

1 July 2020

Opening water allocations 2020-21

Unregulated River water users

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment today announced opening water allocations for unregulated river water users for the 2020-21 water year.

Last year (2019-20) was characterised by low rainfall and high temperatures. There were record low flow periods in several northern inland and coastal systems due to the lack of rainfall and dry catchment areas. Soil moisture deficits inhibited the streamflow response from rainfall.

There has been some improvement in conditions this calendar year, particularly in soil moisture recovery, boosting dry land cropping for the winter period. The opening months of the new water year are forecast likely to deliver at least average rainfall for most of NSW.

There are no surprises in the allocations to unregulated river water users.

- Local water utility access licence holders covered by all unregulated river water sharing plans have received an allocation of 100% of entitlement or 1 megalitre per unit share.
- Domestic and stock water access licence holders covered by unregulated river water sharing plans have received an allocation of 100% of entitlement, that is 1 megalitre per unit share.
- Unregulated River and Unregulated River (special additional high flow) water access licence holders covered by all unregulated river water sharing plans have received an allocation of 100% of entitlement or 1 megalitre per unit share.
- Major utility access licence holders covered by all unregulated river water sharing plans have received an allocation of 100% of entitlement or 1 megalitre per unit share.

The only exceptions to the full allocations noted above are in the following management zones in the Water Sharing Plan for the Macquarie Bogan Unregulated Water Sources 2012;

- Campbells River Water Source (Campbells River Downstream Management Zone)
- Burrendong Water Source (Macquarie River above Bathurst Management Zone)
- Fish River Water Source (Lake Oberon to Macquarie River Confluence)

Unregulated River access licence holders in the above three zones have received an allocation of 20% of entitlement or **0.20 megalitres per unit share**.

The reduced allocations in these three water sources upstream of Bathurst are necessary to protect town water supplies while storage is low. Conditions are being closely monitored and allocations can be increased when storages recover, and town water supply security is restored.