

Media release

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WaterNSW, Macquarie Valley users take steps to extend supply

As record drought grips the Macquarie valley, WaterNSW is advising that Burrendong Dam storage will fall below 10% this summer without significant inflows.

WaterNSW is managing water security in line with NSW Government rules to ensure equity among the numerous competing interests dependent on Burrendong Dam, including communities, farm groups and the environment.

Burrendong currently sits at 15.8% of capacity, with a transfer of 35 gigalitres (GL) set to commence from Windamere Dam on 1 January, 2019.

Even with the additional water, a continuation of drought conditions that have prevailed since 2016 could reduce the volume of water in the dam to less than 5% by the end of summer.

Stringent drought measures and co-operation from customers in the Macquarie Valley has already led to valuable water savings, with surplus deliveries down by more than 95%.

Customer support for stricter water ordering processes and flexibility to make group orders has allowed WaterNSW to stringently manage water storages in the region.

These measures have encouraged customers to be more strategic with their orders, extending supply and helping to push back the need for the Windamere transfer from November 2018 as previously intended, to January 2019.

A NSW Government s324 order also remains in place for the Macquarie valley, temporarily quarantining 30% of all carryover water available to irrigators.

Inflows into Burrendong have been at record low levels since winter – less than a third of the previous lowest total recorded since the dam was built. Burrendong Dam had been drawn below 10% on five previous occasions (June 1995, January 1998, April 2003, May 2004 and January 2007).

WaterNSW is planning information session at major centres in the region in January:

- 15 January – Warren and Narromine
- 16 January – Dubbo (incl Wellington)
- 17 January - Mudgee

“Customers have worked with us under difficult circumstances to prolong water supply and avoid unnecessary losses,” said Adrian Langdon, WaterNSW’s executive manager of System Operation.

For WaterNSW drought information visit: www.waternsw.com.au/supply/drought-information

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