

8 February 2021

Lachlan Regulated River Water Source

Water allocation update

There is no increase to general security allocation in the Lachlan regulated river water source this month, with the total allocation to general security licences this year remaining at 38%.

There has been no significant improvement to resources in the Lachlan Valley across January. Inflows into Wyangala Dam and tributaries totalled 7 gigalitres (GL) in January, which is slightly above the planned minimum inflow.

Releases from the Lachlan Water Quality Allowance (WQA) have been underway throughout January to mitigate the risk of low Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels in the lower Lachlan River and target a flow of around 100 megalitres (ML) per day at Booligal Weir. These releases will likely continue until April 2021. Deteriorated water quality has been measured downstream of Lake Brewster including some orange and red alerts. More detailed information about algae warnings is available at: www.waternsw.com.au/water-quality/algae

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

Inflows in excess of 3 GL are required in February to enable 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 current 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%	38%	 Stage 1

Storage levels (as at 5 February 2021)

- Wyangala Dam is 58.9% full – rising – currently at about 718,000 ML.
- Lake Cargelligo is 69.2% full – rising – currently at about 27,200 ML.
- Lake Brewster is 5.9% full – rising – at about 8,500 ML.

Drought stage

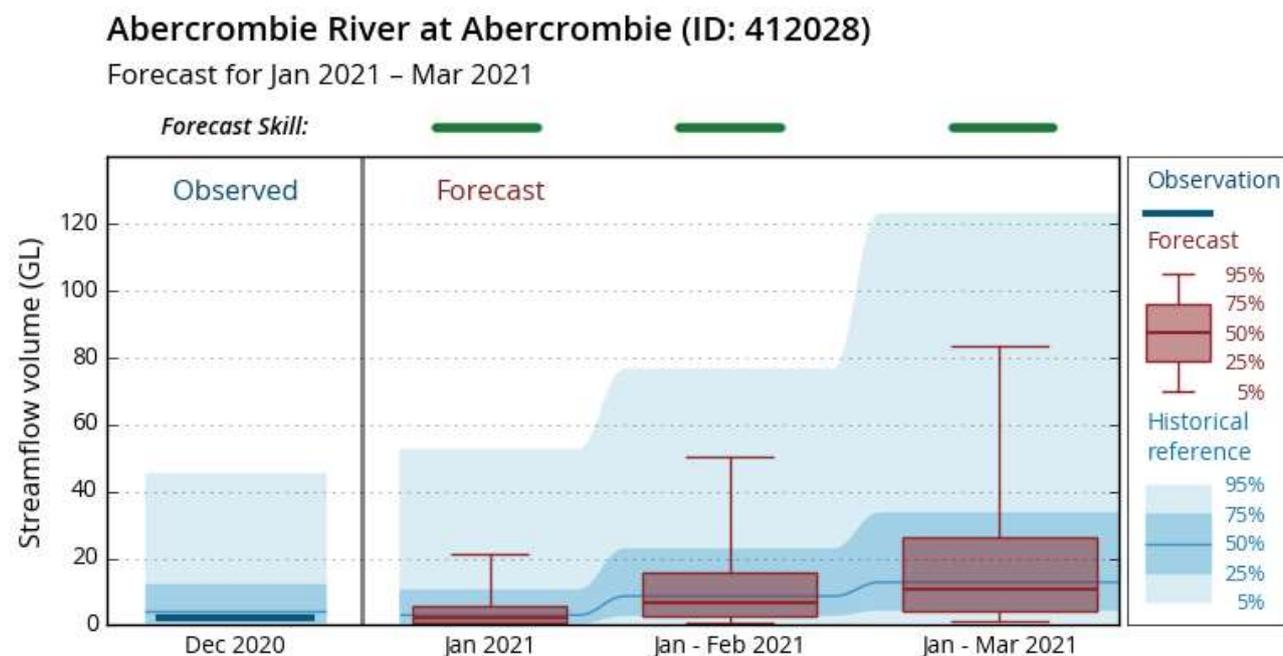
Under the NSW Extreme Events Policy, the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source is in Stage 1, meaning normal river operations are able to deliver water orders and there is enough resource available to meet critical human and high priority needs for the assessment period based on assumed minimum future inflows.

Seasonal rainfall and inflow forecast

The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for February to April indicates that rainfall in the Lachlan catchment is likely to be average to above average. Given that this period is historically the drier season of the year, average to above average rainfall may not lead to significant runoff and resource improvement unless very wet conditions are experienced. Daytime temperatures are likely to be near average while night-time temperatures are likely to be above average.

For further details: 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. While the forecast flow median may be similar to the historical median, the two upper quartiles are clearly less than the historical quartiles. This indicates that high flows will likely be below the historical volumes during January to March.



For further details: www.bom.gov.au/water/ssf/?ref=ftr#id=412028

Next announcement

The next water allocation announcement for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source will be issued on **Monday 8 March 2021**.

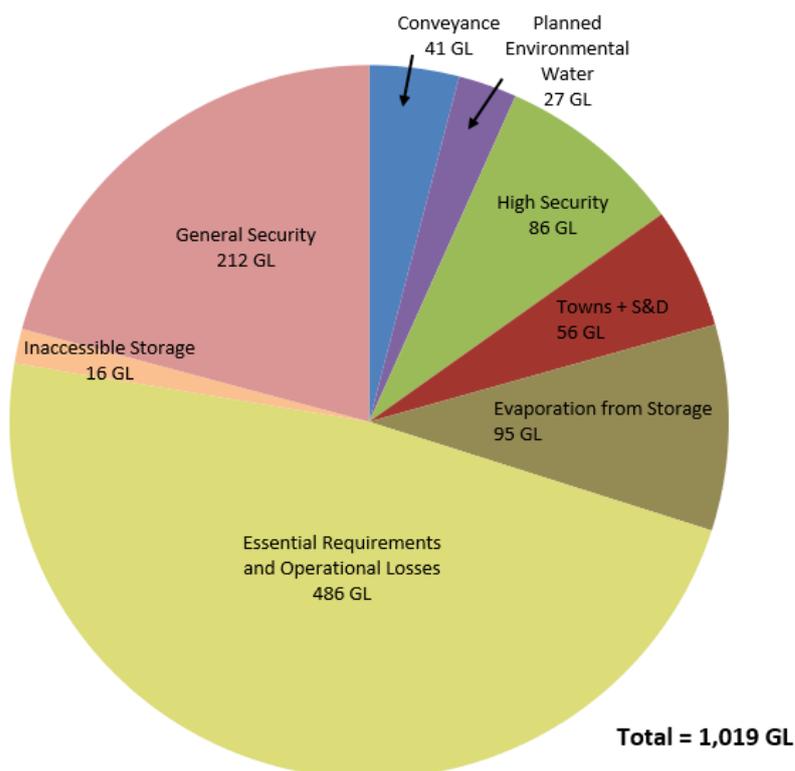
Lachlan resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution (February 2021 to May 2023)	Volume (GL)
Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	1,019
<i>less</i>	
General Security account balance ⁽⁶⁾⁽⁷⁾	212
Conveyance	41
Planned Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	27
High Security ^{(3) (6)}	86
Towns, Stock, Domestic ⁽³⁾	56
Evaporation from storage ⁽⁴⁾	95
Essential Requirements and Losses ⁽⁵⁾	486
Inaccessible storage	<u>16</u>
<i>equals</i>	
Water available for allocation (or deficit)	<u>0</u>

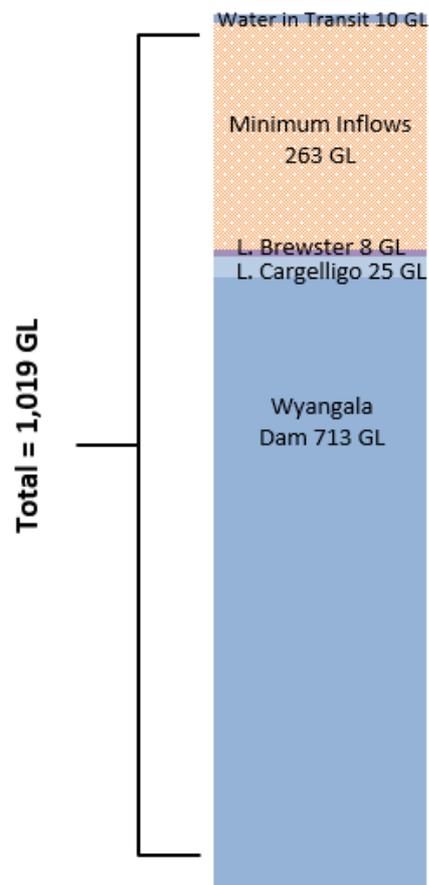
Notes:

- (1) Total available resource: End of January 2021 storage volume in Wyangala Dam, Lake Cargelligo and Lake Brewster, plus expected minimum inflows from February 2021 to May 2023.
- (2) Planned environmental water: 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 27 GL total represents the balance of the WQA, with 7 GL remaining for this water year plus 10 GL per year to May 2023. A volume of 2.9 GL WQA has been consumed in December and January 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 and Losses: 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 22 GL of GS, and 5 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: February 2021 Lachlan Regulated River Water Source



Supply Source



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