

Tuesday, 15 February 2011

RIVER MURRAY WATER RESOURCES UPDATE

River Murray water resource and storage conditions continue to improve due to recent heavy rainfall across the River Murray system and continued releases from Menindee Lakes in response to the high inflow expected from flooding across southern Queensland.

River Murray system inflow during January was 1,750 GL, well above the long-term January average of 230 GL.

Minister for the River Murray Paul Caica said River Murray system inflow from June 1 last year, combined with the high inflow of 580 GL expected for February, will result in an inflow of approximately 13,800 GL.

“This means that, for the first time since 2000-01, South Australia has received a significant volume of unregulated flow which is providing numerous benefits for the riverine environment, Lower Lakes and Coorong,” he said.

“These flows have helped some areas to recover from the prolonged drought but higher flows are required for full recovery. Improved inflow in the River Murray system and increasing volumes in storage will continue to build reserves to give South Australia, along with the other states, a good start to the 2011-12 water year.”

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority has provided a preliminary assessment of the potential water availability in 2011-12, which indicates South Australia will again receive its full 1,850 GL Entitlement Flow for 2011-12.

Mr Caica said this meant it was highly likely irrigation allocations would be 100 per cent from July 1.

The improved flow conditions in the River Murray have provided South Australia with more than 8,000 GL so far in 2010-11.

“The current flow to South Australia since July 1 2010 is equivalent to the total combined flow to South Australia of the past three water years,” Mr Caica said.

“This represents a significant step towards recovery of the River Murray in South Australia.”

The Department for Water is providing weekly River Murray Flow Advice updates on the Water for Good website each Friday while high flow conditions persist.

For more information visit www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au and use this advice where necessary. For more information about conditions in the River Murray or wider Murray-Darling Basin visit www.mdba.gov.au.