

Werribee Irrigation District September 2016

SEASON OUTLOOK

As I am sure you have noticed we have had a very welcome change to weather conditions since autumn. There has been a good amount of rain in the Werribee and Lerderderg River catchments and this is now generating good flows in the rivers and inflows into our reservoirs.

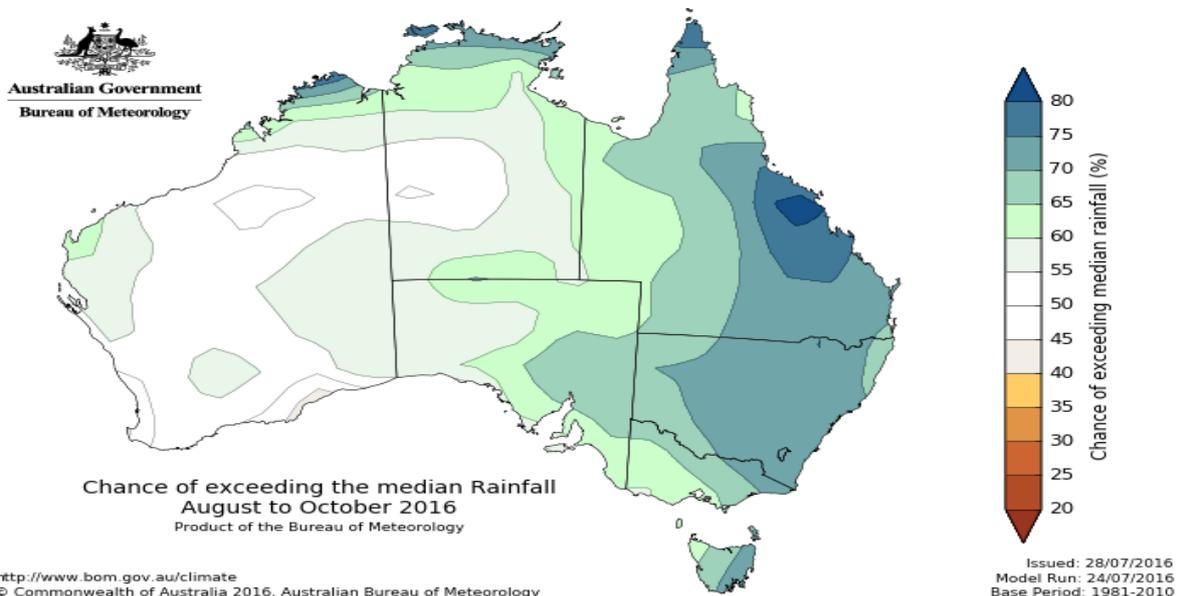


Lerderderg River at O'Briens Crossing – June 2016



Lerderderg River at O'Briens Crossing – July 2016

As of 1st September the reservoirs had risen to 39% full; from a low of 12% at the start of July. With the spring period still to come and with a rainfall outlook of a 60% chance of above average rainfall for August to October, things are looking positive.

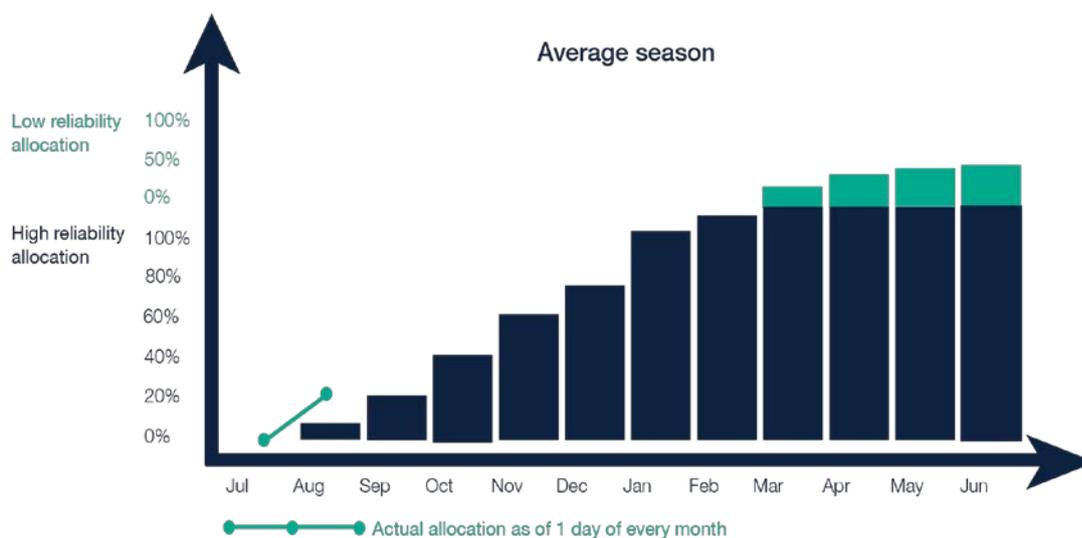


Current allocation

With the increasing water levels in the reservoirs we have been able to increase the allocation to 55% of high reliability water shares.

Predicted allocation

If we get the predicted above average rain over spring then we should have a better than average season. Based on historical inflows, an average season would result in 100% allocation of high reliability water and up to a 50% allocation of low reliability water shares. The chart below shows that we are currently tracking towards an average season or better.



Groundwater Outlook

The groundwater levels dropped steadily last season and were at quite low at the start of this season. Therefore, the starting allocation for groundwater is 25%. The level has recovered a little with the recent rain but is still below the level at the same time last year. We will continue to monitor levels throughout the season to see if we can increase the allocation.

Automated meter reading – Taggle



The groundwater team are introducing a new technology to read groundwater meters. The proposed system comprises a low cost, low power transmitting device that is attached to existing water meters and allows hourly data to be sent digitally via radio technology to high-sensitivity receivers. The data is then available to be viewed on-line and quickly and easily imported directly into our metering system.

This will remove the need for field staff to physically read meters which will substantially reduce operating costs. The ability to access data about daily and hourly water use will hopefully assist customers with on-farm management and allow important decisions regarding resource management to be made quickly and easily.

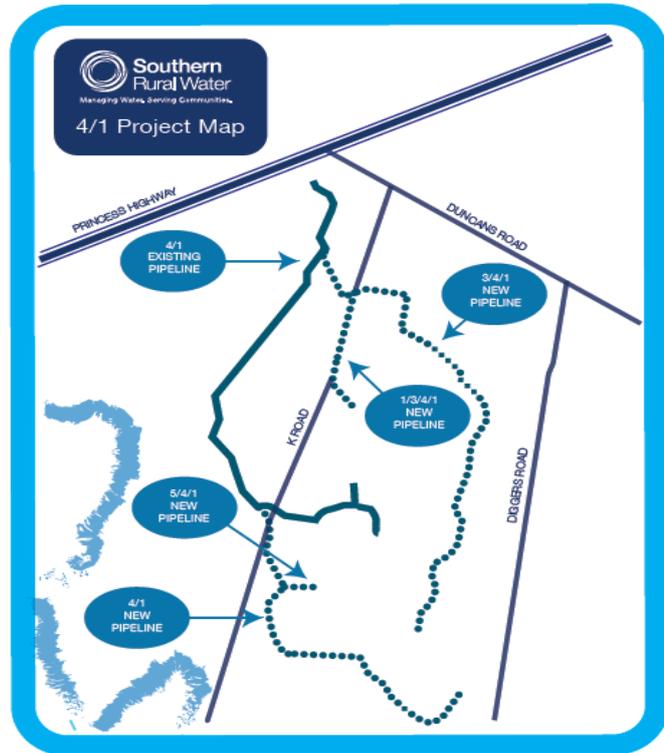
A radio receiver has recently been installed at the Werribee SRW office. This will allow radio coverage of the entire Werribee area. The project will be rolled out to incorporate the remaining areas in a staged approach over the next two to three years.

We have just completed the second and final stage of the 4/1 pipeline project which began last winter.

We have now piped 6km of the worst sections of channel and will save 600ML per year.

The project has been completed ahead of schedule and under budget.

This means that remaining funds can be used for future works.



Next stage of pipelining

It is fantastic news that the Victorian Government has committed to fund a third of the pipeline project in the WID. With grower contributions we now have two thirds of the project funded. We continue to seek funding from the Federal Government through the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund with applications for funding due in the new year.

However, with 2/3rds of the funds already secured, we have begun planning for the next phase of pipeline works with construction to take place during the next winter period. We anticipate completing the pipelining project over the next four to five years.

Recycled water

With the increase in recycled water signed up last year we now have 8,000ML available, which should sustain the district through most seasons. However, in order to deliver this volume we will need to change the weekly supply schedule with a longer period for delivering a recycled water mix and possibly one day a week to supply river water on its own. You will be notified of the new schedule in the coming weeks.

Thomson emergency water and salinity reduction

At the start of this year we had drawn down our water storages to just 12%. To ensure we had enough water to start this season we purchased 1,800ML of Thomson Reservoir water from Macalister Irrigation District farmers. We are currently in discussions with City West Water to determine how this will be supplied to the WID. River water customers will be given an option to take some of the water. Any unused water this season could be carried over until required.

The rest of the water may be used to reduce the salinity of the recycled water supplied over the summer months.

WINTER MAINTENANCE WORKS

We have been busy carrying out maintenance jobs over the last few months. The main focus has been on trying to reduce leaks to help improve the efficiency of the system until pipelining is complete. We have also had a major focus on service customer outlets.

Works carried out:

- Concrete works along various channels with 52.4 m³ of concrete being used.
- Full service of 123 outlets including; wheel replacements; bearing replacements: ground levelling and site clean-up.
- All meters along the Werribee River have been fully serviced and repaired and are now part of a regular maintenance program.
- 4 major valves along the 4/1 and 3/4/1 have been dismantled and fully serviced and repaired for use.
- A lot of weed control alongside the channels and drains



Channel concrete Works



Customer outlet works

NEW SRW WEBSITE

A visit to www.srw.com.au will now reveal a very different picture, with a newly launched website for Southern Rural Water. The site has a cleaner, more attractive design and will be much easier to use. "We are excited about our new website and the level of detail it provides for customers and other interested users," said Julie Logan, Communications and Visual Design, Southern Rural Water. "The website has a lot of great new features, but most of all, we wanted make life easier for our customers. If you take a look around the site we think you'll get a pretty good idea of who we are, what we do and more importantly how we can help you and your business or organisation".

Along with a fresh and simplified look, the site will be compatible with your mobile devices, allowing you to better interact with Southern Rural Water online.

Visit our website for our latest news and updates. We encourage you to explore the website and sign up to receive newsletters and media releases by email.

We hope you will enjoy our new site. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions please send them to srw@srw.com.au or phone 1300 139 510.