

SA River Murray Flow Report



Report #12/2026

Issued 1:00pm 20 March 2026

This supersedes all previous Flow Reports issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW).

Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border this Friday is approximately 8.5 GL/day and is forecast to increase to approximately 9.5 GL/day by next Friday.

The current flow at the South Australian border includes March Entitlement Flow (6 GL/day), which is adjusted for deferred entitlement volume that is stored and accumulated for critical human water needs and private carryover during dry periods.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday is approximately 7.5 GL/day and is expected to increase to approximately 8.0 GL/day by next Friday.

It is important to note that flow forecasts in this advice are based on the information available at the time of preparation. Advice may change as new gauging information becomes available or due to rainfall events or changed operations upstream.

2026-2027 Projected opening allocations

The projected minimum opening allocations are made to communicate the anticipated volume of water that will be available from the start of the upcoming water year for allocation. South Australia will announce projected minimum or 'worst-case' allocations on 15 April 2026 for the 2026-27 water use year. This announcement will include a South Australian Water Allocation Statement with water availability projections, information regarding availability of private carryover, water in storage, and the climate outlook.

For more information see the latest allocation statement at <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/water-and-river-murray/water-licences-allocations-and-markets/water-allocation-and-carryover/current-allocations>

Water levels

Current water levels are updated daily and can be found on [WaterConnect](#).

Upstream flows, rainfall and storages

Rainfall over the Murray-Darling Basin was varied in the week up to 18 March 2026. The central Basin recorded little to no rain, with highest rainfall totals this week recorded in the Southern Basin. Southern Queensland received patchy rainfall, with totals ranging from 0-10mm. Similarly, large areas of NSW received no rainfall. The highest totals of 10-15mm were received in southern New South Wales.

Both Victoria and South Australia received widespread rain this week, with Victoria recording 1-15mm and up to 25mm in some areas. South Australia recorded widespread rainfall totals of 15-25mm, with up to 50mm recorded around the Riverland. Further rainfall information for the Basin can be found at <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/>

As of 19 March 2026, Dartmouth Dam storage has reduced to 2,492 GL, remaining at approximately 65% of capacity, and Hume Dam storage has reduced slightly to 808 GL, remaining around 27% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes, as of 18 March 2026, has decreased and is at 645 GL, approximately 37% of capacity. As of 18 March 2026, combined releases from Menindee Lakes were approximately 1.70 GL/day.

As of 19 March 2026, Lake Victoria storage has increased to 390 GL, approximately 58% capacity, which is an increase of approximately 36 GL over the past 8 days. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 10% of the flow to South Australia.

Flows at the South Australia border averaged approximately 7.6 GL/day over the past week.

This forecast remains subject to change, depending on river operations and catchment rainfall. More information on upstream conditions and forecasts can be found in the [Murray-Darling Basin Authority's Weekly Flow Report](#).

Water quality

Water quality upstream of SA

Please be advised that with additional flows coming from the Darling River there will be an increase in turbidity of the water in the main channel of the River Murray. Horticulturalists may consider this as part of filtration and backflush programs for irrigation systems.

Algal blooms within SA

Coorong

Government agencies continue to work together to conduct fortnightly water testing in the Coorong to monitor for *Karenia*.

For algal bloom water testing results and further information visit [Algal Bloom Water Sampling Dashboard](#).

For Coorong North Lagoon water quality and environmental conditions visit [Coorong North Lagoon Conditions Dashboard](#).

Visitors to coastal areas are advised to check signage and avoid contact with discoloured water, foamy water, or water where marine life is dead or in poor health. When the algae are broken up by wave action, algal particles can cause short-term skin or eye irritation and respiratory symptoms, including a cough or shortness of breath. If you notice symptoms, move away from the beach or water. Most symptoms will resolve within hours of leaving the area.

For current conditions and health advice please visit the [SA Government algal bloom website](#) or the [SA Health water quality alerts page](#).

Algal blooms upstream of SA

WaterNSW issues blue-green algae (BGA) alerts as Red, Amber or Green. A red alert indicates a toxic algal bloom, making the water dangerous for humans and animals; an amber alert indicates BGA may be multiplying in numbers and water should be considered unsuitable for human or animal consumption but remains suitable for recreational use; and a green alert indicates the presence of BGA but not at levels to pose a threat to recreational, stock or domestic use.

WaterNSW has issued red alerts for Menindee Lakes and Silver City Highway. The Edward Wakool system also has multiple amber and green alerts in place. Numerous BGA amber and green alerts apply to the River Murray between Lake Hume and the SA border, and additional alerts are current across the Menindee Lakes and the lower Darling. Further details of the current NSW alert locations can be found on the [WaterNSW website – Algae Alerts page](#).

Victoria’s Goulburn-Murray Water has issued recreational BGA warnings for Tullaroop Reservoir, Hepburns Lagoon and Gum Lagoon in the Torrumbarry Irrigation Area. Details of the current VIC alert locations can be found on the [Blue-Green Algae Warnings - Goulburn Murray Water](#) page.

Lower Murray Water (LMW) has issued a red alert for BGA in Lake Cullulleraine. Various low to mid-level recreational BGA alerts also remain current on the River Murray from Boundary Bend through to Lock 9. Details of LMW alert locations can be found on the [Blue-green algae monitoring - Lower Murray Water](#) page.

Water for the environment delivery

The delivery of water for the environment to the South Australian border is continuing at approximately 1.5 GL/day. This is a combination of direct trade to SA from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder and The Living Murray. The water being delivered is helping to manage Lower Lakes levels and provide a small volume of continuous flow to the Coorong. Water for the environment also continues to be delivered as part of SA’s Entitlement flow.

Planning for further delivery of water for the environment throughout 2025-26 is continuing.

Murray Mouth

Dredging is continuing directly in the Murray Mouth at the junction of the Tauwitche and Goolwa Channels.

Barrage releases, combined with dredging throughout most of the year, help to maintain flow connectivity of the River Murray Channel to the Murray Mouth and assist in exporting salt from the river system.

Exclusion Zones established around the dredging operations are in place to ensure public safety. Refer to [Notice to Mariners No 61 of 2023](#).

Barrage operations and water levels in the Lower Lakes

As of 19 March 2026, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.68m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.66m AHD, noting that lake levels can fluctuate considerably depending on wind conditions.

The Lower Lakes are managed, as far as practicable, to target a daily average lake level between 0.60m AHD and 0.70m AHD throughout March.

Barrage gate operations are adjusted to release water when tidal conditions permit and are dependent on upstream flows, lake levels and variable weather conditions.

Since mid-December 2025, barrage flows have been limited to fishways only. On 6 February 2026, a modified attractant gate at Boundary Creek barrage was also opened to help freshen important estuarine habitat within the Murray Mouth area. These small volumes of water for the environment have been provided specifically to

support refuge habitat for the Coorong's invertebrates, waterbirds and fish. On 24 February 2026, the automatic gate on Goolwa barrage was opened to create localised 'salt wedge' conditions downstream of the barrage. This barrage bay will remain open for at least 28 days to support black bream recruitment.

Gate openings at the barrages can now be viewed on [Water Data SA – Barrage dashboard](#).

Total daily flow releases from the barrages can also be found on [Water Data SA – Flows dashboard](#).

River Murray vessel waste disposal stations

The Lock 3 River Vessel Waste Disposal Station (RVWDS) has been out of commission since January 2020 due to a significant infrastructure failure. The nearest alternative waste facility is located at Waikerie. Normal boat hard waste (domestic or galley waste) can still be deposited at the Lock 3 facility at the present time.

Contractors will perform system upgrades at the following RVWDS on the dates listed below:

- Walker Flat RVWDS: 9 to 14 March
- Swan Reach RVWDS: 9 to 14 March
- Mannum RVWDS: 15 to 19 March.

The stations will remain operational; however, minor delays may occur.

For a full list and map of the stations visit: <http://environment.sa.gov.au/waste-disposal-stations>

You can report any River Vessel Waste Disposal Station issues on 1800 799 065.

If you have any questions, please contact the DEW WIO Engagement Team at DEW.WIOCommunications@sa.gov.au

Salinity

Salinity levels throughout the River Murray in South Australia are within their typical range. Nonetheless, it is possible that some irrigators may record higher salinity readings at isolated locations. These higher readings are more likely to be observed at the bottom of the water column.

Salinity throughout the Goolwa Channel from the Goolwa Barrage to Clayton Bay remains elevated as a result of salt water ingress from recent storm surge events.

Irrigators are encouraged to monitor the [daily salinity levels](#) provided by SA Water as part of their business operations.

Intermediate remediation of the LMRIA levees project

The Intermediate Remediation of the LMRIA Levees project is jointly funded by the Australian and South Australian governments, through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. This project will return the severely flood damaged sections of government and private levees to their pre-flood height.

Government levees in the LMRIA remain temporarily closed to the public. Where intermediate remediation works are required, they will remain closed until works are complete and public safety risk assessments, tree assessments (and any arborist works required), fencing repairs and reinstallation of signage is undertaken to ensure safe access before reopening to the public.

Reopening of the levees will be staged as the assessments and associated works are completed. It is expected levees will progressively start to reopen in 2-3 months.

For more information, including locations and access updates, please visit the LMRIA levees page.

If you have any questions, please contact the DEW WIO Engagement Team at DEW.WIOcommunications@sa.gov.au

Bookmark Creek first operations

First operations of the Bookmark Creek infrastructure have been paused due to rain as the floodplain cannot be accessed for monitoring.

First Operations testing will recommence once the floodplain is dry enough.

The infrastructure was constructed under the Sustaining Riverland Environments program.

Further information can be found at: [Department for Environment and Water - Bookmark Creek first operations](#)

More information

- [Algal bloom information](#)

Other flow updates and information

- [Current SA daily water levels](#)
- [SA Water daily flow report](#)
- [SA Water daily salinity report](#)
- [SA Water daily river graphs](#)
- [Murray-Darling Basin Authority weekly report](#)

- [Real Time Water Data \(DEW\)](#)
- [Live river system data \(MDBA\)](#)
- [SA Health water quality alerts](#)

Mapping

- [River Murray inundation mapping](#)
- [2014 River Murray floodplain flood mapping](#)
- [Flood awareness mapping](#)
- [Algal bloom information](#)

Bureau of Meteorology forecasts

- [SA rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [Victorian rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [NSW rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [Climate outlooks](#)
- [Climate drivers](#)

Further information

- [Murray-Darling Basin Authority news](#)
- [Water for the environment actions by region](#)
- [NSW algal alerts](#)
- [Government of SA - State Disaster Recovery](#)
- [SA Marine safety](#)
- [Weir pool manipulation](#)
- [2022-23 River Murray Flood event](#)

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