

Rookwood Weir Water Supply Scheme

Fact Sheet: Proposed Resource Operations Licence for the weir's operational stage

September 2022

Summary

- Rookwood Weir is currently under construction in the Fitzroy River near the town of Gogango with construction due for completion in 2023.
- Sunwater and the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW) have now commenced consultation on proposed operational rules for the Rookwood Weir Water Supply Scheme (WSS).
- This Fact Sheet describes the proposed Resource Operations Licence for the operation of the weir.
- To view the draft Rookwood Weir WSS Resource Operations Licence, visit the project's [Water Plan page](https://bit.ly/RookwoodWaterPlan) (bit.ly/RookwoodWaterPlan).
- The proposed rules will maintain existing supply reliability for current water allocations in the Fitzroy River.
- Public drop-in sessions are being held to provide stakeholders the opportunity to discuss the proposed Rookwood Weir operational rules.
- The proposed operating rules can only take effect once approved by DRDMW.

What is a Resource Operations Licence?

Resource Operations Licences (ROLs) are developed under the *Water Act 2000* (Qld) to allow an operator of water infrastructure to sustainably manage and supply water within a scheme. A ROL can only be granted within a water plan area.

The ROL is one of the key operational instruments which provides infrastructure details and authority to the owner of a supply scheme to operate the works and distribute water to customers.

Rookwood Weir Resource Operations Licence (ROL)

Rookwood Weir will be owned by the State of Queensland (represented by DRDMW) and Sunwater has been authorised to manage the Rookwood Weir WSS on behalf of DRDMW.

What does a ROL include?

The Rookwood Weir WSS ROL specifies details for Rookwood Weir and sets rules which the weir owner must comply with to operate the infrastructure and distribute water to customers with water allocations. It also sets out conditions to ensure the requirements of the Fitzroy Basin Water Plan are met, including:

- the requirement for an Operations Manual – information provided in a separate Operations Manual Fact Sheet
- environmental management rules
- water metering obligations
- monitoring and reporting requirements
- other conditions including the capture and publishing of temporary trade (seasonal assignment) and streamflow data.

Environmental management rules

The environmental management rules for the Rookwood Weir WSS ensure that the seasonal base flows and first post-winter flow event objectives and strategy are met. Similar to Sunwater's Eden Bann Weir operations; these environmental objectives are met through operational releases to meet specific levels in the Fitzroy Barrage as described in the Rookwood Weir WSS Operations Manual.

Specific rules are in place to ensure that the operation of Rookwood Weir will not negatively impact on the natural ecosystem, including protecting water quality and avoiding bank slumping and fish stranding. The Fitzroy River is home to the endangered White-Throated Snapping Turtle and threatened Fitzroy River Turtle. The Rookwood Weir WSS rules are designed to protect and manage turtle nesting and incubation downstream of the weir.

Additionally, Rookwood Weir will have a fish lock and Queensland's first turtle ramp to allow for fish and turtle passage past the weir. The ROL states that all water released from Rookwood Weir must be made through the fish and turtle way. When Rookwood Weir is at lower levels and the Fitzroy River is in a dry river state, the fish and turtle way will run on five-weekly pulse flow to increase fish and turtle migration as far down the river as possible.

Monitoring and reporting requirements

The Rookwood Weir WSS will require monitoring of:

- streamflow and water levels
- releases from the storage
- waterhole monitoring
- enacting restriction periods (as described in the Rookwood Weir WSS Operations Manual)
- water taken by customers
- temporary trades including the price of these trades
- natural ecosystems, for RWSS specifically this includes implementing the [turtle species management plan](#).

Resembling other ROLs in Queensland, the Rookwood Weir WSS will require quarterly and annual reporting submitted to DRDMW to ensure compliance and inform assessment of the effectiveness of the Fitzroy Basin Water Plan. Other reporting includes operational reports when a non-compliance is detected or during times of an emergency event.

Regulatory considerations

Rookwood Weir is currently being constructed under a ROL which was granted on 31 March 2021 and amended on 25 May 2022. The operational ROL for Rookwood Weir will be an amendment to the constructing ROL. Under section 184 of the *Water Act 2000* (Qld), the owner of Rookwood Weir can make an application to DRDMW to amend a ROL.

While Rookwood Weir is owned by the State (represented by DRDMW), DRDMW has provided Sunwater consent to action on its behalf an application for the Rookwood Weir WSS ROL and Operations Manual. DRDMW can approve the change if the application:

- meets water plan outcomes and measures
- meets water plan water allocation security objectives and environmental flow objectives
- is developed in consultation with all affected persons.

Next steps

Consultation

Sunwater and DRDMW have now commenced consultation with interested individuals and organisations to discuss the proposed Rookwood Weir WSS operational rules.

As part of the consultation, the following drop-in information sessions will be held to provide groups the opportunity to share their views, ask questions and raise concerns regarding the proposed Rookwood Weir WSS operating rules:

Location	Date	Time
Duaringa - Central Highland Regional Council Community Centre, Williams Street	20 September 2022	9:00am-12:00pm
Gogango - Gogango Town Hall, 12 Willis Street	20 September 2022	1:00pm-4:00pm
Alton Downs Hall - 1569 Ridgeland Road (Cnr Nicholson Road)	21 September 2022	9:00am-12:00pm
Rockhampton - Customs House, 208 Quay Street	21 September 2022	1:00pm-4:00pm

Once consultation concludes on 10 October 2022, Sunwater will consider any issues raised before making a formal application to DRDMW. Approval for the ROL and Operations Manual is required before the construction of Rookwood Weir is completed in 2023.

Submitting feedback

To discuss the proposed operating rules further, contact the Rookwood Weir Project hotline on 1800 423 213 or submit feedback to rookwood.weir@sunwater.com.au.