

22 April 2020

Namoi Regulated River Water Sources

Mid-month water allocation update

This mid-month allocation update is to announce improved water allocations for Namoi regulated river water sources. The volume of water stored in Split Rock Dam has now exceeded the 5 per cent full trigger, established in the water sharing plan, meaning Upper Namoi general security licence holders have received a 50 per cent allocation after first lifting high security allocations to 100 per cent of entitlement.

Water recovery in the Namoi catchment has been improving due to rainfall and system inflows. In the past two weeks, the Upper Namoi catchment has received 50 to 100 mm of rainfall producing a 2 gigalitre (GL) improvement in Split Rock Dam, while Keepit Dam received about 3 GL of water. Total storage volume has increased to approximately 84 GL.

This allocation increase does not mean the drought has broken. Storages remain perilously low and river operations will continue to reflect the need for water savings. Water users are reminded to keep practising water conservation measures. Water delivery on the Lower Namoi will rely on tributary inflows rather than supply from Keepit Dam, and pulsed deliveries can be expected in the Upper Namoi.

This resource improvement during the first half of April reduces the previous resource shortfall (end of March 2020) from 35 GL to 31 GL.

| 2019-20 | High Security | General Security | Drought Stage |
|--|---------------|------------------|---|
| Upper Namoi Regulated River Water Source | 100% | 50% |  Stage 3 |
| Lower Namoi Regulated River Water Source | 100% | 0% |  Stage 3 |

Keepit Dam storage volume is holding 63 GL, or 13 per cent full, and Split Rock storage volume is about 21 GL, which is just over 5 per cent full or 4.5 percent effective (less dead storage) capacity.

Key facts

- HS allocations for the Upper and Lower Namoi have risen from 75% to 100% (full) allocation.
- GS allocation for Upper Namoi has been increased from 0% to 50% allocation.
- The allocated water remains subject to delivery limitations.
- Critical requirements for Manilla and Barraba townships are now secure for the next 24 months under a budgeted minimum inflow scenario.
- Should inflows be less than planned in coming months, and Split Rock storage again depletes, drought contingency measures will be activated to protect water for critical human needs.

Drought stage

The NSW Extreme Events Policy introduced a staged approach from one to four to manage extreme circumstances. Since February 2020, both Split Rock and Keepit storage volumes have been slowly increasing. Critical requirements are now secure with improved flow connectivity. Limited delivery of general security water is being met mainly from downstream tributary inflows.

Both the Upper Namoi and Lower Namoi drought stages currently remain at stage 3 (severe) criticality as delivery from storages has been very limited or not resumed.

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

Seasonal climate outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for April to June indicates that wetter than average conditions are likely for the Namoi catchment. Daytime temperatures over this period are likely to be warmer than average with night time temperatures being very likely to be warmer than average for the catchment.

The Bureau of Meteorology states that a warmer than usual eastern Indian Ocean is currently the main influence on Australia's climate, increasing moisture feeding into weather systems as they sweep across the country.

Details can be found at: www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/

Resource Assessment data sheet as at 14 April 2020

| Volumes in GL | Budget | Current | Additional | Balance |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|------------|---------|
| Storage Evaporation Loss | 26.49 | 25.07 | 1.42 | 26.49 |
| Essential Supplies | 58.24 | 30.54 | 5.31 | 35.85 |
| Upper Namoi General Security | 1.28 | 1.28 | 0.00 | 1.28 |
| Delivery Loss | 3.40 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Lower Namoi General Security | 10.06 | 10.06 | 0.00 | 10.06 |
| Peel Trade Account | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Additional Resource for Sharing | - | 6.73 | -6.72 | 0.01 |
| Split Rock and Keepit active volumes | - | 73.68 | 0.01 | 73.69 |

Further information

The next monthly water allocation statement for the Namoi Regulated River Water Source will be available in early May 2020.