



Frequently asked questions

Draft Policy 13:

Recreation within public drinking water source areas on Crown land

Q 1. What are the key differences between the original Policy 13, 2003 and draft Policy 13, 2012?

- A.** No significant policy changes are proposed. The aim of Policy 13, 2012 is to maintain the current types and level of recreation in the outer catchments of public drinking water source areas. New recreation is recommended to occur outside public drinking water source areas. Please note that:
- Significant format changes have occurred to make it consistent with current agency formatting.
 - The policy has been simplified (see also questions 2, 3 and 4 below).

Q 2. Why has the column titled ‘Proposed P1 PDWSAs’ in Policy 13, 2003 been removed from Policy 13, 2012?

- A.** This column was needed in Policy 13, 2003 because at that time some catchments were still being assessed to determine if they should become proclaimed public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs). Those assessments are now complete, so this column is not required in Policy 13, 2012.

Q 3. Why has reference to priority areas (P1, P2 or P3) been removed from Policy 13, 2012?

- A.** Priority areas are used to guide land use planning proposals being assessed by the Department of Planning and local government. They have not lent themselves well to the management of recreation activities in public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs).

In Policy 13, 2012 a simple approach has been developed that divides a PDWSA into two parts. The reservoir or wellhead protection zone and the rest of the PDWSA (called the outer catchment). This is consistent with the method used by the Standing Committee on Public Administration’s Inquiry into recreation within PDWSAs.

Q 4. Why have some activities listed in Policy 13, 2003 been removed from Policy 13, 2012?

- A.** Some of the activities listed in policy 13, 2003 were not considered to be recreation.

The activities removed include; military training, research/environment study, firewood gathering, native flora removal and soil/rock/gravel removal. The management of these activities in public drinking water source areas will be considered in other Department of Water processes and/or documents.

Q 5. Why did Government “note” Recommendation 1 of the Standing Committee on Public Administration report, when it supported the other 10 recommendations?

- A.** Government required Recommendation 1 to be further considered as part of the Policy 13 update process. Section 2.3.3 of draft Policy 13, 2012 explains how Recommendation 1 has been considered by the Department of Water and why no increased recreation is recommended in PDWSA.

Increased recreation in PDWSAs will increase water quality and public health risks, and increase water supply treatment costs. These risks and costs can be avoided by locating recreation outside PDWSAs in the future. The Standing Committee’s Report 11 to Parliament noted that many alternative recreation sites already exist outside PDWSAs for increased recreation. Policy 13, 2012 aims to maintain (not increase or decrease) the types and amount/level of recreation that currently exists in PDWSAs.

Q 6. Why is Policy 13 needed?

- A.** Policy 13 is needed to help address the water quality contamination and public health risks associated with recreation. Policy 13 helps us deliver a good balance of drinking water protection and recreation. A 2010 report to Parliament specifically considered this matter and made a number of recommendations and findings, including ongoing support for Policy 13.

Q 7. What will Policy 13, 2012 achieve?

- A.** It will help provide for the ongoing availability of a safe, good quality, lower cost public water supply.

It aims to protect water quality and public health, whilst maintaining the current level/amount of land based recreation in the outer catchment of public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs).

It also supports increased recreation opportunities outside PDWSA, and deproclamation over the next five years of up to eleven proclaimed PDWSAs making them available for increased recreation use.

Q 8. Where can recreation occur?

- A.** The focus of new recreation should be outside PDWSAs (subject to the Department of Environment and Conservation land management controls). The Standing Committee Report 11 to Parliament noted that many alternative recreation sites are available outside PDWSA. Information on available recreation areas can be obtained from State and Local Government agencies.

The existing amount of passive land based recreation is still supported in the outer catchments of public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs) consistent with Policy 13, 2012.

In addition, up to 11 PDWSA are expected to be deproclaimed within the next five years. These include: Bickley Brook Catchment Area (CA), Gooralong Brook Water Reserve (WR), Dirk Brook WR, Boddington Dam

CA, Murray River WR, Bancell Brook CA, Harvey Dam CA, Brunswick CA, Wellington Dam CA, Mullalyup WR and Padbury Reservoir CA. This will allow for increased recreation opportunities in these catchments.

Q 9. What is the meaning of 'acceptable at 2012 levels'?

- A. The objective is to maintain (not increase or decrease) the amount/level of passive land based recreation that currently occurs in the outer catchments of public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs).

The Department of Water will work with recreators to determine the existing 2012 level of recreation in the outer catchments of PDWSAs. This work will include an audit of existing management plans to determine recreation activity approvals.

Q 10. What is a designated area?

- A. An area that has been approved by the Department of Environment and Conservation or the Department of Water for a specific purpose in an approved management plan. Approved picnic areas, camping grounds and tracks or trails are examples of designated areas.

Q 11. What is a 'recreation management plan'?

- A. A Recreation management plan (in the context of Policy 13, 2012) is a document that identifies risks to water quality from a recreational activity, and describes how to deal with those risks. A generic recreation management plan can be developed for some activities (e.g. rogaining), leaving only event specific details (e.g. time and date) to be added.

The Department of Water is preparing a document to guide the development of 'Recreation management plans'.

Q 12. What is a public road?

- A. For the purpose of Policy 13, 2012 a public road includes cleared and graded roads with a gravel or bitumen/cement surface that are subject to regular maintenance. It does not include tracks or trails that exist for the purpose of fire control or infrastructure access/maintenance. Please also note that signs or barriers (e.g. gates) can limit or prohibit access on roads. Where this signage or barriers exist the road is not considered to be a public road.

Q 13. Will population growth impact on Policy 13, 2012?

- A. Due to population growth the number of people recreating and/or visiting the outer catchments of public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs) is likely to increase. This increase is recognised by the Department of Water, but it does not mean additional facilities will be supported in PDWSAs. The construction of additional recreational facilities, roads, tracks, trails, picnic areas, toilets etc, should be developed outside PDWSAs to cater for population growth. This approach protects PDWSAs and provides for increased recreation.

Q 14. Will recreation facilities be maintained in public drinking water source area outer catchments?

- A.** Existing approved recreation facilities will be maintained in PDWSA outer catchments, subject to ongoing funding and use. New recreation facilities are supported outside PDWSAs.

Q 15. How will increased recreation be funded?

- A.** Government recognised that funding options needed to be investigated as part of its August 2011, response to the Standing Committee's Report to Parliament. In that response Government has asked a collaborative working group (comprising the Department of Sport and Recreation, Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Health, Department of Water and Water Corporation) to report to it on this matter.

Q 16. When will Policy 13 be reviewed next?

- A.** Policy 13, 2012 is planned to be reviewed within five years of being approved. This timeframe fits in well with the planned deproclamation of up to eleven PDWSAs over that time. It will also allow sufficient time for decisions to be made on where recreation should be located and what recreation opportunities should be developed. The Department of Sport and Recreation and Department of Environment and Conservation are likely to lead this work in consultation with key stakeholders such as Local Government and recreation groups.