

## Public Notice

### Preliminary public consultation notice – Replacement of the Water Plan (Gulf) 2007 – s44 of the *Water Act 2000*

#### 1. Proposal to replace the Water Plan (Gulf) 2007

Notice is given under section 44 of the *Water Act 2000* that the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water proposes to replace the Water Plan (Gulf) 2007 (the water plan).

#### 2. Water to which the water plan will apply

It is proposed that the replacement water plan will continue to apply to the following water as described in the water plan area including:

- water in a watercourse or lake; and
- water in springs not connected to Great Artesian Basin water; and
- overland flow water, other than water in springs connected to Great Artesian Basin water; and
- underground water that is not Great Artesian Basin water

The water plan area is shown in **Figure 1**.

#### 3. Reason for preparing the replacement water plan

The water plan is due to expire on 1 November 2027. The [2023 Ministers Performance Assessment Report](#) of the Water Plan (Gulf) 2007 indicated the implementation of the plan has been effective in achieving most of the plan's outcomes. However, a review and replacement of the water plan is necessary to respond to increasing water demand, as well as the intricate nature of the emerging challenges identified in the performance assessment report.

To ensure the water plan continues to advance the sustainable management of water resources, the following issues and risks need to be considered:

- water management arrangements, including surface water, overland flow management thresholds and arrangements for groundwater hydraulically connected to surface water
- the boundary of the water plan area
- incorporating best-available science, including consideration of climate change on water availability and the water needs for the environment
- effectiveness of outcomes, including standardising alike outcomes and developing stand-alone cultural outcomes for First Nations people
- current and emerging interests of Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples and Native Title Holders in relation to water resources in the Moreton water plan area
- identifying unallocated water, including assessing demand for additional water supplies
- growing water needs, including identifying options to meet growing demand for new irrigated agriculture, urban water and critical minerals while balancing associated impacts on other water interests and values
- water entitlements, including the potential for water licences to be converted to water allocations
- water trading, including identifying any barriers to accessing the existing trading framework and the suitability of the existing gauging station network to support trading
- requirements under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

To address these issues, I propose to prepare a replacement water plan. It is also proposed that as part of the Gulf water plan replacement process, other documents will be prepared or amended to give

effect to section 1259 of the *Water Act 2000*, where provisions of the current Gulf Resource Operations Plan will be stated in other water planning instruments. These include a Water Management Protocol, Resource Operations Licences, Distribution Operations Licences, Operations Manuals and Water Entitlement Notices.

## 4. Proposed arrangements for consultation

Submissions are now being sought. I encourage anyone with an interest in the Gulf water plan catchments to put forward their thoughts on water management in the plan area through a submission.

Submissions received and engagement with key stakeholders including water users, water supply scheme operators, Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and other interest groups will inform the development of the draft replacement plan.

There will be further opportunity for consultation through a public submissions process and meetings with key stakeholders following the release of the draft replacement water plan.

## 5. Enquiries and submission process

For further information on this consultation, search “Gulf water plan” at [www.rdmw.qld.gov.au](http://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au).

To make a submission on water planning issues within the Gulf water plan area please contact the department:

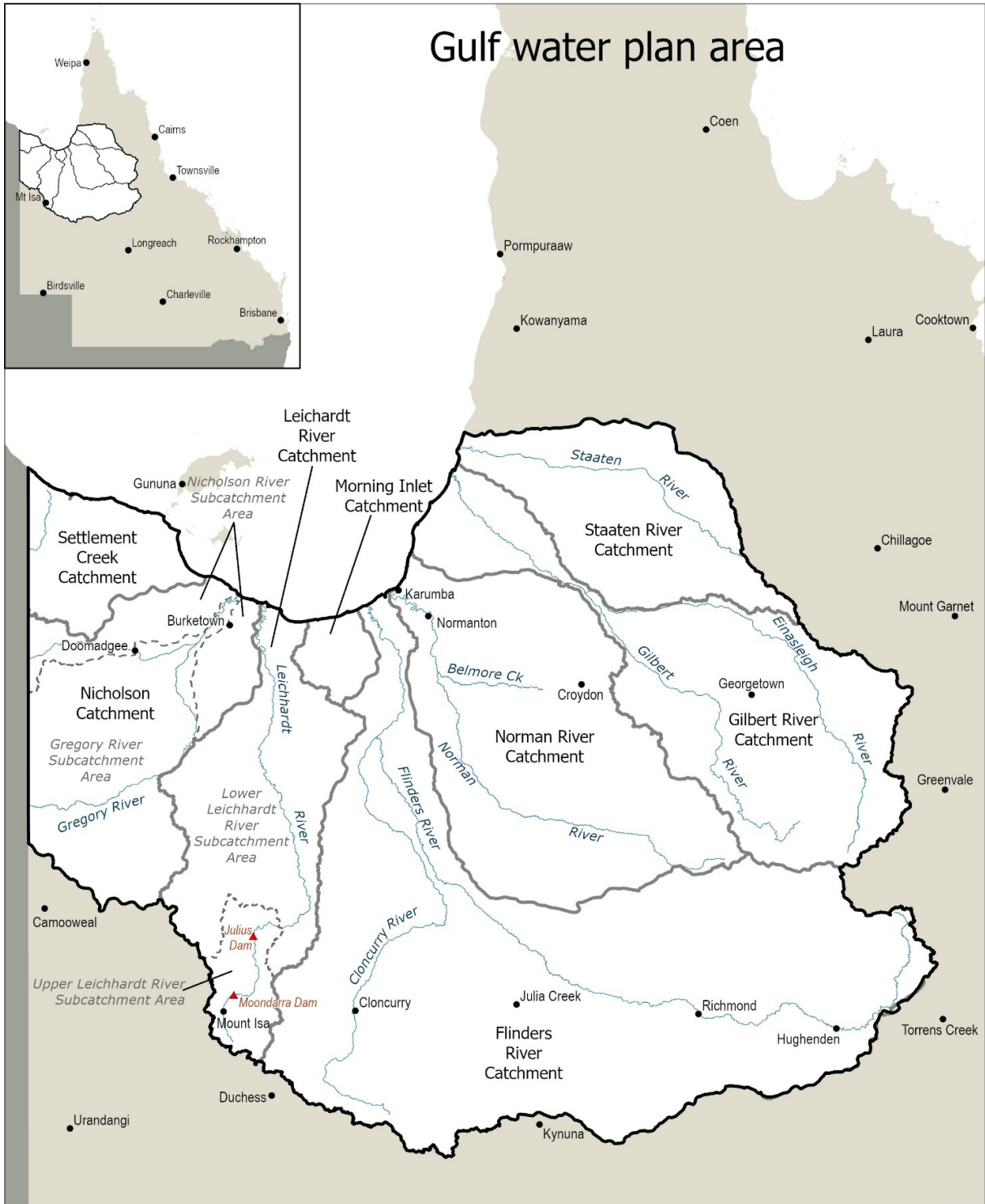
- email [NorthWPS@rdmw.qld.gov.au](mailto:NorthWPS@rdmw.qld.gov.au)
- phone 1800 822 100
- post to  
Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water  
Water Services North Region  
Attention: Manager Water Planning and Science  
PO Box 156, Mareeba QLD 4880

Preliminary consultation submissions will close on 19 July 2024.

This notice is dated 15 March 2024

The Hon. Glenn Butcher MP  
Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water

Ingrid Fomiatti Minnesma  
Executive Director Northern Region (as the Chief Executive’s delegate)



SDS231059

- Town
- ▲ Storage infrastructure
- ~ Major watercourse
- ▭ Gulf water plan area
- ▭ Catchment
- - - Subcatchment

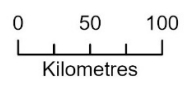


Figure 1: Map of the Gulf water plan area