Critical water planning for the Lachlan Valley

Issue 7 | 1 February 2010

Current water availability
The Christmas rainfall event boosted Wyangala Dam by 26 gigalitres (GL). In addition approximately 8 GL entered the Lachlan River downstream of Wyangala Dam. Due to higher than expected losses this provided less than 1 gigalitre inflow into Lake Brewster weir pool.

The following table shows storage levels in GL as at 31 January 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volume (GL)</th>
<th>Percentage of Capacity</th>
<th>Change in volume (GL) since 1 December 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyangala Dam</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inflow graph

![Inflow graph](image-url)
What this means

To take advantage of a wet river releases from Wyangala Dam were increased from 150 to 600 megalitres (ML) per day on 18 January 2010. These releases will total about 23GL, which is made up of 13GL of the inflow into Wyangala Dam over Christmas and 10GL which would have been released under the drought management strategy. This additional water will help to replenish all weir pools along the river to Lake Cargelligo. It is expected to result in approximately 4.5GL arriving at Lake Brewster weir by mid February, although travel times for this flow are much longer under previous regulated conditions.

Lachlan River management during 2009/10

These releases will renew the flows of the Lachlan River and provide enough water to reach to mid Lachlan effluent creeks which had started to flow from runoff in late December.

Currently Lake Brewster weir pool is holding approximately 400ML. When the additional inflow arrives, water will be released at a rate sufficient to deliver water to the Corong and Oxley area by mid March.

The current water delivery operation under the emergency drought management plan is expected to result in Wyangala Dam storing approximately 2.6 per cent of capacity as at 30 June 2010. This level of storage will still necessitate a continuation of flow restrictions into the 2010-2011 water year.

Town water supply

Balranald Shire Council commenced carting water on 25 January to the village of Oxley with two loads being delivered to individual household tanks.

The residents of Euabalong and Euabalong West are now required to cart water as the river has stopped running. Water will be carted from Lake Cargelligo or Condobolin to the 200 residents on alternate days. The pulse flow is expected to reach Lake Cargelligo around the mid February, at which time water carting will not be required.

The residents at Booligal are able to access water for stock and domestic use through the recently completed emergency bore.

Local water utilities along the Lachlan Valley have agreed to establish uniform water restrictions. These are currently at Level 2, with two hours watering on an odds and evens basis before 8.00am and after 5.00pm.

A number of emergency works are also expected to be completed by June. These include a third emergency bore at Forbes, a second emergency bore at Condobolin and the emergency bore at Lake Cargelligo.

Water trading in 2009/10

High security allocations can be traded, but buyers need to be aware of limitations on access.

Fish habitat

Landholders and members of the public are asked to report all incidences of fish becoming stressed, stranded or dying to Industry and Investment NSW (formerly NSW Fisheries) by phone to:

Allan Lugg on 4428 3401 or 0409 912 686 or
Adam Vey on 6042 4205 or 0419 185 506
Compliance
The NSW Office of Water’s Drought Contingency Planning Program will only work if everyone adheres to the restrictions and is careful with all water use. To ensure that the system is run fairly, the community should report any suspected breaches to the NSW Office of Water’s Compliance Unit on 1800 633 362 or by email to watercompliance@dwe.nsw.gov.au All reports are confidential.

Water availability outlook

Lachlan Valley Indicative Outlook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probability</th>
<th>Indicative Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>GLs % Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>336 28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>185 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>127 10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>70 5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>57 4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TWS(70%), S&D(50%) & HS(30%) & small GS alloc
Full GS carryover (33GL)
Enough reserves for normal operations in 2010/11
Drought Contingency measures in place.
Lake Cargelligo back on-line

TWS(70%), S&D(30%) & HS(20%)
14% of GS carryover (5GL) in 2009/10
Drought Contingency measures continue.
Lake Cargelligo off-line
Reserves in June 2010 (5%)

TWS(50%), S&D(15%), HS(10%)
and Nil access to GS carryover
Lake Cargelligo off-line
flows maintained to full river for full year
under Drought Contingency Measures

TWS(50%), S&D(15%), HS(10%)
and Nil access to GS carryover
Lake Cargelligo off-line
Severe drought Contingency Measures
Flows to cease at Condobolin

Key contacts

Peter Christmas, Director Water Management and Implementation, NSW Office of Water
Tamworth – 02 67019639

Viv Russell, Licensing Officer, NSW Office of Water Forbes - 02 6850 2801

Sri Sritharan, State Water Corporation Dubbo – 02 6841 2063

Adam Vey, Senior Conservation Manager, Aquatic Habitat Rehabilitation Unit, Industry & Investment NSW – 02 6042 4205

Allan Lugg, Senior Fisheries Conservation Manager, Aquatic Habitat Protection, Industry & Investment NSW – 02 4428 3401

Anne Brook, Community Relations & Media, NSW Office of Water 02 67019662 mobile 0419 120 527

The NSW Office of Water is a separate office within the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water