

Critical water planning for the Murrumbidgee Valley

Issue 30 | 15 December 2009

Current water availability

Isolated heavy falls have contributed to the above average rainfall readings in the Murrumbidgee Valley this month; however, very little inflow has been generated due to the catchments being so dry.

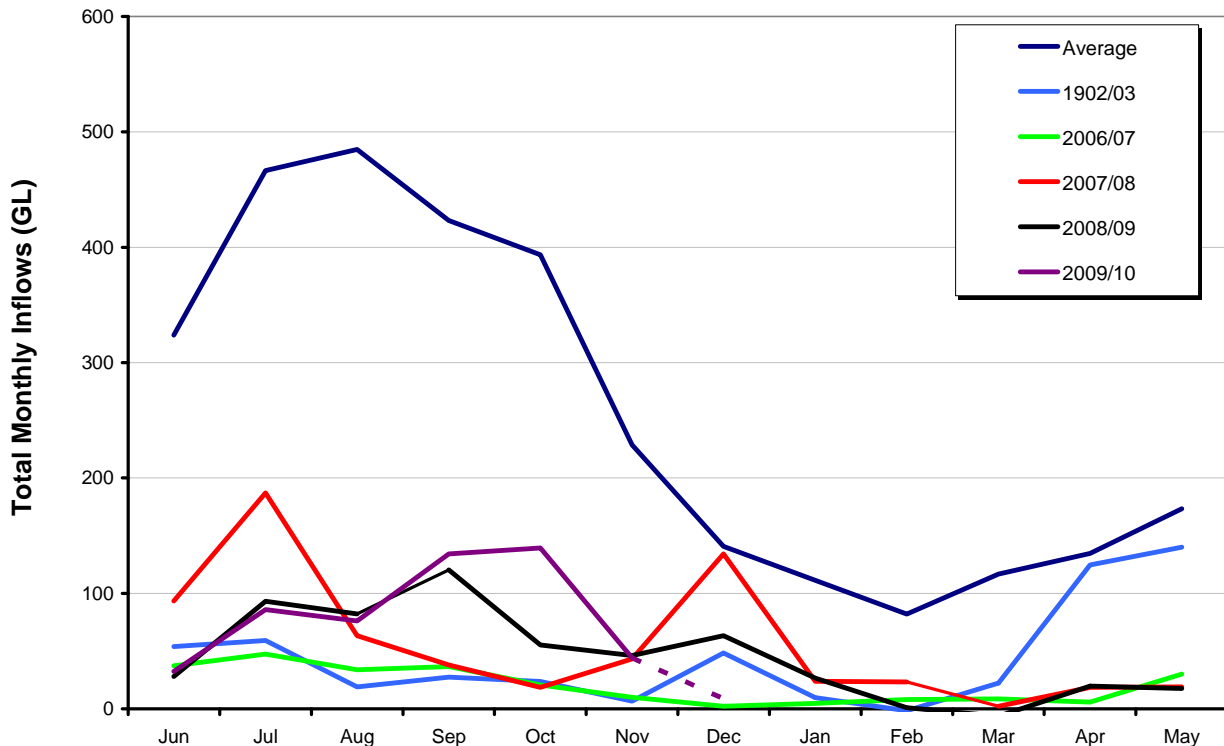
Location	10-30 November (mm)	1-10 December (mm)	Total (mm)	December Average (mm)	% of December Average
Thredbo Village	147.4	25.4	172.8	118.1	146
Gundagai	34	8.8	42.8	52.3	82
Griffith	27.8	36.4	64.2	30.8	208
Hay	40.2	10.2	50.4	26.8	188

The following table shows Murrumbidgee Valley storage levels as at 10 December 2009.

Storage @ 10 December 2009	Volume (GL)	Percent of capacity	Change in Volume 12 November 2009 to 10 December (GL)	Approximate volume at this time last year.
Burrinjuck Dam	441	43	-8	498
Blowering Dam	575	35	-24	718
Total	1016	38		1216

Inflow graph

Total Murrumbidgee Valley System Natural Inflows (excluding Snowy)
Selected Drought Years-v-Long term average



What this means

Despite good rainfall across the valley over the past four weeks, the very dry nature of the catchment has seen minimal inflows to the Valley's storages. As a result, there will be no increase to general security allocations, which will remain on 15 per cent of entitlement.

The outlook from the Bureau of Meteorology is for median rainfall conditions over summer.

The inflows that have occurred over the past month have been set aside to meet future critical human needs. To date, approximately 70 per cent of critical human needs water for 2010/11 has been reserved.

The next assessment will be carried out mid January 2010, with a critical water planning communiqué to be issued on 15 January 2010.

Trade

The second trade ballot for the Murrumbidgee Valley finished on 3 December. This ballot was over subscribed with the full 42 gigalitres flagged for trade out of the valley. The majority of this water was purchased by South Australian interests.

As this stage the NSW Office of Water will continue to monitor the delivery of trade water to determine if future ballots are the best method to deal with the physical river constraints.

Carryover

While the water sharing plan remains suspended, carryover rules in the Murrumbidgee Valley will remain as they did in 2008/09. The Murrumbidgee Water Sharing Plan will only recommence when water resources improve sufficiently to provide full high security allocations for the both the 2009/10 and 2010/11 years. Once conditions allow the plan to be resumed, carryover rules outlined in the Murrumbidgee Water Sharing Plan will prevail.

Until then, high and general security and conveyance licences will be allowed to carryover up to 30 per cent of their entitlement. Water use, that is allocation plus carryover, for each licence in 2010/11 will be limited to 100 per cent unless additional water is purchased in that year.

Compliance

The NSW Office of Water's Drought Contingency Planning Program will only work if everyone adheres to the restrictions where these apply 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 via phone 1800 633 362 or by email to watercompliance@dwe.nsw.gov.au. All reports are treated confidentially.

Water availability outlook

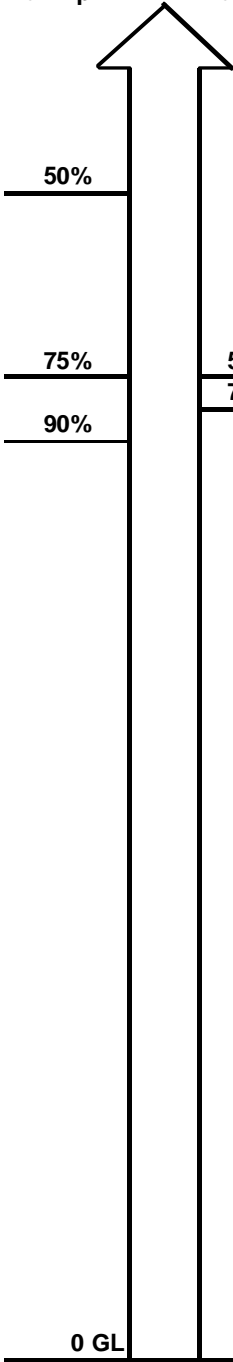
The figures that have been used to inform this diagram are based on dry tercile and are very conservative. They refer to water availability in **2009/10**.

The volumes on the "rocket" are indicative only and may change depending on the priority of access following stakeholder feedback and the reservation of water for 2010/11.

Murrumbidgee Valley Indicative Outlook

Availability @ 15/12/09

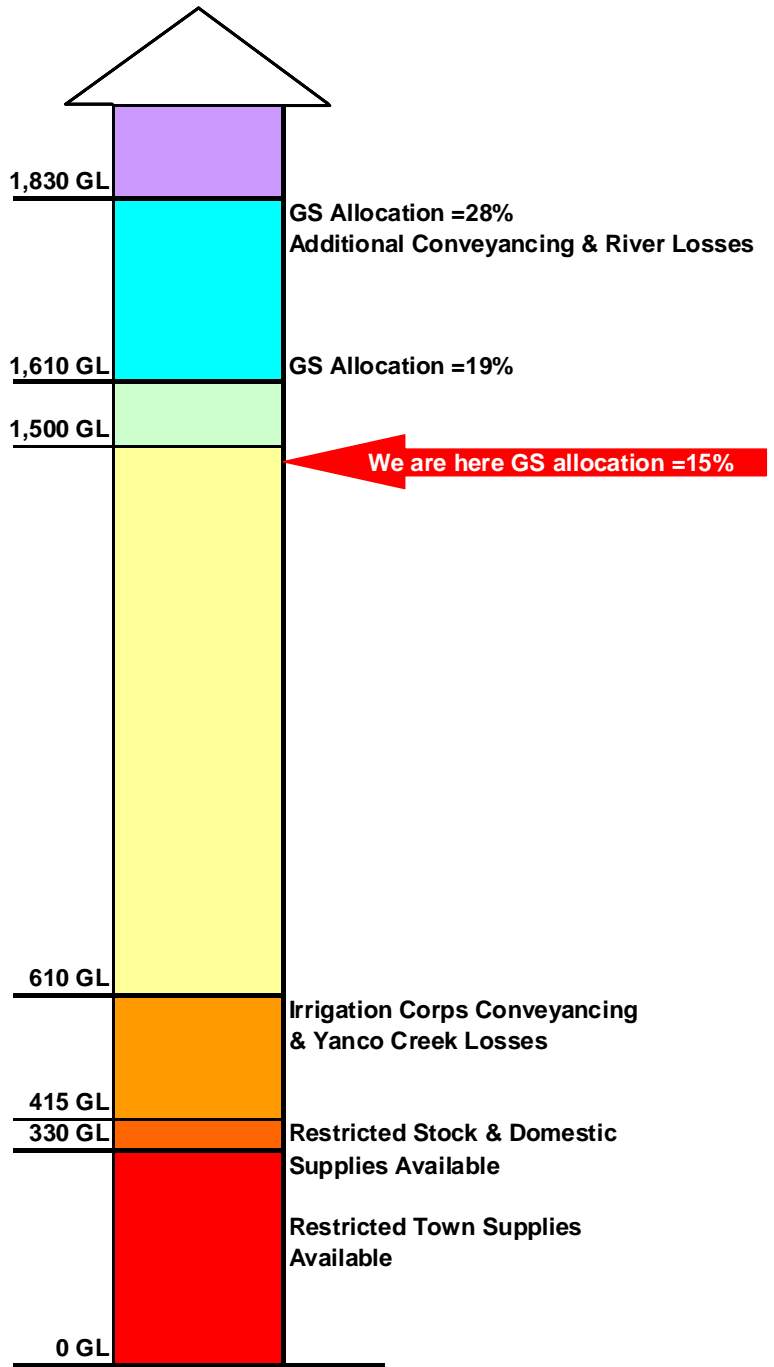
Chances
At 1 April



Chances
At 1 February



Indicative Requirements



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