

1 August 2019

Murrumbidgee Valley

Water allocation update

General security allocations for the Murrumbidgee regulated river water source **remain unchanged**.

The minor resource improvement in the Murrumbidgee since the last assessment has been applied to building for high priority commitments, including critical human needs in 2020-21.

Murrumbidgee system inflows over the last water year were in the lowest five percent of historical record. Rainfall totals in excess of 30 mm at Burrinjuck, and around 60 mm at Blowering in July failed to produce any meaningful flow response in the upper catchment tributaries. As a result, there was only minor - around 15 gegalitres (GL) - improvement in resources since the last assessment. The Murrumbidgee system has experienced near 'extreme' dry inflow conditions and the Snowy Scheme has tracked similarly.

The allocations can only be increased in the current year once total system resource and inflows, including contributions from the Snowy Scheme, ensure that high priority needs for the next (2020-21) water year can be met. Conditions will continue to be monitored fortnightly and the resource availability updated.

2019-20	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover	Drought Stage
Murrumbidgee	95%	0%	8%	 Stage 2

Drought stage

The **Murrumbidgee Valley** regulated river water source is in Stage 2 drought criticality, meaning drought operational planning has commenced in preparation for extreme dry conditions that may continue through 2019-20. Accordingly, a Critical Water Advisory Panel has been formed for southern valleys to advise on drought management options and will convene again in conjunction with public drought meetings to be arranged later this year.

Further information on the policy and related drought stages can be found at:
www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/extreme-events

Storage levels (as at 31 July 2019)

- Blowering Dam is 46 per cent full – steady – holding 767,000 ML.
- Burrinjuck Dam is 31 per cent full – steady – holding 323,000 ML.

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for August to October indicates that the Murrumbidgee catchment is likely to experience drier than average conditions, with headwater parts of the catchment likely to experience the largest rainfall deficiencies. Temperatures over this period are likely to be above average.

The Bureau indicates that the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral. Modelling suggests that the ENSO is likely to remain neutral over the remainder of 2019. Positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are forecast for the remainder of winter and spring. A positive IOD will likely mean below average winter-spring rainfall and above average temperatures.

For further details: www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary

Trade

Trade **out** and **into** the Murrumbidgee Valley is open. Water users are encouraged to monitor the WaterNSW website (www.waternsw.com.au) for daily information about the IVT account balance and status of trade.

Next announcement

The next water allocation statement for the Murrumbidgee Valley will be on **Thursday 15 August 2019**.

The next statement will include an updated probability analysis including the rocket diagram showing the likelihood of improvement in water availability under a range of inflow scenarios.

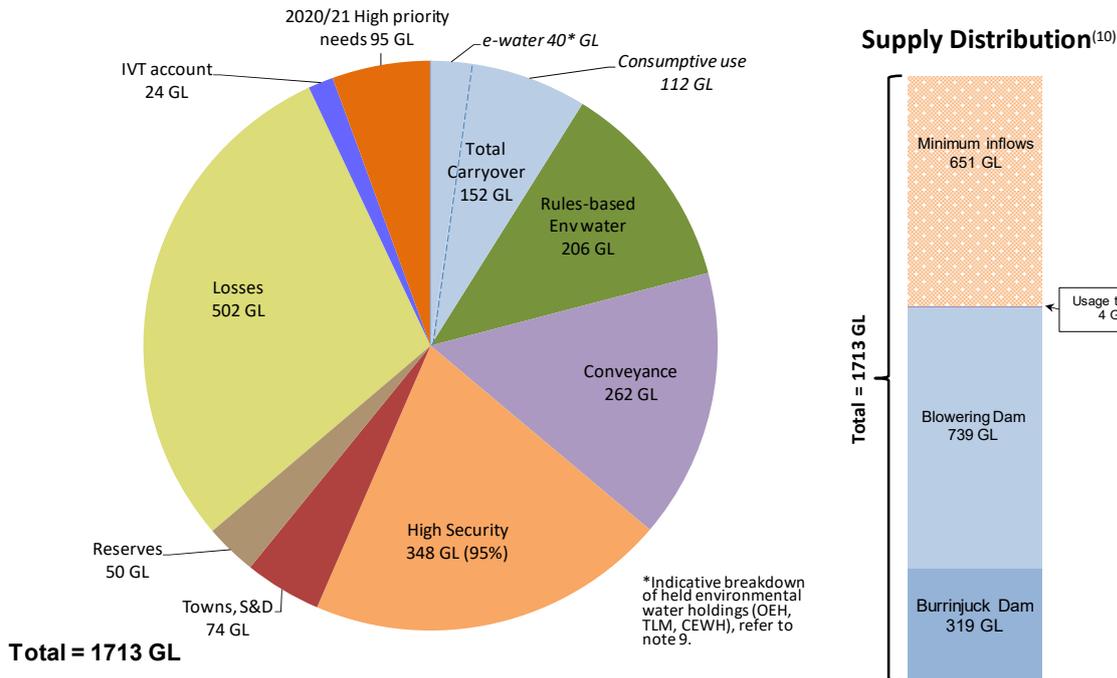
The two year resource assessment, used to ensure future high priority needs can be met before further allocating in the current year, will also be provided.

Murrumbidgee resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution (1 August) for 2019-20	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	1,713
less	
Carryover (GS and Conveyance)	152
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	206
Towns, Stock, Domestic	74 (100%)
Reserves ⁽³⁾	50
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	262
Announced High Security	348 (95%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) ⁽⁵⁾	502
Murrumbidgee IVT account (carryover as of 1 July) ⁽⁶⁾	24
Late Season Inflows ⁽⁷⁾	0
Announced General Security	0 (0%)
Future (2020-21) high priority needs ⁽⁸⁾	95

*See notes below.

Murrumbidgee resource distribution 2019-20 – 1 August 2019



Notes

- 1) Total available resource – total active storage volume (Blowering & Burrinjuck Dams) at the day of assessment plus any usable flows in transit plus drought inflows for rest of the year plus Snowy Hydro's assured Required Annual Release (RAR) (including any flex (pre-release) from the prior year), as well as estimated usage to date. Snowy Hydro's net Jounama Release for this year (2019-20) is estimated to be about 762GL.
- 2) Rules-based environmental water – water required to be set aside under water sharing plans to provide for riverine environments. Includes end-of-system flow requirements (currently 193 GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 0 GL, EWA2 = 13 GL, EWA3 = 0 GL). Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water also known as held environmental water (HEW). This total volume typically reduces as commitments are met and water is used during the year.
- 3) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans, and mainly used for emergency purposes and critical needs. Includes 25GL per dam as an operational reserve, and Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV1 = nil, PSV2 = nil).
- 4) Conveyance entitlement – a category of access licence originally issued to Irrigation Corporations to facilitate delivery of water through their channel systems. Allocation to this category is prescribed in the water sharing plans and is a function of high and general security allocations. (This category of licence in the Murrumbidgee valley, like general security, can carry over up to 30% of entitlement).
- 5) Losses – is the best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions to meet demands for the remainder of the water year. This includes storage evaporation, transmission losses and operational loss. This estimate is regularly updated as the year unfolds.
- 6) IVT account – this is the carryover value into 2019-20. There is currently a positive balance (24 GL).
- 7) Late Season Inflows – is the estimated inflow volume that will arrive into storage late in the year, after the peak irrigation demand season (usually post-February). This water cannot be allocated to water users at the start of the water-year, otherwise there could be an expectation that the water is available for delivery and use before it is captured in storage.
- 8) Future high priority needs – it is required to look ahead to next water year (2020-21) to ensure there is sufficient resource available to meet high priority commitments on 1 July 2020. This volume is currently estimated to be about 95GL. This value changes from month to month based on the complex interaction of climatic factors, projected historical inflow sequence including Snowy Hydro Required Annual Releases, usage/potential carryover, and actual transmission and operational losses as the water year unfolds.

- 9) Held environmental water (HEW) – licenced water administered by environmental water holders is reported here, with the associated portions of general security allocation and carryover also identified in the above pie chart. This reporting of held environmental water is the total credited to accounts (not usage) and is estimated to be 40 GL of GS carryover. These entitlements are held and/or managed either singly or jointly by various environmental holder groups, including the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), The Living Murray (TLM) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). Details on environmental holdings can be found on individual agency websites.
- 10) Supply Distribution – the distribution of supply includes volumes at the time of the assessment for the following categories: active volumes in the dams, indicative usage to-date (may be estimates prior to reconciliation with hydrographic updates) and assumed minimum future inflows (includes Snowy Hydro's guaranteed inflows for the water year, and late season inflows).