

9 July 2021

## Lachlan Regulated River Water Source

### Water allocation update

**General security entitlements have received an opening allocation of 11%** in the Lachlan regulated river water source for the 2021-22 water year. All high priority licences and conveyance entitlements were allocated 100% of entitlement on 1 July 2021.

Rainfall throughout June produced some high inflows into Wyangala Dam and downstream tributaries totalling approximately 94 gigalitres (GL). By early July a further 21 GL of inflow has occurred and at least another 6 GL is expected. These secure early July inflows have been included in this assessment and allocation announcement.

This resource assessment ensures that all high priority needs can be met through to May 2023 before further allocations to general security are made. There are currently no replenishment flows to the effluent creeks.

The Brewster and Wyangala Environmental Water Allowances (EWAs) have been credited with 10 GL each this water year. This credit happens as per the water sharing plan when the general security account balance, including carryover, exceeds 50% of entitlement on 1 July. This year the general security carryover balance on average was over 70% of entitlement.

A focus of environmental watering over the next 12-18 months will be the water levels in the Lake Brewster inflow wetland to establish a diverse aquatic plant community, waterbird and frog habitat. This will also assist long-term improvements in water quality for downstream water users.

Based on historical inflows, there is more than a 30% chance that the major storages within the system, including Wyangala Dam, will spill by the end of August 2021. Should a spill occur, general security accounts will be reset and equalised in accordance with the rules in the water sharing plan.

General security water users are reminded that the Annual Use Limit that applies in this 2021-22 water year is a volume equivalent to 100% of their entitlement. This is the maximum amount that can be used in the 2021-22 water year, plus any up or down adjustments for trade.

2021-22	High Security	General Security
Lachlan Regulated River Water Source	100%	11%

### Storage levels (as at 7 July 2021)

- Wyangala Dam is 77% full – rising – holding around 931,000 megalitres (ML)
- Lake Cargelligo is 59% full – falling – holding around 24,000 ML
- Lake Brewster is 20% full – rising – holding about 30,000 ML

## Wyangala Dam penstock outage

Maintenance on Wyangala Dam penstock has now been completed. The penstock will be recharged in the next two days and will soon be fully operational.

## Wyangala Dam airspace operations

With Wyangala storage increasing, WaterNSW has developed a strategy to manage airspace in accordance with the system operation rules in the water sharing plan. The strategy aims to provide a good chance (at least 80%) of Wyangala Dam being full as irrigation demand increases in October.

If airspace releases become necessary, this will trigger a spill and reset of general security accounts, high security spillable sub-accounts and conveyance accounts in line with clause 56 of the water sharing plan. Water users are advised to note the following:

- all valid orders made in good faith prior to the account reset date will be honoured in full according to the accounting arrangements at the time the order was made, taking into consideration travel times to extraction points
- if there is an account spill and reset, there will be no further reset in the following 6 months
- an account reset will rarely deliver the maximum 136% allocation because it depends on the time on the time of year of the reset and the future inflow sequence
- the allocation from a reset will be based on the usual resource assessment at the time.

## Drought recovery year 2020-21

A major improvement in water resources across the state has been observed last water year. In August 2020, a large rainfall event boosted Wyangala Dam level by approximately 400 GL. The river system recovered from drought and returned to normal river operations. By September 2020, general security water users received their first allocation, some 28% of entitlement, since August 2017. Incremental allocation increases continued over the spring, autumn and early winter up to a closing general security allocation for Lachlan general security water users of 70% of entitlement.

This was also the first year that the Wyangala and Brewster EWAs had been credited since the Wyangala EWA credit of 2018. Environmental water deliveries have been underway throughout the Lower Lachlan since April to refresh lagoons and wetlands. These flows have also provided significant instream benefits and habitat for species such as the threatened Southern Bell Frog.

Throughout May and June, flows into Muggabah Creek were used to water a nationally significant river red gum and lignum floodplain wetland for the first time since 2016.

## Seasonal climate and streamflow outlooks

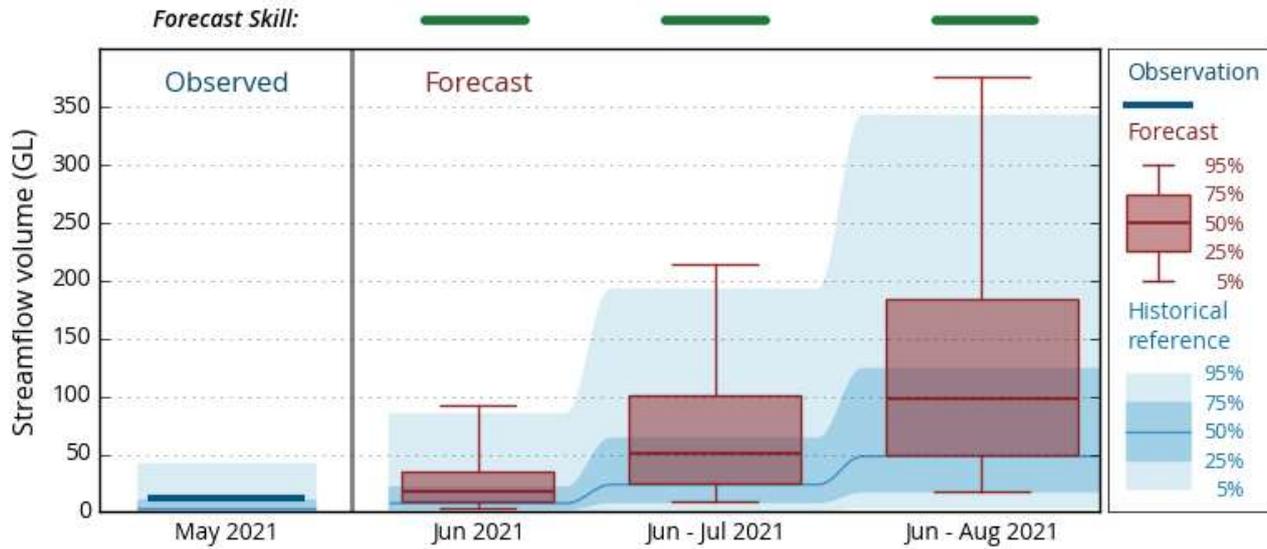
The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for July to September indicates that rainfall is very likely to be above average across the catchment. Daytime temperatures are likely to be below average and overnight temperatures are likely to be warmer than average. A negative Indian Ocean Dipole is expected to develop during winter, which increases the chance of above average winter-spring rainfall in the catchment.

The Bureau of Meteorology also issues a seasonal flow forecast for the Abercrombie River that drains into Wyangala Dam (see the figure below). This provides a forecast of potential storage

inflows. All forecast flow quartiles are much higher than the historical flows for July to September, demonstrating the potential for higher than historical flows throughout these months.

## Abercrombie River at Abercrombie (ID: 412028)

Forecast for Jun 2021 – Aug 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)

## Lachlan resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution (July 2021 to May 2023)	Volume (GL)
Current and Future Resources <sup>(1)</sup>	1,222
<i>less</i>	
General Security account balance <sup>(6)(7)</sup>	487
Conveyance	36
Planned Environmental Water <sup>(2)</sup>	40
High Security <sup>(3) (6)</sup>	55
Towns, Stock, Domestic <sup>(3)</sup>	40
Evaporation from storage <sup>(4)</sup>	108
Essential Requirements and Losses <sup>(5)</sup>	438
Inaccessible storage	<u>18</u>
<i>equals</i>	
Surplus (or deficit) <sup>(8)</sup>	0

### Notes:

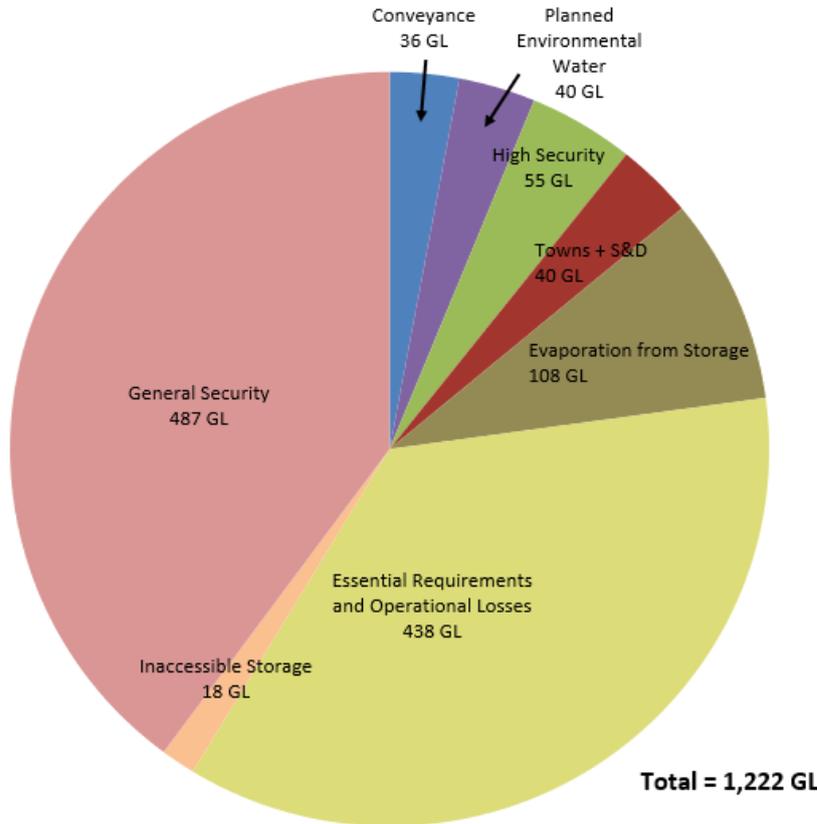
- (1) End of June 2021 storage volume in Wyangala Dam, Lake Cargelligo, and Lake Brewster, plus July inflow forecast of 27 GL and the expected minimum inflows from August 2021 to May 2023.
- (2) Water allocated to the Water Quality Allowance and/or the Environmental Water Allowances (EWA). The total volume represents the balance of the WQA and EWAs. The Wyangala and Brewster EWAs have been allocated 10 GL each for the 2021/22 water year. In addition, 10 GL each year is allocated to the WQA. '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 are 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 76 GL of GS, and 3 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).
- (7) The GS account balance includes any AWDs made this current water year and GS water carried over from the previous years.
- (8) All available water resources have been fully allocated with no surplus left. The system is secure to May 2023 and beyond with no deficit.

# Water Allocation Statement

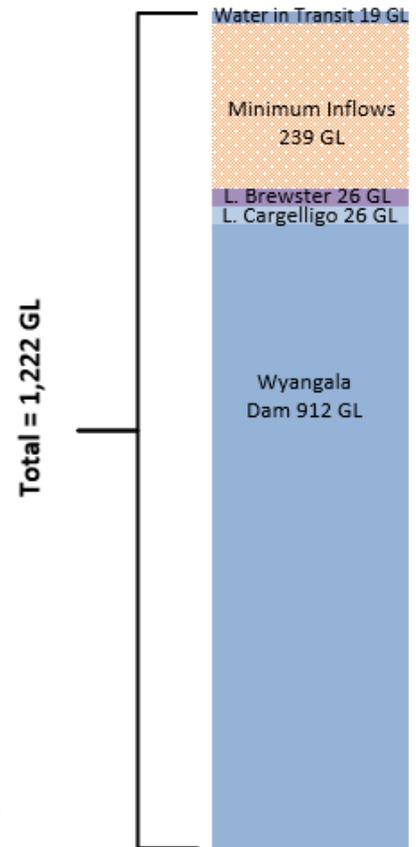
Water availability and allocation update



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



## Supply Source



## Next announcement

The next routine water allocation announcement for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source will be issued on **Monday 9 August 2021**.

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