

Submission Writing Guide

10 billion litre/year Larrimah Farms Water Licence

Larrimah Farms have applied to extract 10 billion litres of water per year to mostly irrigated cotton from the aquifer that discharges into Bitter Springs and the Roper River. This is despite their land clearing permits making no mention of irrigated cotton as a prospective crop in the semi-arid region.

This licence would be issued under the highly controversial draft Mataranka Water Allocation Plan, which isn't even finalised yet.

The exact same water licence was revoked in 2021 following a merits review challenge by ECNT and NLC. The Government's own scientists warned that pumping too much water out of the ground at Larrimah could make some water flows to the Roper change direction, causing springs to stop flowing.

Independent scientists warned that this proposed extraction could run Larrimah's town water dry. Communities are already seeing the dire impacts of water extraction along the Roper River, with water levels being lower than they've ever seen, springs turning green, and the land around the river looking drier than it's ever looked.

The government are currently accepting feedback from community members and the Environment Centre has drafted this submission guide to assist with your submission writing.

Step 1: Introduce yourself

Share your story and paint a picture of who you are and why this matters to you; it's important that government decision makers understand the people who will be impacted by their decisions.



Step 2: Outline your concerns with the Larrimah Farms Licence Application

It's important to outline your concerns with the 10 billion litre per year licence application in your submission. Water licensing is crucial to ensuring water extraction does not impact the environmental and cultural values of our rivers, waterholes and billabongs. It's important that the government gets this right. The risks of over-extraction in this area include:

- Larrimah's town water could run dry.
- Reducing important aquifer discharges in South Mataranka at the iconic Bitter Springs. The Roper River relies on discharges from these springs to keep it flowing in the dry season.
- Reducing the underground water table could dry Livistona palms out, increasing fire risk.
- If there's less water flowing down the Roper, saltwater incursion could occur at the mouth of the river. This could impact Ngukurr's access to safe drinking water. These events could become more frequent with less water flowing down the river.
- Rivers need a minimum level of flows to sustain barramundi and sawfish populations. The plan proposes a dangerous decrease in flows which could impact these species.
- The community and traditional owners have not been adequately consulted.

Step 3: Submit your public comment

All submissions must be made in writing to the Controller of Water Resources, by emailing: water.licensing@nt.gov.au

You may also want to send your submission to the Environment Minister, to show how important this issue is to you: minister.worden@nt.gov.au and sign our [petition](#) to email the Water Minister.

You must make your submission by 5pm on 19 July 2024 for it to be counted.

Thank you for making a submission!

More info via admin@ecnt.org

