

8 March 2021

## Lachlan Regulated River Water Source

### Water allocation update

There is a **6% increase in allocation to general security (GS) entitlements** in the Lachlan regulated river water source this month, bringing the total cumulative allocation to 44%.


Receding inflows from rainfall in early and mid-February, along with a reduction in essential requirements and storage evaporation savings, have improved resources in the Lachlan Valley by approximately 36 gegalitres (GL). Inflows into Wyangala Dam and tributaries totalled 25 GL throughout February, which is better than the 1.6 GL of assumed minimum inflow.

Releases from the Lachlan Water Quality Allowance (WQA) have been underway throughout January and February to mitigate the risk of low Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels in the lower Lachlan River. The WQA has been used to target a flow of around 100 megalitres (ML)/day at Booligal Weir and is likely to be maintained until April 2021. Deteriorated water quality has been measured between Lake Brewster and Willandra Weir, and in the lower Lachlan at Coorong, with WaterNSW indicating a red algal alert level. A few other sites in the lower Lachlan are at amber algal alert level. Water users are encouraged to seek further updates and information from WaterNSW's algae web page: [www.waternsw.com.au/water-quality/algae](http://www.waternsw.com.au/water-quality/algae)

Based on historical inflows, there is about a 10% chance that the major storages within the system will spill by the end of June 2021. Should a spill occur, general security accounts will be reset and equalised in accordance with the water sharing plan.

Inflows in excess of 5 GL are required in March to facilitate an increase in general security allocations in the next assessment. The planning outlook runs to May 2023 and ensures that all high priority needs can be met through this period before further allocations to general security are made.

General security water users are advised that the Annual Use Limit that applies in the 2020-21 water year is a volume equivalent to 100% of their entitlement. This is the maximum amount that can be used in the 2020-21 water year, plus any up or down adjustments for trade.

2020-21	High Security	General Security	Drought Stage
Lachlan Regulated River Water Source	100%	44%	 Stage 1

### Storage levels (as at 8 March 2021)

- Wyangala Dam is 59% full – falling – currently at about 715,000 megalitres (ML).
- Lake Cargelligo is 72% full – falling – currently at about 28,000 ML.
- Lake Brewster is 8% full – falling – at about 11,500 ML.

### Drought stage

Under the NSW Extreme Events Policy, the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source is in Stage 1, meaning normal river operations are able to deliver water orders and there is enough resource

available to meet critical human and high priority needs for the assessment period based on assumed minimum future inflows.

## Seasonal rainfall and inflow forecast

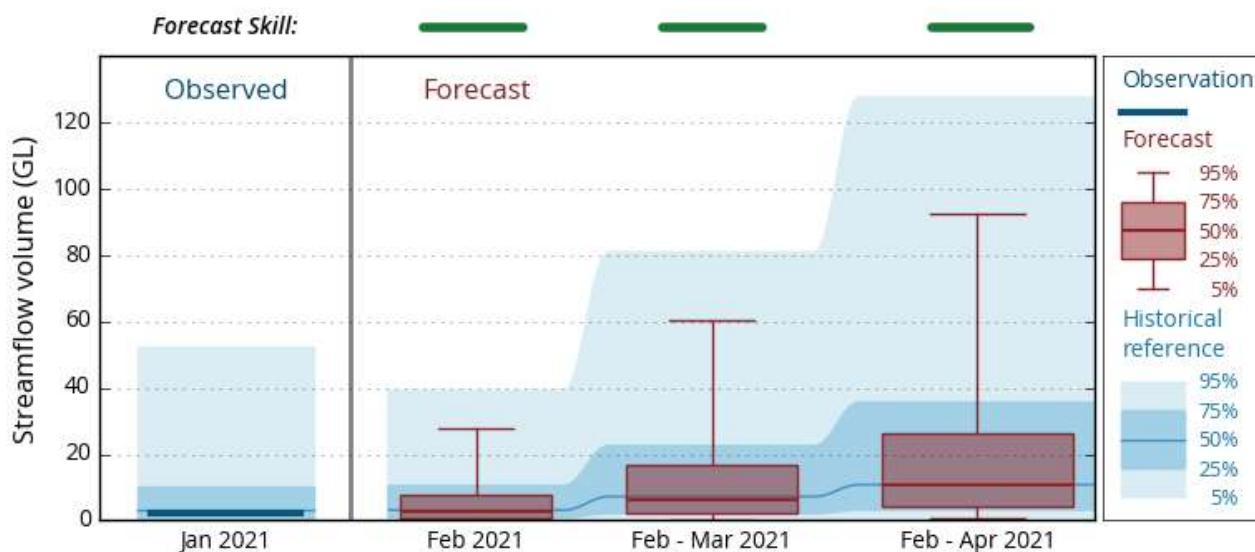
The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for March to May indicates that rainfall in the Lachlan catchment is likely to be above average. Daytime temperatures are likely to be below average, while night-time temperatures are likely to be above average. The current La Niña is forecast to end during autumn.

For further details: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary)

The Bureau of Meteorology also issues a seasonal flow forecast of the Abercrombie River that drains into Wyangala Dam (see the figure below). This provides an indicative distribution of potential inflows. The forecast median flow is equal to the historical median for February to April, however; the two upper quartiles in the forecast flow are much lower than the historical quartiles. This indicates that high flows will likely be below the historical volumes during February to April.

### Abercrombie River at Abercrombie (ID: 412028)

Forecast for Feb 2021 – Apr 2021



For further details: [www.bom.gov.au/water/ssf/?ref=fr#id=412028](http://www.bom.gov.au/water/ssf/?ref=fr#id=412028)

## Next announcement

The next water allocation announcement for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source will be issued on **Monday 12 April 2021**.

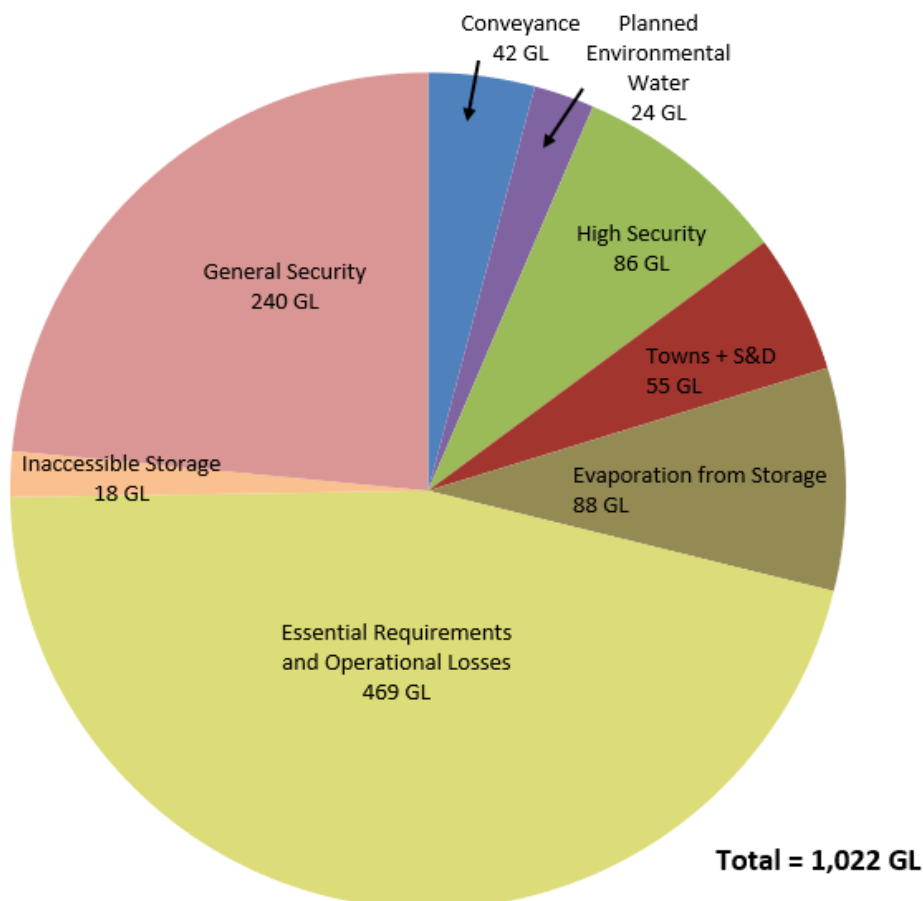
## Lachlan resource assessment data sheet

<b>Resource Distribution (March 2021 to May 2023)</b>	Volume (GL)
Current and Future Resources <sup>(1)</sup>	1,022
<i>less</i>	
General Security account balance <sup>(6)(7)</sup>	240
Conveyance	42
Planned Environmental Water <sup>(2)</sup>	24
High Security <sup>(3) (6)</sup>	86
Towns, Stock, Domestic <sup>(3)</sup>	55
Evaporation from storage <sup>(4)</sup>	88
Essential Requirements and Losses <sup>(5)</sup>	469
Inaccessible storage	<u>18</u>
<i>equals</i>	
Water available for allocation (or deficit)	<u>0</u>

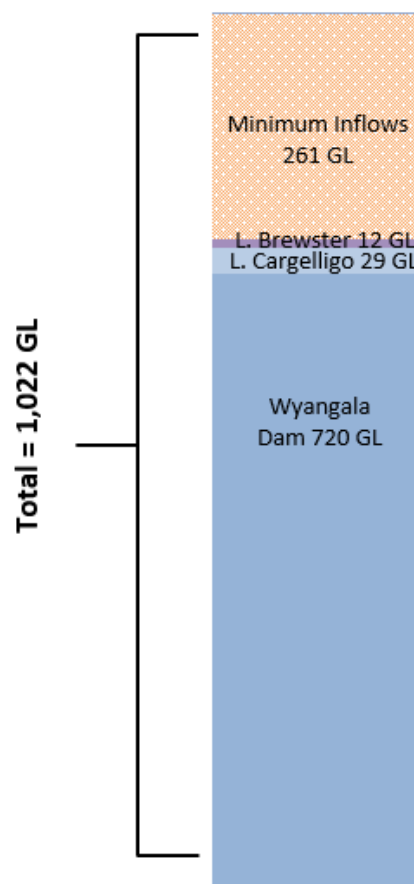
### Notes:

- (1) End of February 2021 storage volume in Wyangala Dam, Lake Cargelligo and Lake Brewster, plus expected minimum inflows from March 2021 to May 2023.
- (2) Water allocated to the Water Quality Allowance and/or the Environmental Water Allowances (EWA) under the water sharing plan. EWA allocation for 2020-21 is currently zero. The volume 24 GL total represents the balance of the WQA, with 4 GL remaining for this water year plus 10 GL per year to May 2023. A volume of 6 GL has been consumed from the WQA throughout December to February from releases beginning 23 December 2020. 'Licence-based' environmental water is excluded from this category.
- (3) Towns, Stock, Domestic and High Security: reserves are set aside to meet projected use of these users to 31 May 2023. Balances in high security accounts also include water traded in from general security licences, if any.
- (4) The evaporation from all three storages based on the forecast drawdown over the assessment period.
- (5) Essential requirements include basic rights and any replenishment deliveries required. The loss budget (transmission and operational) is based on the best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions through to May 2023. This mostly comprises of natural transmission losses as water soaks into riverbed sands. The loss allowance is updated regularly.
- (6) This may include held environmental water (HEW) as shown in the pie chart. The reporting of HEW is indicative only, prior to reconciliation of usage and net trade, and is estimated to be 23 GL of GS, and 6 GL of HS. These reported entitlements are managed by agencies holding environmental water accounts. They include the NSW DPIE - Environment, Energy and Science (EES) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). Details on e-water holdings can be found on individual agency websites.
- (7) The GS account balance includes any AWDs made this current water year and GS water carried over from the previous years.

## Resource Distribution: March 2021 Lachlan Regulated River Water Source



## Supply Source



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