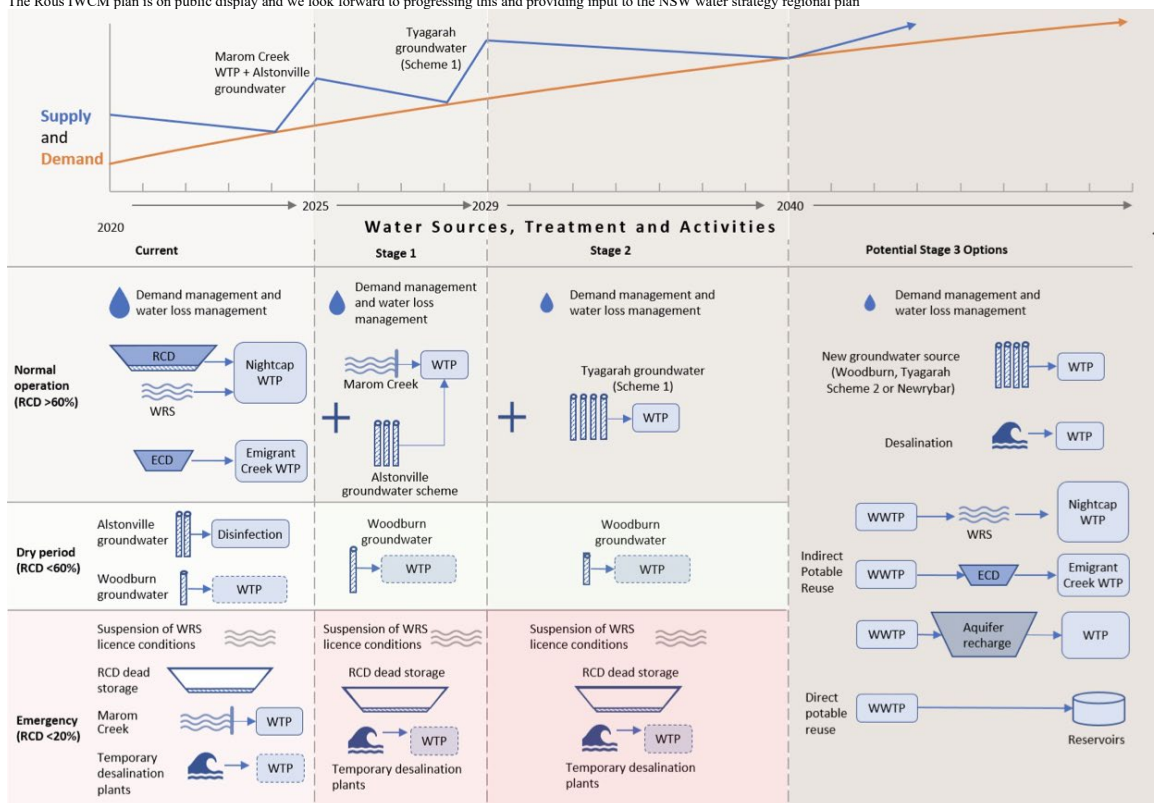
Rous has worked with our community, key stakeholders, Aboriginal representatives and water experts for over a decade to identify a future water strategy. This strategy was made policy in 2014 and recently reconfirmed in 2020 as ongoing demand management, groundwater in the short term and recycled purified water in the long term.

The groundwater sources can be brought online when needed to supply anticipated future demand and are located close to population growth areas. These diverse sources give Rous adequate water until 2040 and time to gain approvals for recycled purified water sources into the future.

Rous Future Water Strategy meets the following NSW Water Strategy priorities:

- 1 Provide community confidence by implementing known water source options that are affordable in the short term (groundwater) and sustainable in the long term (recycled purified water). An additional action is to start conversations with our community about the potential for recycled purified water.
- 2 Support Aboriginal values with meaningful action to return sites of cultural significance to First Nations agencies.
- 3 Improve ecosystem health by reducing extraction of water from creeks and rivers and tapping into the significant supplies of waste water already being produced.
- 4 Show resilience to change with affordable incremental sources that can be brought online quickly and when needed.
- 5 Enable economic growth by investing in new technologies and infrastructure (recycled purified water) and providing affordable water to meet anticipated demand from new housing.
- 6 Ensure our cities and villages are liveable by providing diverse water supplies that are independent of rainfall.
- 7 Contribute to an innovative water sector by progressing regulatory reform for recycled purified water and providing good quality, abundant, drought proof water for the future.

The Rous IWCM plan is on public display and we look forward to progressing this and providing input to the NSW water strategy regional plan.



**State government support**

Rous County Council, the water supply authority for the northern rivers region, is committed to recycled purified water. This is an under utilised resource with significant potential. We need state government support to build a pilot plant and demonstrate to our community and regulatory authorities that recycled purified water is affordable, sustainable and safe.

Regards

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