

4 November 2020

## Peel Regulated River Water Source

### Water allocation update

The Peel catchment saw very much above average rainfall in October, receiving approximately 200mm of rain. Net inflow into Chaffey Dam storage since 1 August was approximately 11.2 gigalitres (GL), with approximately 6.8 GL of this inflow coming in recent weeks. Chaffey Dam is currently holding around 35.8 GL of water, some 33.2% full.

Recent resource improvements in the Peel catchment reflected in the latest resource assessment allows for the following further allocations:

- **Local water utility (LWU) and Domestic and stock (D&S) allocation to increase by 10% of entitlement** resulting in a total 80% allocation for the current water year.

There is no new allocation for high security or general security water access licences, or the Environmental Contingency Allowance (ECA) at this time.

Although the catchment has received much needed rain and conditions have improved in recent weeks, the improvement so far is largely under-pinning the security of high priority entitlements in accordance with the water sharing plan. It is estimated that another 6 – 8 GL is required in Chaffey Dam to fully secure all high priority commitments, after which allocation to general security licences can commence.

In the meantime, uncontrolled flows have been declared in the Peel River and general security entitlement holders can order and use these waters regardless of their allocation or account balance. Water users should liaise with WaterNSW regarding their daily ordering and take of water noting that over 300 megalitres of uncontrolled flow has been diverted so far.

### Announced water allocations for the Peel Regulated River Water Source

Access licence type	2020/21	Drought Stage
Local Water Utility	80%	
Domestic and Stock	80%	Stage 3
High Security	50%	
Environmental Contingency Allowance	0%	
General Security	0%	
Aquifer (general security)	51%	

## Drought stage

The Peel regulated river water source is currently at Stage 3 (severe) drought criticality, however; the recent improvements and favourable outlook will likely see this ease to Stage 2 (recovering) in the near future.

Further information on drought stages can be found at: [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/drought-update/critical-valleys-in-drought](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/drought-update/critical-valleys-in-drought)

## Key facts

- Chaffey Dam storage is holding approximately 35.8 GL of water, some 33.2% full.
- Local Water Utility and Domestic and Stock allocations have increased by 10% to a total of 80% of entitlement for the current water year.
- Peel allocation remains unchanged for high security (currently at 50%) and nil for general security and ECA.
- With Chaffey Dam holding more than 20% capacity, Phase 1 of the authorisation under the Water Supply Critical Needs Act 2019 is currently in place.
- Delivery of all allocated water, including usage for Tamworth, is secure for the next 24 months and beyond based on the budgeted minimum inflows.
- General security allocation can be expected when Chaffey Dam rises closer to 45 GL.
- In the meantime general security entitlement holders can access uncontrolled flows regardless of their allocation or account balance.

## Seasonal climate outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for November 2020 to January 2021 indicates a wetter than average three-month period for nearly all of Australia (greater than 65% chance in most areas). The outlook indicates that the average maximum temperature for eastern NSW for November to January is likely to be cooler than the long-term average.

The Bureau of Meteorology's ENSO outlook is at La Niña, meaning La Niña is underway in the tropical Pacific Ocean. Recent observations show a slight strengthening in the pattern. La Niña conditions are likely to persist until at least the end of the 2020-21 summer. La Niña tends to promote wetter conditions in parts of eastern Australia.

Details can be found at: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/)

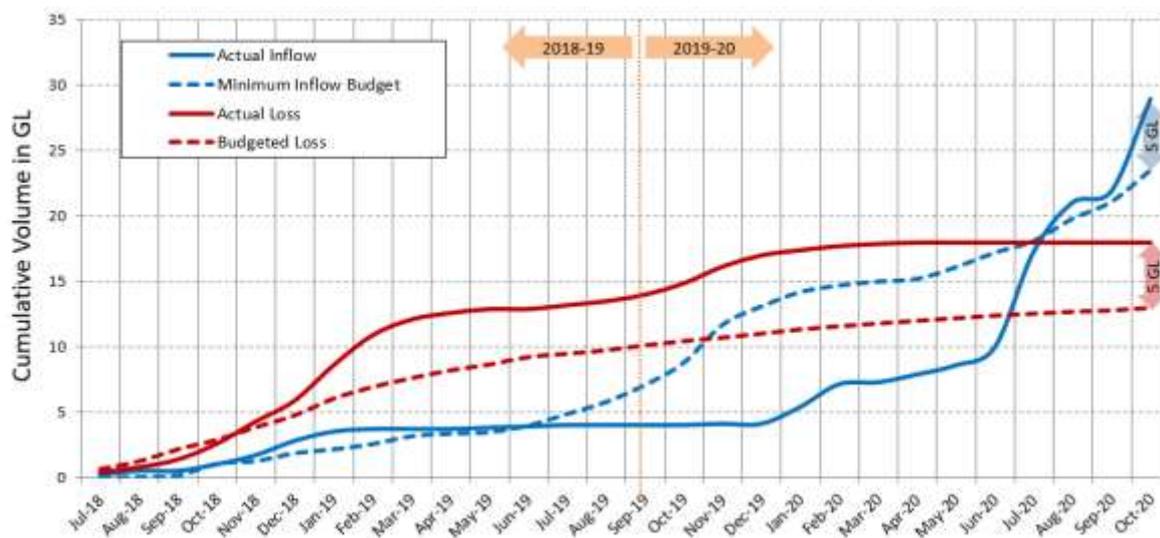
### Resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution (as at 2 November)	Volumes (GL)
Available Resources <sup>(1)</sup>	38.3
<b>less</b>	
Essential Supplies <sup>(2)</sup>	18.6
Reserve for 2021-2022 <sup>(3)</sup>	14.0
General security balance	0.0
ECA balance <sup>(4)</sup>	0.0
Evaporation, operational and transmission loss <sup>(5)</sup>	5.7
<b>equals</b>	
Uncommitted Resources	0.0

**Notes:**

- (1) Chaffey Dam storage above dead storage, Dungowan Dam storage above 50% and minimum inflow expected to June 2021.
- (2) Water set aside to provide for basic landholder rights, domestic and stock, local water utility, high security and associated transmission loss plus minimum storage release. D&S have been allocated 80%, LWU has been allocated 80%, and HS have been allocated 50% for the current water year.
- (3) Reserve set aside to meet the minimum allocation of 2021-22 under the water sharing plan (WSP) obligation at the repeat of the worst drought since the implementation of the WSP. This includes basic landholder rights, 70% domestic and stock, 70% local water utility, 50% high security and associated transmission loss plus minimum storage release. This also considers minimum inflow expected next year offset by evaporation over 2021-22.
- (4) Total ECA account balance (GS allocation in ML/share multiplied by 5000).
- (5) Evaporation budget assumes historical high evaporation rates. The transmission loss is to run the river to deliver water orders based on current conditions and forecasts. ECA water delivery is measured at the dam wall therefore incurs no transmission loss.

Transmission losses have reduced with the recently installed pipeline from Chaffey Dam to Dungowan Village and have been supported by recent rainfall. The deficit of actual to budgeted has been steady at 5 GL in recent months, but is likely to reduce (see Figure 1). Additionally, actual inflows have in recent months have surpassed the historical minimum (budget) indicating recovery from previous extreme dry catchments.



## Further information

The department will continue to closely monitor Peel water resource availability and will increase the frequency of Peel valley statements to monthly while conditions are improving. The next statement will be on **9 December 2020**, earlier if conditions change significantly beforehand.

Information on available water determinations and water sharing plans is available on the Department of Industry website - [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water)

*Subscribe [here](#) to receive the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's monthly email update on water planning, management and reform in New South Wales.*