

7 May 2020

Namoi Regulated River Water Sources

Water allocation update

There is **no change to allocations** in the Upper and Lower Namoi Regulated River Water Source.

The Namoi Valley received average to above average rainfall during the month of April. The upper catchment received between 25 to 100 mm of rain, resulting in inflows to the upper storages of approximately 7 gigalitres (GL). Part of this improvement was anticipated and was allocated in the mid-April resource assessment. The current resource deficit in the valley is about 37 GL.

2019-20	High Security	General Security	Drought Stage
Upper Namoi Regulated River Water Source	100%	50%	 Stage 2
Lower Namoi Regulated River Water Source	100%	0%	 Stage 3

Keepit storage volume is at approximately 64 GL, or 13.8 percent full storage capacity and Split Rock storage volume is at 21 GL, or 4.6 percent of full storage capacity.

Key facts

- Minimal resource improvement despite average/above average rainfall regionally in April.
- During the month of April, Upper and Lower Namoi High Security license holders had their allocations increased to 100%, Upper Namoi General Security license holders had allocations increased to 50%, while Lower Namoi General Security license holders remained at 0% allocation.
- Critical requirements for Manilla and Barraba townships are now secure for the next 24 months under a minimum inflow scenario.
- The Pian Creek replenishment flow requirement has been met from flows below Keepit Dam.

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 and river connectivity has improved. With some gradual resource improvements, the Upper Namoi catchment drought stage has been eased to Stage 2, however; the Lower Namoi remains at Stage 3 (severe) drought criticality.

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 May to July indicates that overall wetter than average conditions are likely for the Namoi catchment. Daytime temperatures over this period have roughly equal chances of being warmer or cooler than average. However, for the month of May, days are likely to be cooler.

The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is most likely to remain neutral over winter, but may cool towards La Niña levels by late winter or early spring. As the chance of La Niña currently remains less than 50% and the BOM’s ENSO outlook remains at inactive.

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

Resource Assessment data sheet as at 30 April 2020

Volumes in GL	Budget	Current	Additional	Balance
Storage Evaporation Loss	26.73	25.94	0.79	26.73
Essential Supplies	58.24	31.61	0.12	31.72
Upper Namoi General Security	1.38	1.38	5.72	7.10
Delivery Loss	5.15	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	-	6.63	-6.63	0.00
Split Rock and Keepit active volumes	-	75.61		75.61

Inflow recovery

The historical minimum inflow for 33 months prior to the current drought was 155 GL (solid line below). The cumulative net reservoir inflow from the last allocation of August 2017 to end of April 2020 (33 months) was 112 GL (dashed line below). With the rain events that occurred in January 2020 through to mid-April 2020, water resource availability continues to improve. However, there remains a resource shortfall of 43 GL, as shown below which represents the shortfall in the amount of water that was assumed available and allocated, and the water that has become available.

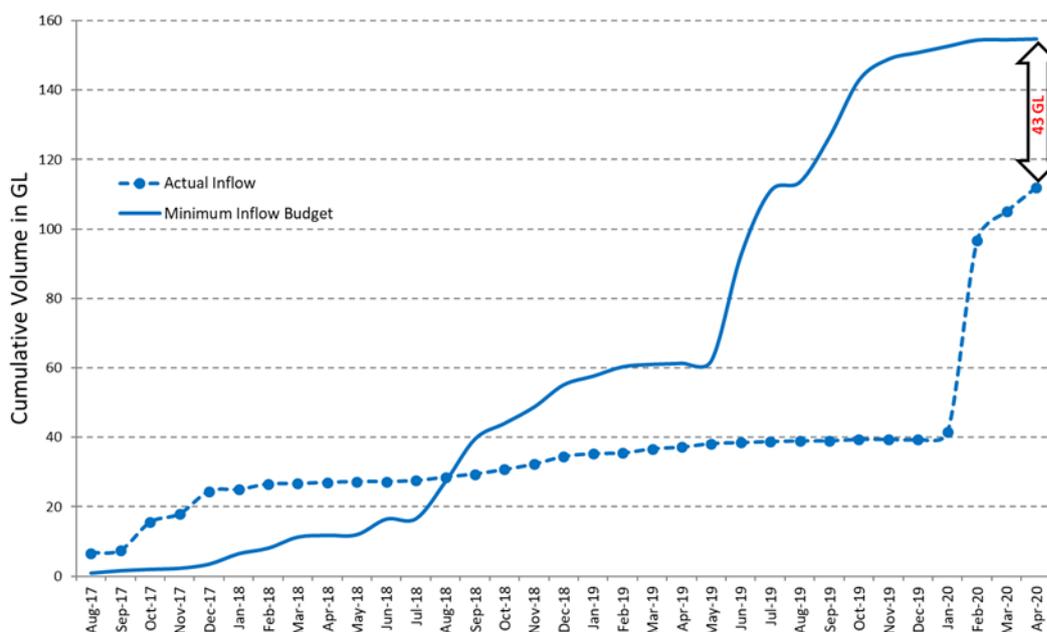


Figure 1: Cumulative inflows to the headwater storages since August 2017 and the planned minimum inflow sequence (budget) underpinning current allocations.

Further information

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

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