



Where Water Flows
Life Grows

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 - 2016

Namoi Water

Strategic Plan

2014 - 2016



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Overview

Namoi Water is the peak industry group for irrigated agriculture in the Peel, Upper Namoi and Lower Namoi Valleys in the North West of NSW. It is a non-profit, non-political organisation supporting members to achieve a sustainable irrigation industry that meets the environmental, economic and social needs of our local communities.

Namoi Water is an amalgamation of a range of water user groups including groundwater, regulated, unregulated and town water. The original groups included the Coordinating Committee of the Namoi Valley Water Users' Associations, the Lower Namoi Groundwater Advisory Association and the Upper Namoi Water Users Association. These groups were merged into a single entity in 2005 which is now Namoi Water.

Process

This Strategic Plan was developed through a consultative process held during 2013. Initially a workshop was held with Board Members and Executive staff in June that identified the key issues, the vision and began to solidify the objectives required under the first two prioritised key issues.

A second workshop was held in December of 2013 where the actions, responsibilities, KPIs and budget impacts were further developed.

During the amalgamation process in 2005 a Draft Business Plan was developed by Michelle Ward. This information has also been incorporated into this Strategic Planning process.

It is anticipated that the Strategic Plan will be reviewed and updated on a six monthly basis from 2014 to 2016.

Purpose

The purpose of the Namoi Water Strategic Plan is to:

1. Provide a clear path for the future of the group, leading to an improved succession of group position holders
2. Better understand the role board members play and the skills they bring to the group
3. Provide focus through prioritisation of Namoi Water objectives and the desired achievements
4. Be able to more effectively engage members in identifying what they see as value provided by Namoi Water, thereby more efficiently directing member resources and deliver on what member's see as valuable

Namoi Water Vision is that....

All water entitlements are recognised at all levels of government, irrigation is highly valued across the community and usage is based on our plan for sustainable communities.

NW Competitive Advantage

- Operate at the Namoi Catchment Scale, focussing specifically on water
- We were first to be engaged on the issue of water with a long history of being active
- We are largely voluntary, membership-based
- We have a balanced production and environmental view
- We live in the community and take a whole-of-community perspective
- We are approachable and open to local input
- We provide local leadership (planning, lobbying and advocacy on water issues) as well as technical knowledge
- We sometimes act representatively from the whole northern area of the Darling Basin

Key Issues

In order to properly fulfil this Vision, Namoi Water has identified its Key Issues in priority order. These are:

Key Issue One-Preservation of Water Rights

Namoi Water seeks to preserve the rights of water users. In an environment that lacks connectivity and good quality communication between water users and the wider community (particularly metropolitan people) and lacks water users' (at a community level) involvement in government planning and where there is often misinformation, a lack of knowledge or interest group influence influencing common perceptions and in turn, government policy it is increasingly difficult to ensure that water users' rights are upheld.

Key Issue Two-Sustainable Water Use

Namoi Water seeks to ensure that all water users have access to good quality water that is managed, allocated and used sustainably. In the face of increasing demand for water across a range of users for a plethora of uses, sustainable access and use is paramount.

Key Issue Three-In-house Operations

In order to continue to be relevant and necessary to Namoi Water members, the organisation must communicate to members its achievements, position on issues and future plans, run an efficient and effective organisation, base its decisions on good quality, science-based information and be proactive, forward thinking and well planned.

Each of these three Key Issues has been fleshed out and strategies developed to appropriately deal with each Key Issue. Each Key Issue has a number of strategies, and each of the strategies has a number of actions required to achieve that strategy. Each Action is allocated Responsibility (Resp.), Timing (Time), Key Performance Indicator/s (KPI) and Budget. The Budget column refers only to the likely cost implication to NW. The final column titled A is to be used to tick (✓) when the KPI has been achieved.

It is recognised that many of these actions will be undertaken in conjunction with each other and not developed in a vacuum, however they are presented under each of the Key Issues for ease of readability.

Key Issue One Preservation of Water Rights

1.1 Undertake legal and political campaigns to strengthen and preserve the legal rights of irrigators					
Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
1.1.1 Develop an Issues Paper, identify and approach other potential groups to joint resource this strategy such as NSW Farmers, local gov, CA, National Farmers etc	Tim Duddy	February 2014	\$80,000 support raised from partners	\$20,000 in total	
1.1.2 Identify a suitable lawyer and engage them to provide advice on the issue		December 2013	Lawyer engaged		✓
1.1.3 Identify pressure points/weaknesses in government to inform the lobby campaign		December 2013	Weaknesses identified		
1.1.4 Seek members' permission to contribute financially to the strategy		February 2014	Members approval of expenditure		
1.1.5 Utilise the impending 2014 election to raise the issue and lobby to use the issue as an election promise		March 2014	Water rights issues are frequently heard during the election campaign		
1.1.6 Continue to lobby the government of the day to ensure there is equal accountability between different industries in their use of water and of the importance of water in legislation and regulation		Ongoing - reassess in late 2014	NA	NA	

1.2 Undertake a communication campaign to improve the general public's opinion of the irrigation industry					
Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
1.2.1 Engage strategist to advise on ways to inform state wide public opinion	EO	December 2013	Strategist engaged		✓
1.2.2 Identify and approach other potential groups to joint resource this strategy such as NSW Farmers, NSW Irrigators, local gov, CA, National Farmers etc	EO	March 2014	Further \$10,000 support secured		
1.2.3 Develop a multipronged communications plan (including incorporating data and information gathered in 2.1 and 2.2 of Strategic Plan) and including identification of key messages for a state-wide audience	Strategist, overviewed by Board	May 2014	Communication plan adopted by NW	\$10,000	
1.2.5 Implement communications plan (see 3.3)	As per the ongoing Communications plan				

Key Issue Two Sustainable Water Use

2.1 Coordinate and undertake our own research and development to identify and benchmark a healthy river system and catchment

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
2.1.1 Establish a Working Group	EO	February 2014	Working Group established	NA	
2.1.2 Define the research needed based on an initial assessment of existing works around defining what a health river system looks like	NW Working Group	May 2014	Research question drafted	NA	
2.1.3 Canvass other organisations for what research already exists by writing a letter and following up with a call	EO	May 2014	Initial research collected	NA	
2.1.3 Collate and file in an easily retrievable system any relevant research as per strategy 3.2	EO	May 2014	Research filed	NA	
2.1.4 Undertake modelling using the “Smart Rivers System”	EO	June 2014	Modelling done	NA	
2.1.5 Identify possible funding avenues for research	EO	June 2014	Funding identified	NA	
2.1.6 Hold stakeholder workshop go establish financial partners, enhance existing research collection and further define the research question	NW Working Group	June 2014	Workshop 1 held	NA	
2.1.7 Develop a preliminary proposal to CRDC	EO	September 2014	PRP submitted	NA	
2.1.8 If successful, hold a second stakeholder workshop to further clarify research question and firm up partners	NW Working Group	November 2014	Second workshop held	NA	
2.1.9 If required, seek other funding avenues	EO	November 2014	Funding identified	NA	
2.1.10 If successful, develop a full proposal to CRDC	EO	January 2015	FRP submitted	NA	
2.1.11 If successful, undertake full research project for three years	NW Working Group overseeing Key Researcher	June 2015 – June 2018	Research project completed	TBA	

2.2 Develop a business case for the value of agriculture in the Namoi compared to that of extractive industries in terms of long term value to the local community					A
Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
2.2.1 Develop Terms of Reference for this project and seeking funding	EO	January 2014	TOR developed	NA	
2.2.2 Approach Agripath to develop the business case for the value of agriculture to the local community	EO and Mark Hamlin	April 2014	Business Case – Ag finished	Some likely	
2.2.3 Approach Dave Thompson (RDA) to develop the business case for the value of extractive industries to the local community	EO	April 2014	Business Case – extractives finished	NA	
2.2.4 Use the comparison of these two Business Cases to develop a presentation for a roadshow to local government, Namoi ROC, local water user members, government members and local media .	EO with local ag businesses	August 2014	Presentation to > 3 sources	NA	
2.3 Promote the sustainability of our production in terms of water usage and environmental impacts – the “We Can Keep Doing It Forever” message					A
Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
2.3.1 Source information, research and recent achievements/innovations/development on water use efficiency and environmental sustainability	EO	September 2014	Info gathered	NA	
2.3.2 Develop a reference paper to lobby NSW Irrigators, National Irrigators and NSW Farmers for the immediate need for a policy around promoting agriculture’s sustainability.	EO	September 2014	Reference paper presented	NA	
2.3.2 File this information and use it for media in urban areas	EO	Ongoing	Info filed	TBA	

Key Issue Three In-house Operations

3.1 Develop “Namoi River Catchment Plan” in order to be in a position to influence the Basin Planning Process and the Water Resource Plan

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
3.1.1 Utilise first two strategies to gather, collate and file existing information	EO	End 2014	Info filed	NA	
3.1.2 Use this to develop a best practice Plan for the Namoi River Catchment	EO	Mid 2015	Plan completed	NA	
3.1.3 Facilitate local action around environmental activities that improve ricer health	EO	After Mid 2015	Program of activities initiated	TBA	

3.2 Ensure suitable systems are maintained for saving and retrieving information

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
3.2.1 Establish and maintain a cloud system for storing and retrieving information	EO	Ongoing	Cloud maintained	NA	
3.2.2 Where applicable, allow public access to information	EO	Late 2014	Public Info Access established	NA	
3.2.3 Ensure regular training is provided so that staff and board members can utilise the system	EO	Ongoing	Training held 6 monthly	NA	

3.2 Maintain and build membership

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
3.2.1 Maintain regular outgoing communications with members promoting NW actions and policies	EO	Ongoing	Happy members	NA	
3.2.2 Survey members, investigate and implement feedback mechanisms from members	EO	2015	Feedback mechanism in place	NA	
3.2.3 Further investigate and implement a policy on conjunctive use plans	EO	2015	Policy position established	NA	

3.3 Utilise Communications to implement this strategy					
Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	
3.3.1 Develop Communications Plan	EO oversee	Feb 2014	Plan ready	Likely	
3.3.2 Implement communications plan	EO oversee	Ongoing	Plan used	Likely	
3.4 Systemise as much of Namoi Water’s activities as possible in order to reduce the time burden reacting to activities					
Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	KPI	Budget	A
3.4.1 Develop cheat sheet of often asked questions by members that the admin staff can use to respond	EO	Feb 2014	FAQ used by admin	NA	
3.4.2 Respond to members queries as required	EO	Ongoing	Members satisfaction rating	NA	
3.4.3 Ensure adequate time is spent on reading, researching and responding to issues as they arise	EO	Ongoing	EO knowledge of issues is good	NA	

Appendix One: Roles

President
 Vice President
 Secretary
 Treasurer
 Board Member
 Executive Officer

Appendix Two: Ground Rules

What would cause poor outcome today?	What are the groundrules?
If no-one has views on the strategic direction of the group	That all communication is useful and honest
Being unable to represent members views	That there are no digressions
No real idea of direction for the staff	No phones or text except in breaks
No real idea of direction for the board	
Don't get to the bottom of what provides value for members	
That members can't be part of the process	

Appendix Three: Who Else Operates in this Field?

- North West Local Land Services
- Kamilaroi Nations Claimants
- State Water
- NSW Office of Water
- NSW Office of Planning
- NSW Minerals Council
- NSW Farmers
- NSW Irrigators Council
- Northern Basin Advisory Committee
- Murray Darling Basin Committee/Authority
- National Farmers Federation
- National Irrigators Council
- Cotton Australia
- Gwydir, Macintyre and Boarder Rivers Irrigator Groups
- Peel Valley, Split Rock and Pian Water Users Groups
- Caroon Coal Action Group, People of the Plains, Maules Creek Community Council and North West Alliance
- Community
- Local, State and Federal Government

