



NSW Government

Department of Water & Energy

Critical water planning for the Murrumbidgee Valley

Issue 9 | 17 December 2007

Current water availability

There has again been some useful rainfall across the Murrumbidgee Valley in the month that has reduced irrigation demand for water, but has not resulted in any significant inflows to the major storages.

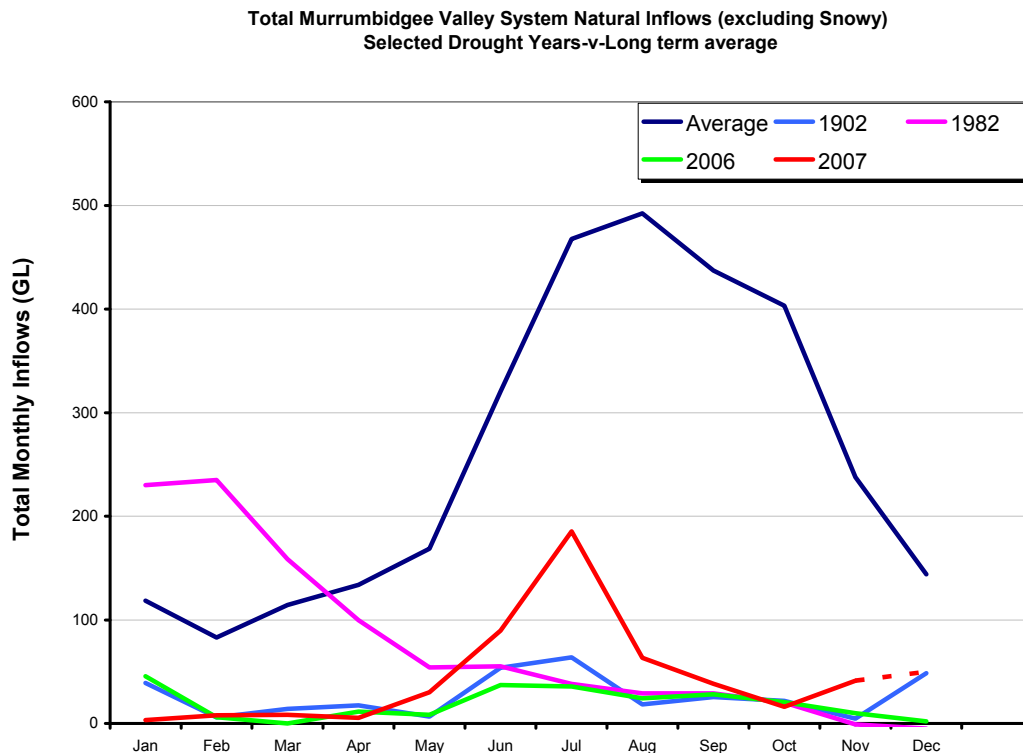
Since 13 November, Wagga Wagga has received 55 millimetres (mm) of rain, Griffith received 89.6 mm and Yass received 137 mm. The total inflow into the Murrumbidgee Valley system for November was 41 gigalitres (GL), which is higher than the inflows of 10 GL recorded in November 2006. The total inflows in the Murrumbidgee system for the period of July to November 2006 was 110 GL, compared to 345 GL for the same period in 2006.

Inflows into Snowy Mountains Scheme storages have continued to be above those recorded for the same period in 2006. The inflows into Blowering Dam are largely due to the releases from Snowy Hydro so far this year.

Murrumbidgee Valley storage levels as at 12 December 2007.

Storage @ 12 December 2007	Volume GL	Percent of capacity	Change in Volume 15 November to 12 December GL
Burrinjuck Dam	402	38.9	17
Blowering Dam	509	30.2	-9

This graph shows the long-term average system inflows comparing 2007 to recent drought years.



What this means

There is enough water to allow for a three per cent general security allocation to be made immediately. Resources have not yet reached the agreed triggers to start setting aside water to repay the environmental water accounts, however five GL has been released for environmental purposes in the Murrumbidgee Valley.

Water trading in 2007/08

All water in accounts may be traded. This includes all inter-valley and inter-state trades.

Water can be traded back into the Murrumbidgee Valley, as long as there is nett trade into the Murray Valley.

An important exception to these arrangements is for those users who participated in the 2002/03 Snowy Hydro borrow arrangements. Water re-credited in 2007/08 from that which was suspended in 2006 may not be traded until the water borrowed from Snowy Hydro has been repaid.

Close off of all trade in the Murrumbidgee Valley will be as of close of business (COB) on 30 April 2008

Carry over

Licence holders are likely to be able to carry over 15 per cent of entitlement into 2008/09 on the basis that the water sharing plan remains suspended. This means that licence holders can carry over all unused water in their account as at 30 June, up to a limit of 15 per cent of their total entitlement.

For example: If your account balance on 30 June is 100 megalitres (ML) and your licensed entitlement is 300 ML, you can carry over 45 ML.

Town water supply

The water allocation for town water supply is at 100 per cent of entitlement. However, suppliers are advised to continue to remain conservative with all water use and continue to implement a water restriction that limits the use of outside watering.

Compliance

The drought contingency planning 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 Department of Water and Energy's Compliance Unit on 1800 633 362 or by email to watercompliance@dwe.nsw.gov.au.

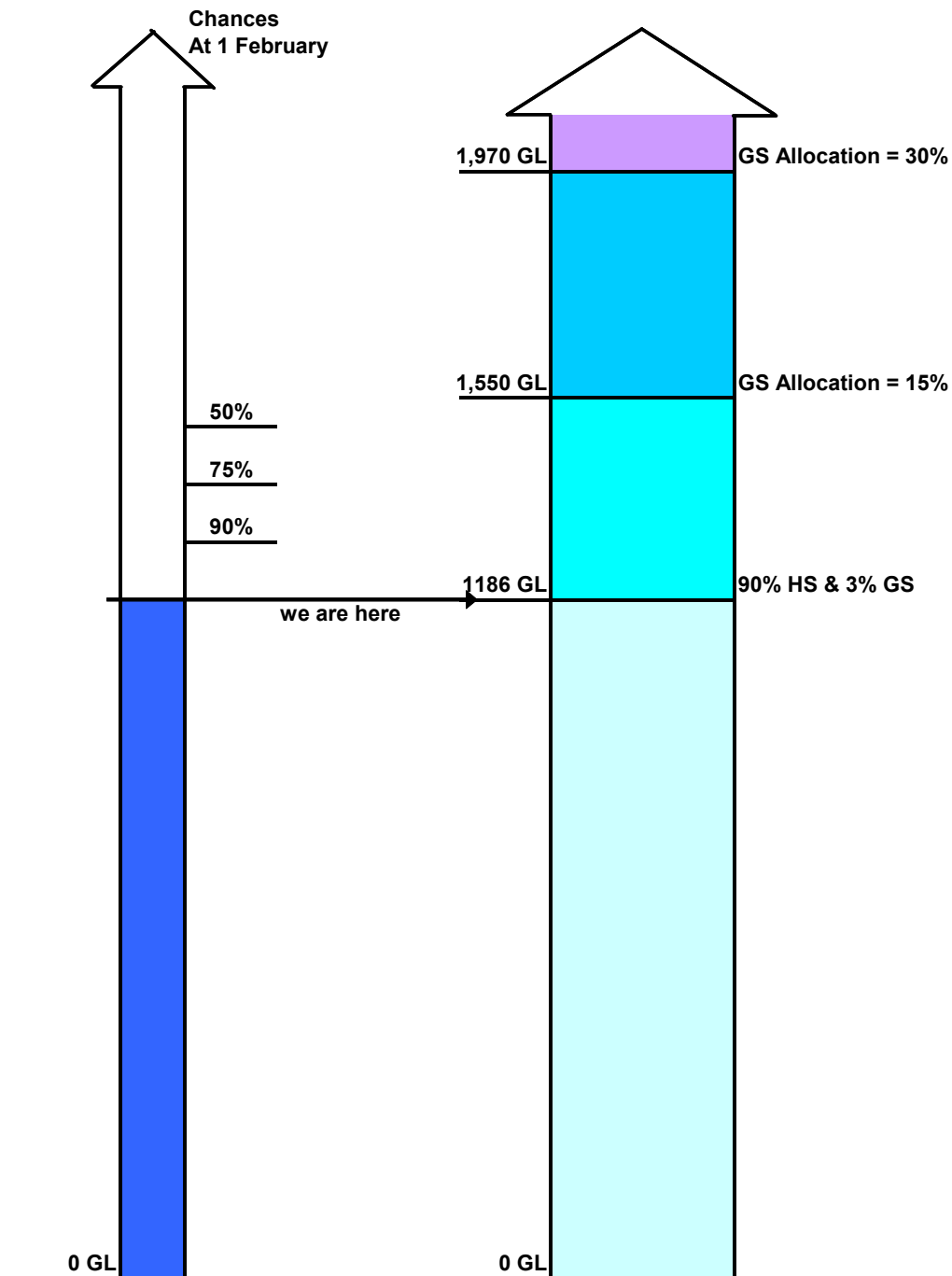
Water availability outlook

The following diagram shows the **approximate probabilities** of improvements in water availability occurring by 1 February 2008. This diagram will continue to change throughout the season as conditions change and other issues, such as reserving water for next year, need to be included.

Murrumbidgee Valley Indicative Outlook

Availability @ 15/12/07

Indicative Requirements



Unless there is very heavy rain in the catchment, the next resource update will be on 15 January 2008

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