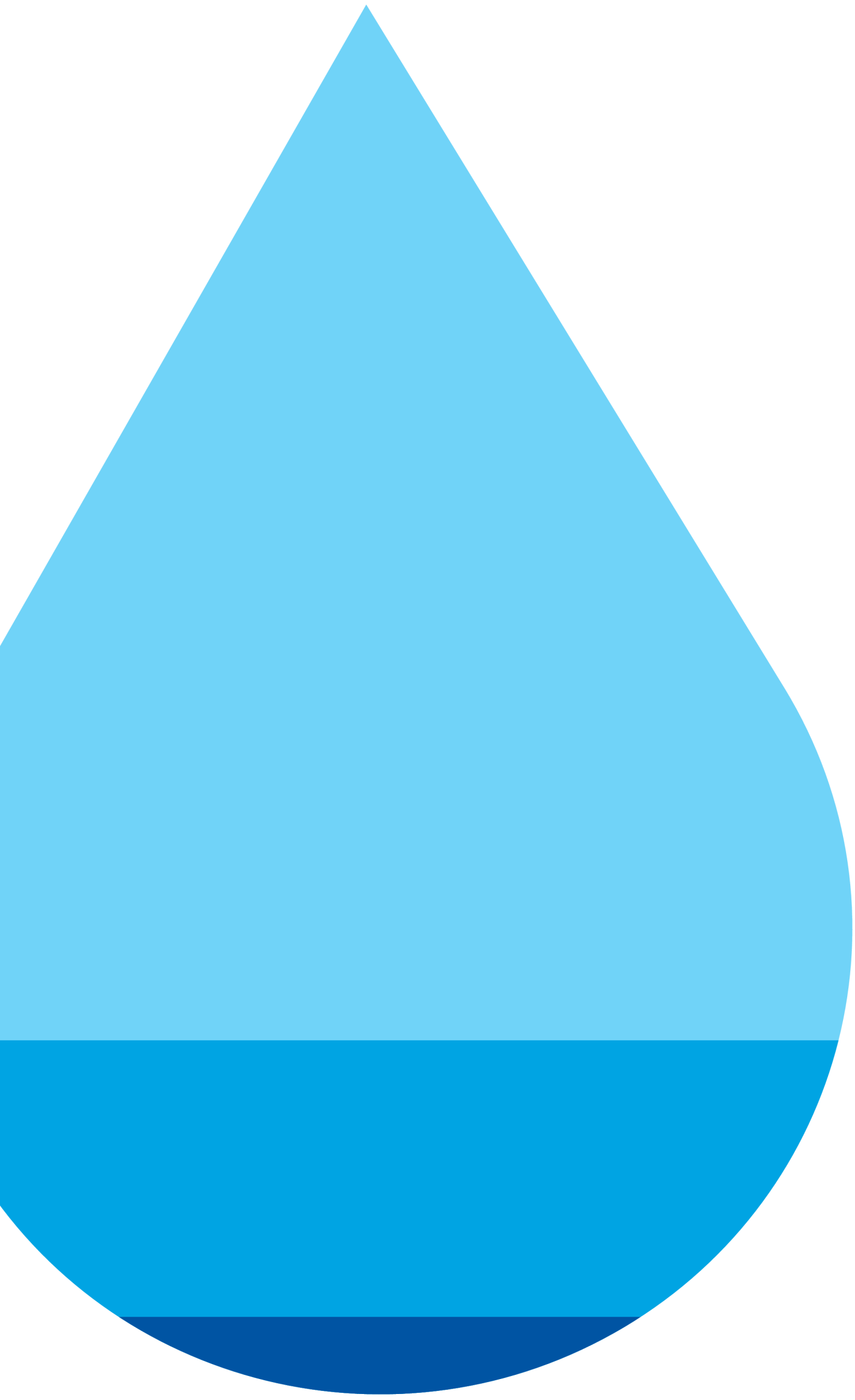
THE HUNTER RIVER 2023

A precious water resource for the Upper Hunter community

NSW MINING

Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue



2023 was a drier than average year, with

252,000 MEGALITRES

of water entering the river system in the Upper Hunter

68.8%

of that water stayed in the Hunter River System

The amount of water extracted and used by farmers, residents and businesses was

28.6%

MINING used just **2.7%** of the water in the system

The Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue developed this resource using the best available information supplied by industry. Since water accounting is a complex task that relies on estimates and computer models, there are corresponding limits to the accuracy of the information. Key figures presented in this publication have been rounded. Data represnted is based on the water year.

Sources: Bureau of Meteorology; DPI Water; NSW Minerals Council.

For more information:

miningdialogue.com.au

UPPER HUNTER WATER BALANCE 2023

Mining's water use

Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue

The Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue assessed water use by the mining industry in the Upper Hunter in 2023. Using a common accounting framework, mining companies have reported their water inflows and outflows from operations. This has helped them to manage their water use and embark on water saving and reuse opportunities.

Hunter River System Extraction

99.1GL
Net Rainfall/Runoff and Evaporation

173.3GL
Flow Passing Singleton
(Including flows for the environment)
= 68.8%

152.9GL
Environmental Flows including Dam Release

78.7GL
Total Extraction from Hunter River
= 22.5%

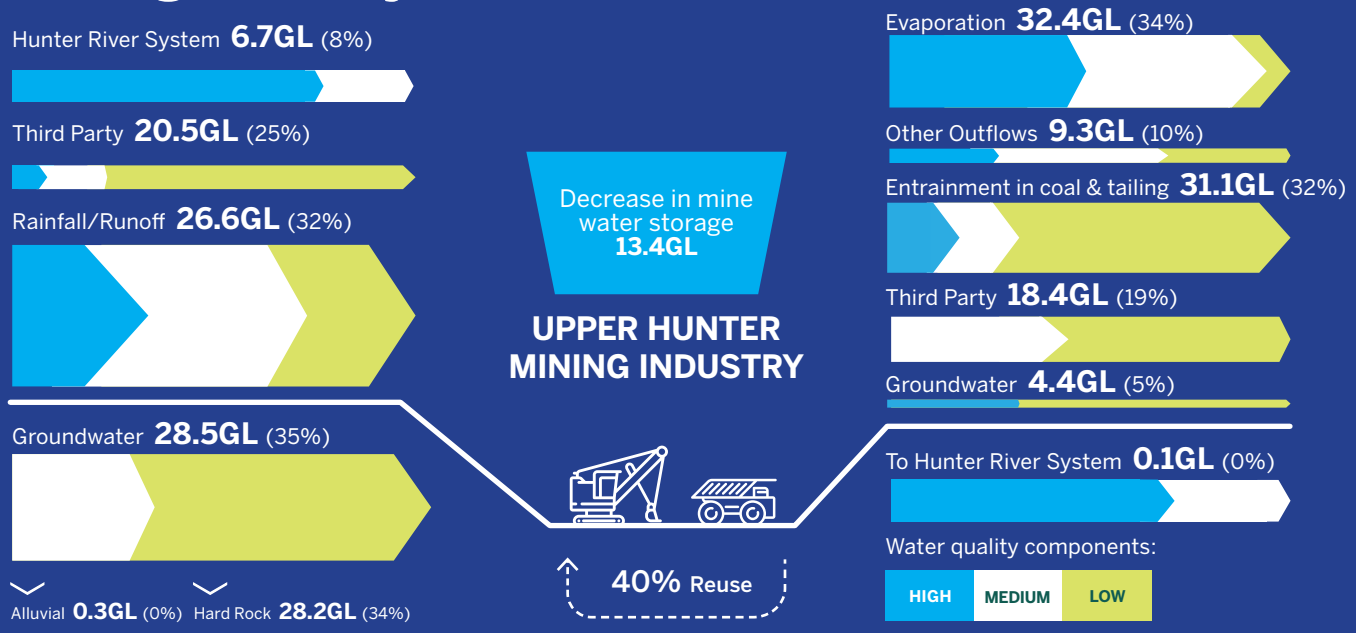
72GL
Agriculture/ Power Station/ Town Water
= 28.6%

6.7GL
Mining = **2.7%**

The rainfall in Scone during 2023 was 454mm, which is below the long-term average rainfall of 615mm. [1]

The drier conditions meant that companies had fewer opportunities to discharge excess water into the Hunter River System and were conserving their stored water.

Mining Industry Water Use Balance



MORE THAN **5.7x** as much water evaporated from the Hunter River System storage dams as was extracted from the Hunter River System by mining companies

The mining industry used JUST **2.7%** of water in the Upper Hunter River System

9% of mine water came from rivers and alluvial aquifers

32% of mine water was sourced from onsite rainfall and runoff

34% of water was sourced from deep aquifers that are of limited use to other water users due to their high salinity

The mining industry REUSED **40%** of its water onsite

0.1% of mine water was discharged into the Hunter River

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For more information:
miningdialogue.com.au

UPPER HUNTER WATER BALANCE 2023

NSW MINING Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue

Summary of Key Findings

The Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue assessed water use by the mining industry in the Upper Hunter in the 2023 water year. Since 2014, using a common accounting framework, mines in the Upper Hunter region have reported their water inflows and outflows from operations. This has helped the mining industry manage their water use and embark on water saving and reuse opportunities. Below is a summary of key findings on water use in the Upper Hunter for 2023:

- 2023 was a drier than average year, which allowed 252 gigalitres (or 252,000 megalitres) to enter the river system in the Upper Hunter.
- 69% (or 173 gigalitres) of the water stayed in the river.
- Farmers, residents and businesses extracted around 29% (or 72.0 gigalitres) of the water in the system.
- Mining used 2.7% (or 6.7 gigalitres) of the water in the system.
- 15% (or 38.0 gigalitres) of the available water evaporated from the Hunter River System storage dams.
- 9% (or 7.0 gigalitres) of the water inflow to mines came from rivers and alluvial aquifers.
- 32% (or 26.6 gigalitres) of the water inflow to mines was sourced from onsite rainfall and runoff.
- 34% (or 28.2 gigalitres) of the water inflow to mines was sourced from deep aquifers that are of limited use to other water users due to their high salinity.
- The mining industry reused 40% of its water onsite.
- 0.1% (or 0.1 gigalitres) of the water outflow from mines was discharged into the Hunter River. The drier conditions meant there were fewer opportunities to discharge.
- The rainfall in Scone during 2023 was 454mm, which is significantly lower than the long-term average of 614mm. The drier conditions in 2023 meant that mining companies had fewer opportunties to discharge excess water into the Hunter River System and were conserving their stored water.

Several figures are included over the page, which provide a snapshot of the long-term annual water use figures for the Upper Hunter and demonstrate mining's water use in the context of other Hunter River water users.

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Sources: Bureau of Meteorology; DPI Water; NSW Minerals Council data.

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UPPER HUNTER WATER BALANCE 2023

Summary of Key Findings

NSW MINING Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue

Figure 1: Annual Upper Hunter Water Use Figures (2014-2023)

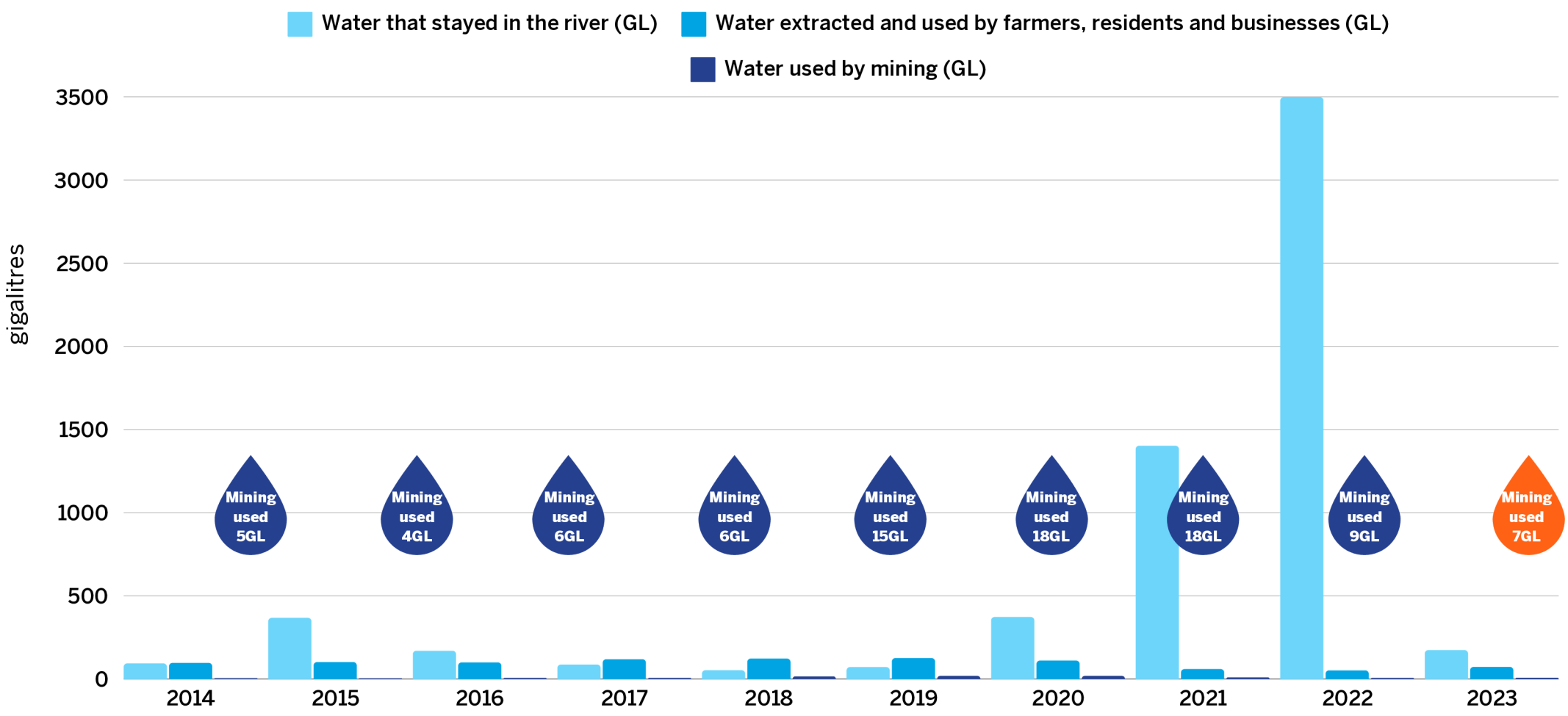


Figure 2: Annual Upper Hunter Water Use Figures (2014-2020)*

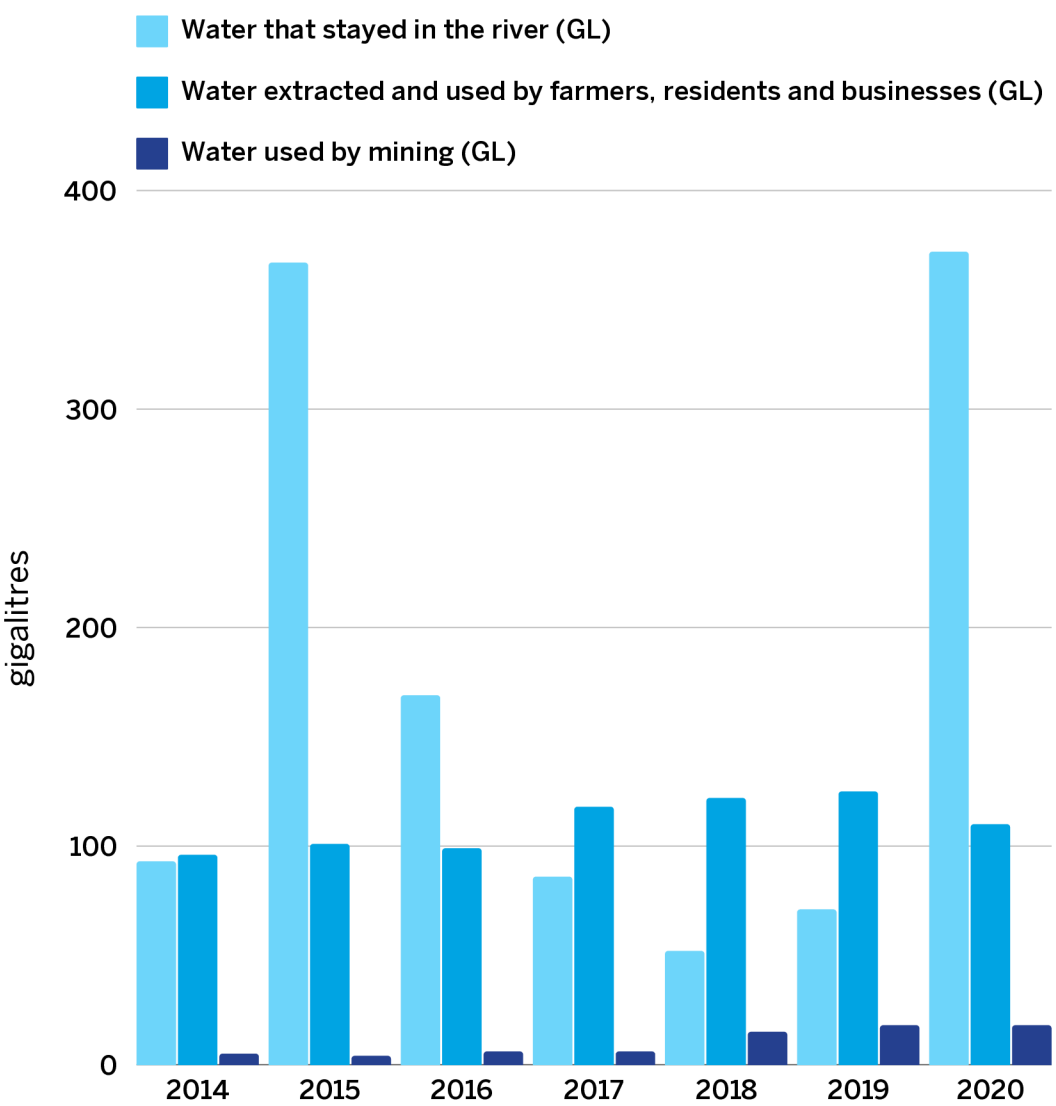
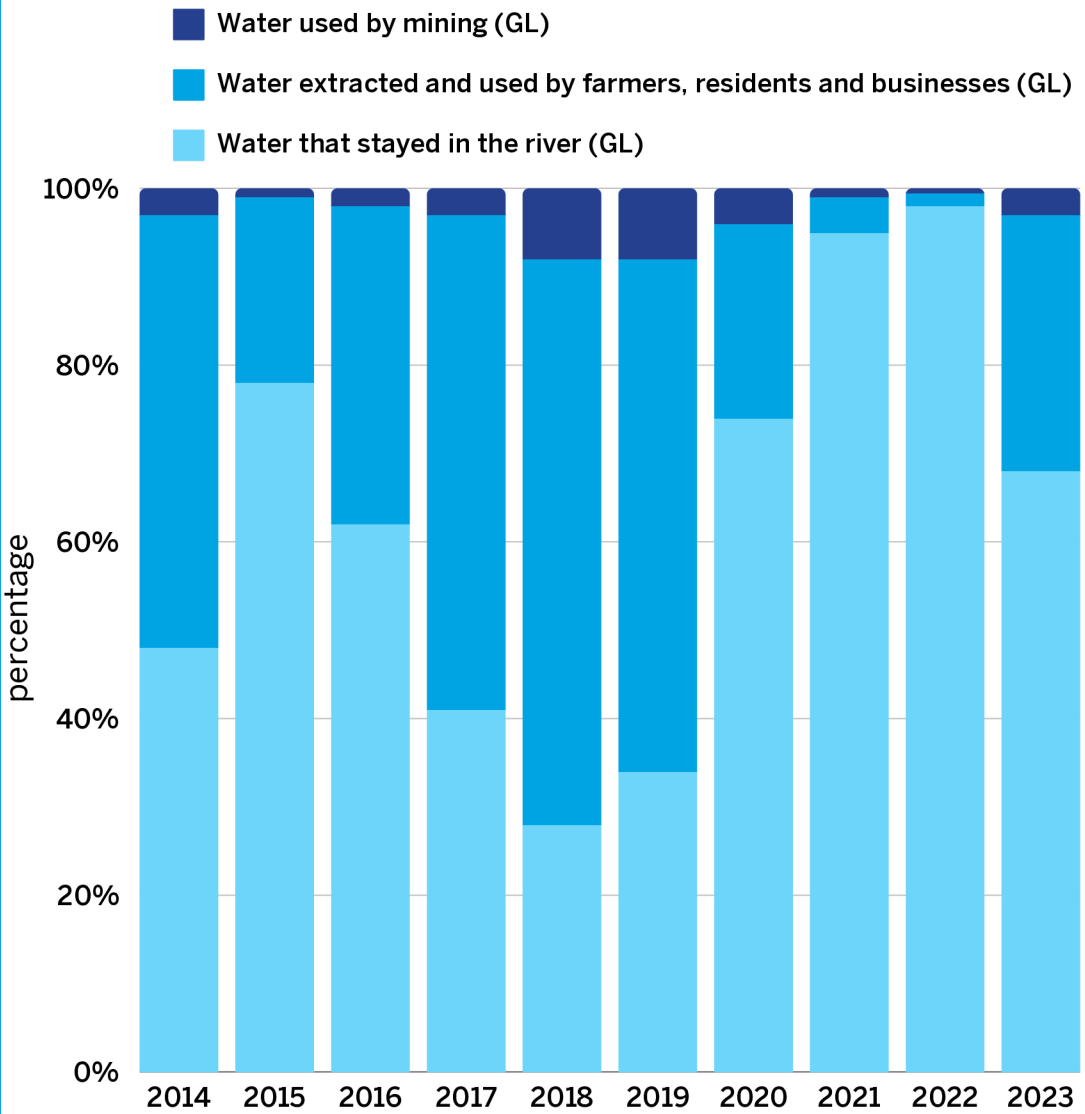


Figure 3: Annual Percentages of Water Use (2014-2023)



*** Note: Fig. 2 contains the same information as Fig. 1, but with the 2021 and 2022 years removed to better differentiate pre-2021 figures.**

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Data presented is based on a water year. Sources: Bureau of Meteorology; DPI Water; NSW Minerals Council data.

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