

SARFIIP – Pike Floodplain Hydraulic Modelling – Natural, Current and Basin Plan Flow Scenarios

DEWNR Technical note 2016/03



Government of South Australia
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SARFIIP – Pike Floodplain Hydraulic Modelling

Natural, Current and Basin Plan Flow Scenarios

Mahdi Montazeri and Daniel McCullough

Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

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Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

GPO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone National (08) 8463 6946
 International +61 8 8463 6946

Fax National (08) 8463 6999
 International +61 8 8463 6999

Website www.environment.sa.gov.au

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Summary

The following report presents the hydraulic modelling work undertaken to understand the hydrological regime (both inundated area and hydraulic variability) of Pike Floodplain for a range of conditions:

- natural, without structures on the floodplain or development influences on flow in the River Murray
- current, the hydrological regime expected based on pre-Basin Plan (2009) conditions
- future, with a range of Basin Plan water recovery scenarios considered (2400, 2750 and 3200GL/year).

The hydraulic modelling results indicate that:

- The frequency of inundation of the floodplain for a given flow is significantly reduced in the baseline condition compared to the without development condition.
- Without development conditions show relatively even distributions of velocities throughout the velocity ranges, particularly between the very slow to moderate ranges.
- Basin Plan flow regimes from current up to 3200RC show the majority of velocities are contained in the very slow to slow velocity categories across all ARIs and event durations, with reach length in the slow–moderate velocity range particularly reduced when compared with the without development velocity profiles.
- Comparison of inundation extents, frequencies and velocity distributions within the floodplain between without development floodplain conditions and baseline conditions indicates that additional flows delivered to the Murray–Darling Basin through the Basin Plan will likely require the implementation of additional measures, such as man-made embankment removals and infrastructure solutions, in order to approach the floodplain benefits achieved under without development conditions.

1 Background

Pike Floodplain is an anabranch of the River Murray located in the vicinity of Renmark, South Australia. Its main inlets are located upstream of Lock 5, with return flows re-entering the River Murray on the downstream side of Lock 5. A number of structures and banks have been constructed over the years, both internal and external to the floodplain, which have modified the natural hydraulics of the system and resulted in a general degradation of the ecological condition of the floodplain and associated wetlands. Figure 1.1 shows the main creeks and structures associated with the floodplain.

Owing to the general degradation of the floodplain condition in comparison to that under natural conditions, the South Australian Riverland Floodplains Integrated Infrastructure Program (SARFIIP) has been initiated to improve the flexibility of managing the system via new infrastructure and operational solutions. The following report presents the hydraulic modelling work undertaken to understand the hydrological regime (both inundated area and hydraulic variability) of the Pike Floodplain for a range of conditions:

- natural, without structures on the floodplain or development influences on flow in the River Murray
- current, the hydrological regime expected based on pre-Basin Plan (2009) conditions
- future, with a range of Basin Plan water recovery scenarios considered.

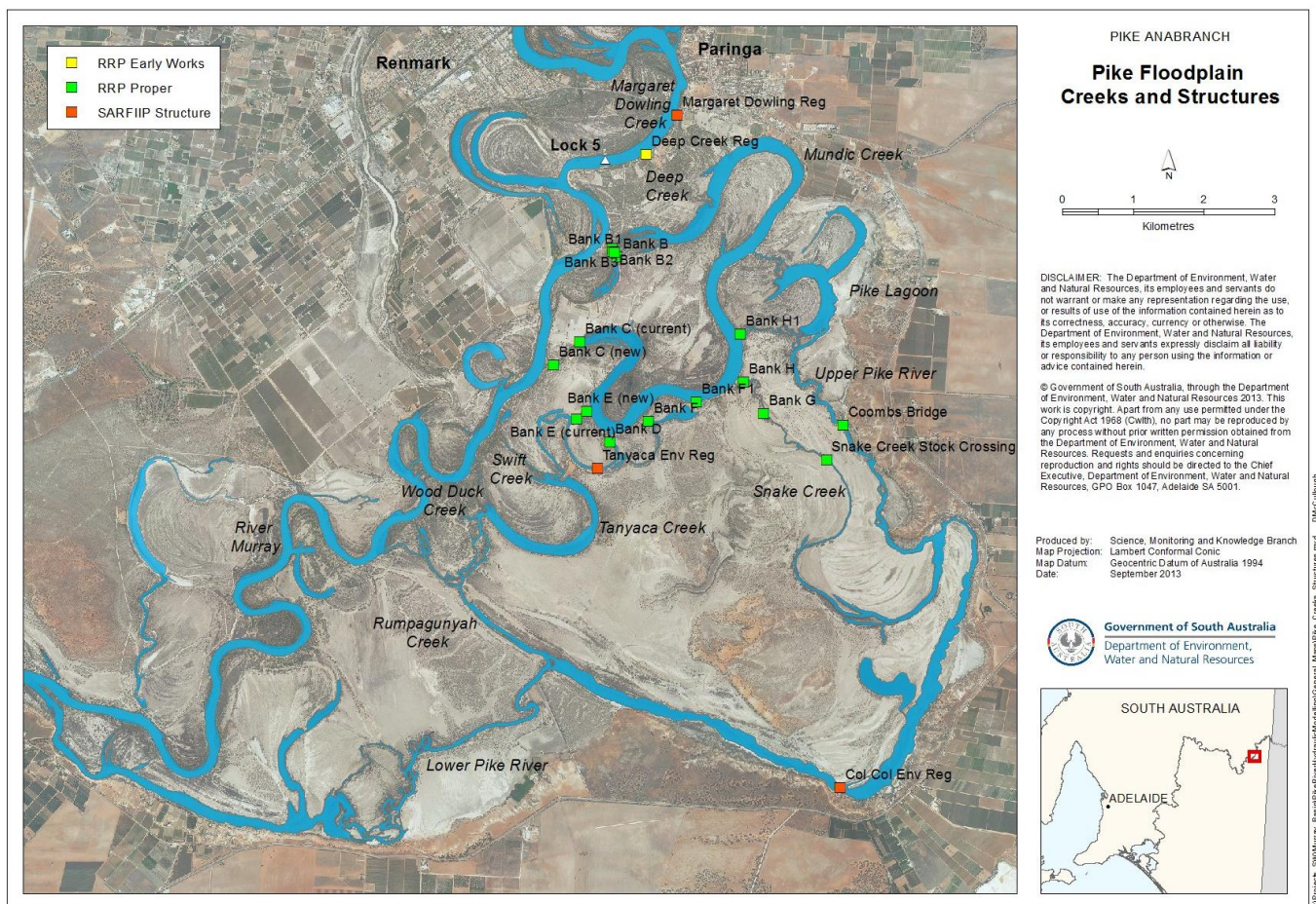


Figure 1.1 Pike Floodplain creeks and structures.

2 Hydraulic Model

The numerical hydrodynamic models were originally produced and calibrated by Water Technology using the MIKE FLOOD modelling platform that combines the dynamic coupling of the one-dimensional MIKE 11 river model and MIKE 21 two dimensional model system. Details of the original MIKE FLOOD model configuration are presented in Water Technology (2009), which is supported by a preliminary review of the data available for producing the hydraulic model (Water Technology, 2008). The original version of the model used a two dimensional (2D) bathymetric grid cell size of 20 m, however this was re-schematised to a 30 m grid size as detailed in Water Technology (2010b). The MIKE FLOOD model was further refined and re-calibrated in 2013 (McCullough, 2013) and again in 2015 (McCullough, 2015) within the SMK branch of DEWNR to address the updates implemented by the DEWNR.

To represent the current conditions of the Pike Floodplain, the following branches are specified in the model as 1D representations (refer to Figure 1.1 for locations of creeks and structures):

- River Murray (between Locks 4 to 6)
- Margaret Dowling Creek (anabranh inlet upstream of Lock 5)
- Deep Creek (anabranh inlet upstream of Lock 5)
- Tanyaca Creek (section directly south of Mundic Creek only, not including horseshoe lagoon)
- Swift Creek (inlet to Tanyaca Creek)
- Wood Duck Creek (inlet to Tanyaca Creek)
- Rumpagunyah Creek
- Snake Creek
- Upper Pike River
- Lower Pike River (section approximately 5 km downstream of junction between Lower Pike and Rumpagunyah)

Structures represented in the model are as follows:

- Margaret Dowling inlet structure
- Deep Creek inlet structure
- Bank B regulator
- Bank C – existing earthen bank and new regulator
- Bank D, F, F1, G, H, Snake Creek Stock Crossing – existing earthen banks
- Coombs Bridge – existing bridge with culverts
- Col Col Bank – existing bank and environmental regulator
- Tanyaca Creek environmental regulator

The recently calibrated MIKE FLOOD model was used as a basis in this investigation. The details of the recent MIKE FLOOD model are presented in McCullough (2015).

3 Methodology

3.1 Scenarios Modelled

To provide context on the potential benefits that could be restored through infrastructure two key states of the floodplain have been considered representing: 1) the baseline infrastructure condition (i.e. existing condition) and 2) without development condition (i.e. near to natural condition). The recent MIKE FLOOD model was used without any modifications to represent the baseline condition and then all structures and locks were removed from this model to create a model representing the floodplain as near to natural condition as possible.

A number of Basin Plan water recovery scenarios were considered under baseline condition to assess the impact of different flow regimes on frequency of inundation within Pike Floodplain. These water recovery scenarios have been developed by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) since 2010 to represent the changes in the flow regime that can be achieved through the recovery and use of water for the environment under the Basin Plan. The characteristics of the Basin Plan water recovery scenarios are discussed in detail in MDBA (2012a) and MDBA (2012b) for the relaxed constraint scenario.

All scenarios that were assessed in this investigation are as follows:

- **Without development Condition**

Floodplain conditions that are as near to natural conditions as possible and flow regime based on MDBA without development model run that excludes diversions and river infrastructure such as storages

- **Baseline Condition – Current flow regime**

Existing floodplain condition (structures, locks and operating rules) with flow regime representing pre Basin Plan river development (representative of 2009 conditions) (MDBA, 2012a).

- **Baseline Condition - BP2750**

Existing floodplain condition (structures, locks and operating rules) with a flow regime based on a water recovery of 2750 GL. This was the updated mode run developed for the SDL Adjustment Mechanism Benchmark (MDBA 2014), which is similar to the BP2800 scenario in MDBA (2012a).

- **Baseline Condition - BP2400**

Existing floodplain condition (structures, locks and operating rules) with a reduced water recovery of 2400 GL, representing a possible post SDL Adjustment recovery volume

- **Baseline Condition - BP3200RC**

Existing floodplain condition (structures, locks and operating rules) with an increased water recovery volume of 3200 GL And included relaxed flow delivery constraints within the Murray, representing an upper limit to the inundation regime expected from the Basin Plan (MDBA, 2012b).

3.2 Model Simulations

Each hydraulic model requires boundary conditions to be defined, including upstream flow into the model (i.e. flow upstream of Lock 5) and water level at the outlet of the model (i.e. upstream of Lock 4).

3.2.1 Flow data

Flow rates with average recurrence interval (ARI) of less than 10 years, representing inundation frequencies relevant to flood dependent ecosystems, that meet specific duration of inundation within Pike Floodplain were identified for each scenario by applying statistical analysis on daily time series of calculated flow to South Australian (QSA) modelled by MDBA.

The same definition of a successful event as in MDBA (2012a) was adopted here, namely the target duration was met over the period between June 1 and December 31 each year. Smaller events within the period were combined to meet the target duration, provided the length of an individual event was longer than one week. The flow that exceeded the target duration was identified every year over the 114 year MDBA modelled flow period, and then flows meeting different frequencies were calculated and rounded to the nearest 5000 ML/day for each water recovery scenario. Three target durations were considered, 30, 60 and 90 days, which align with different flow indicators.

Flow rates with ARI of less than 10 years for each scenario are summarised in Table 3.1 to

Table 3.5.

Table 3.1 Flows (ML/day) with average recurrence interval (ARI) of less than 10 years that meet specific target durations under without development condition

ARI (1 in ...)	Duration (days)		
	30	60	90
2	60 000	50 000	45 000
3	80 000	70 000	60 000
4	90 000	75 000	65 000
5	95 000	80 000	70 000
6	100 000	80 000	70 000
7	100 000	85 000	75 000
8	105 000	90 000	75 000
9	110 000	90 000	75 000
10	110 000	95 000	75 000

Table 3.2 Flows (ML/day) with average recurrence interval (ARI) of less than 10 years that meet specific target durations under baseline condition – Current flow regime

ARI (1 in ...)	Duration (days)		
	30	60	90
3	45 000	35 000	30 000
4	55 000	45 000	35 000
5	60 000	50 000	40 000
6	65 000	55 000	45 000
7	65 000	60 000	45 000
8	70 000	60 000	50 000
9	70 000	60 000	50 000
10	75 000	65 000	50 000

Table 3.3 Flows (ML/day) with average recurrence interval (ARI) of less than 10 years that meet specific target durations under baseline condition – BP2750

ARI (1 in ...)	Duration (days)		
	30	60	90
2	40 000	35 000	30 000
3	55 000	50 000	40 000
4	60 000	55 000	45 000
5	65 000	60 000	50 000
6	70 000	60 000	55 000
7	70 000	65 000	55 000
8	75 000	65 000	60 000
9	85 000	65 000	60 000
10	85 000	70 000	60 000

Table 3.4 Flows (ML/day) with average recurrence interval (ARI) of less than 10 years that meet specific target durations under baseline condition – BP2400

ARI (1 in ...)	Duration (days)		
	30	60	90
2	40 000	35 000	25 000
3	55 000	45 000	40 000
4	60 000	55 000	45 000
5	65 000	60 000	50 000
6	70 000	60 000	50 000
7	70 000	60 000	55 000
8	75 000	60 000	55 000
9	75 000	65 000	55 000
10	85 000	65 000	60 000

Table 3.5 Flows (ML/day) with average recurrence interval (ARI) of less than 10 years that meet specific target durations under baseline condition – BP3200RC

ARI (1 in ...)	Duration (days)		
	30	60	90
2	40 000	35 000	30 000
3	55 000	50 000	40 000
4	65 000	55 000	45 000
5	70 000	60 000	50 000
6	70 000	65 000	55 000
7	75 000	65 000	60 000
8	75 000	65 000	60 000
9	75 000	70 000	60 000
10	80 000	70 000	60 000

3.2.2 Water level data

Water levels data at Lock 4 and 5 were derived from DEWNR's Hydstra database and the SA Water backwater curves for both without development and baseline conditions.

For without development conditions, as Locks 4 and 5 are removed, an estimate of water level at each flow rate was required at the Lock 4 downstream boundary. These estimates were obtained by interpolating historical water level data captured at the Lock 4 and 5 sites between 1927 and 1929 immediately preceding lock construction, and relating this data to a modelled Flow to South Australia (QSA) representing actual flows based on the maximum monthly stream discharge. While QSA is not necessarily equivalent to the flow upstream of Lock 5 due to losses, it was considered a sufficient approximation for the purposes of this analysis.

Table 3.6 shows interpolated Lock 4 and 5 levels prior to lock construction for a range of identified flow rates under without development condition (i.e. 45 000 ML/day to 110 000 ML/day).

Table 3.6 Interpolated water level at Lock 4 and Lock 5 sites (pre-lock construction) against calculated flow to South Australia (QSA).

QSA (ML/day)	Lock 4 site Water Level (m AHD)	Lock 5 site* Water Level (m AHD)
45 000	12.5	13.8
50 000	12.6	14.0
55 000	12.7	14.3
60 000	12.8	14.5
65 000	12.9	14.8
70 000	13.0	15.0
75 000	13.1	15.3
80 000	13.2	15.5
85 000	13.2	15.8
90 000	13.3	16.0
95 000	13.4	16.3
100 000	13.4	16.5
105 000	13.5	16.8
110 000	13.6	17.0

*Water level data at Lock 5 site was used for model validation only.

A similar approach was used to estimate water level data at Locks 4 and 5 for baseline conditions by focusing on water level data captured after construction of Lock 4 and 5. Table 3.7 shows interpolated Lock 4 and 5 levels for a range of identified flow rates under baseline condition (i.e. 25 000 ML/day to 85 000 ML/day).

Table 3.7 Interpolated water level at Lock 4 and Lock 5 against calculated flow to South Australia (QSA).

QSA (ML/day)	Lock 4 Water Level (m AHD)	Lock 5 Water Level (m AHD)
25 000	13.20	16.30
30 000	13.20	16.30
35 000	13.20	16.30
40 000	13.20	16.30
45 000	13.38	16.30
50 000	13.55	16.30
55 000	13.85	16.30
60 000	14.15	16.30
65 000	14.25	16.53
70 000	14.31	16.61
75 000	14.36	16.63
80 000	14.55	16.90
85 000	14.58	16.90

3.3 Model Validation

The hydraulic models assumed steady-state flow conditions, which signifies that the water levels in the models are allowed sufficient time to equalise under the specified flow rate. The hydraulic model was validated by comparing the simulated water with the observed water levels at three locations, namely Lock 5 upstream and downstream levels, and Lock 4 upstream level. The comparison of observed and modelled water levels under baseline condition is presented in Figure 3.1. Given the steady state assumption, the model would be expected to closer to the upper water levels recorded for each flow, and this can be seen to be the case in Figure 3.1.

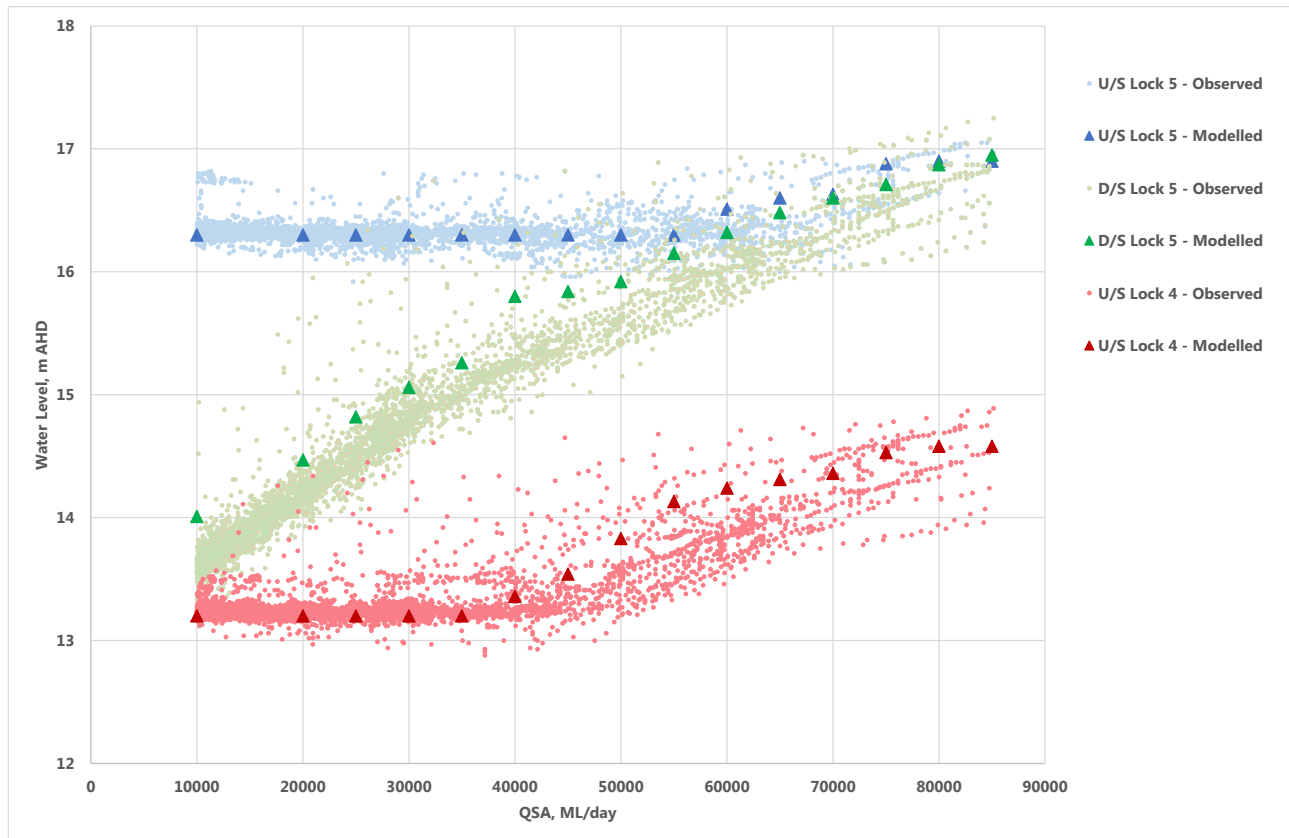


Figure 3.1 Observed and modelled water level at Lock 4 and 5.

4 Results

Inundation areas and velocities corresponding to flows with less than 10 years ARI that meet the target duration of 30, 60 and 90 days were derived from the hydraulic models and compared to assess the impact of development on the Pike Floodplain.

The following section presents the outputs relating to flood frequency mapping and distribution of velocities for without development conditions and baseline conditions (BP2750). The outputs of the other water recovery scenarios and current flow regime under baseline conditions are presented in the Appendix.

4.1 Inundation Frequency Mapping

The following figures were produced to assess the natural and potential Basin Plan frequency of inundation within Pike Floodplain. Each colour presents a unique ARI event in all figures. In general, it can be seen that naturally larger areas of the floodplain were inundated for longer periods more regularly compared to current conditions, and this is still the case even for the most optimistic scenario (e.g. BP3200RC). To allow the different scenarios to be compared more quantitatively, Table 4.1 provides the area inundated for each flow rate.

For example, as shown by the light blue colour in Figure 4.1, under without development conditions, it was estimated that once every three years Pike Floodplain was inundated for at least 30 days by flow of around 80 000 ML/day, whereas under baseline conditions (assuming a water recovery target of 2750 GL), a smaller portion of Pike Floodplain was estimated to be inundated by a flow of around 55 000 ML/day once every three years for the same duration of 30 days (Figure 4.2).

Similarly, under without development conditions, it was expected that Pike Floodplain was inundated once every three years by a flow of around 70 000 ML/day for at least 60 days (Figure 4.3), while under baseline conditions (assuming a water recovery target of 2750 GL), a smaller portion of Pike Floodplain was estimated to be inundated by flow of around 50 000 ML/day once every three years for a similar duration of 60 days (Figure 4.4).

In addition, represented by the light green colour in Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6, under without development conditions it was expected that Pike Floodplain was inundated once every five years by a flow of around 70 000 ML/day for at least 90 days, however under baseline conditions (assuming a water recovery target of 2750 GL) a smaller portion of Pike Floodplain was estimated to be inundated by a flow of around 50 000 ML/day once every five years for a similar duration of 90 days.

Table 4.1 Area inundated within Pike Floodplain for each flow rate

QSA (ML/day)	Area Inundated (Ha)	
	baseline Condition	without development Condition
25 000	535	Not Modelled
30 000	604	Not Modelled
35 000	760	Not Modelled
40 000	1567	717
45 000	1639	969
50 000	1714	1293
55 000	2317	1685
60 000	3032	2018
65 000	3429	2473
70 000	3748	2900
75 000	4044	3295
80 000	4388	3645
85 000	4585	3869
90 000	Not Modelled	4187
95 000	Not Modelled	4418
100 000	Not Modelled	4608
105 000	Not Modelled	4814
110 000	Not Modelled	4978

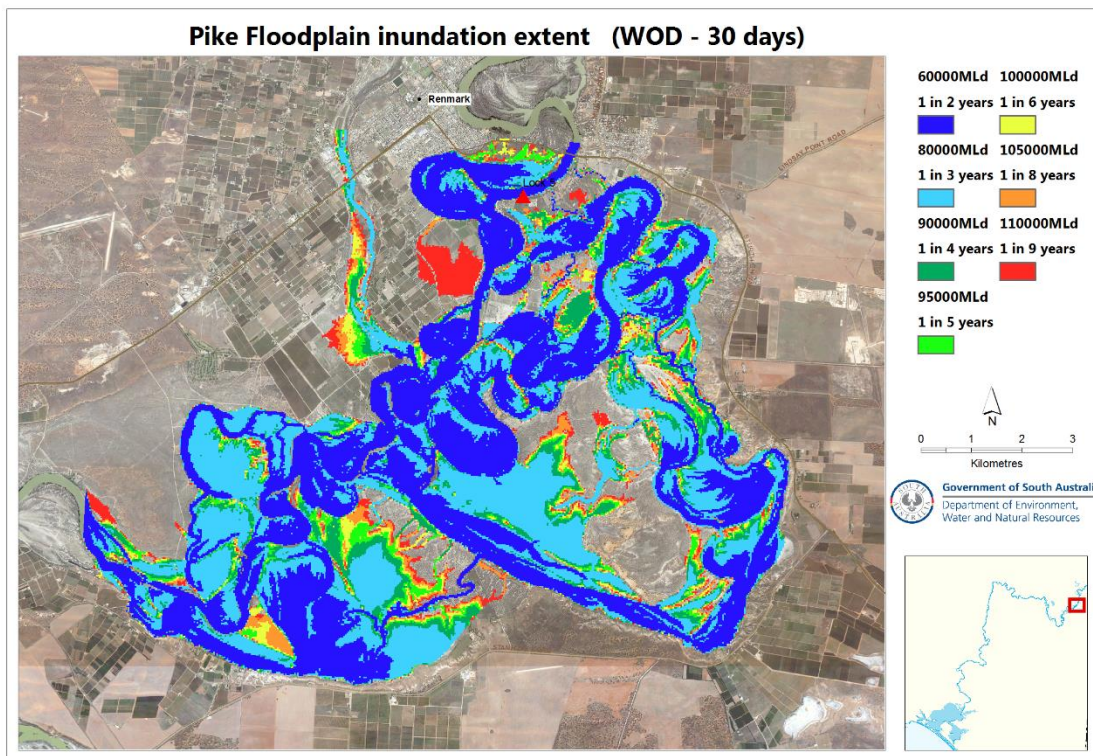


Figure 4.1 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – without development (30 days)

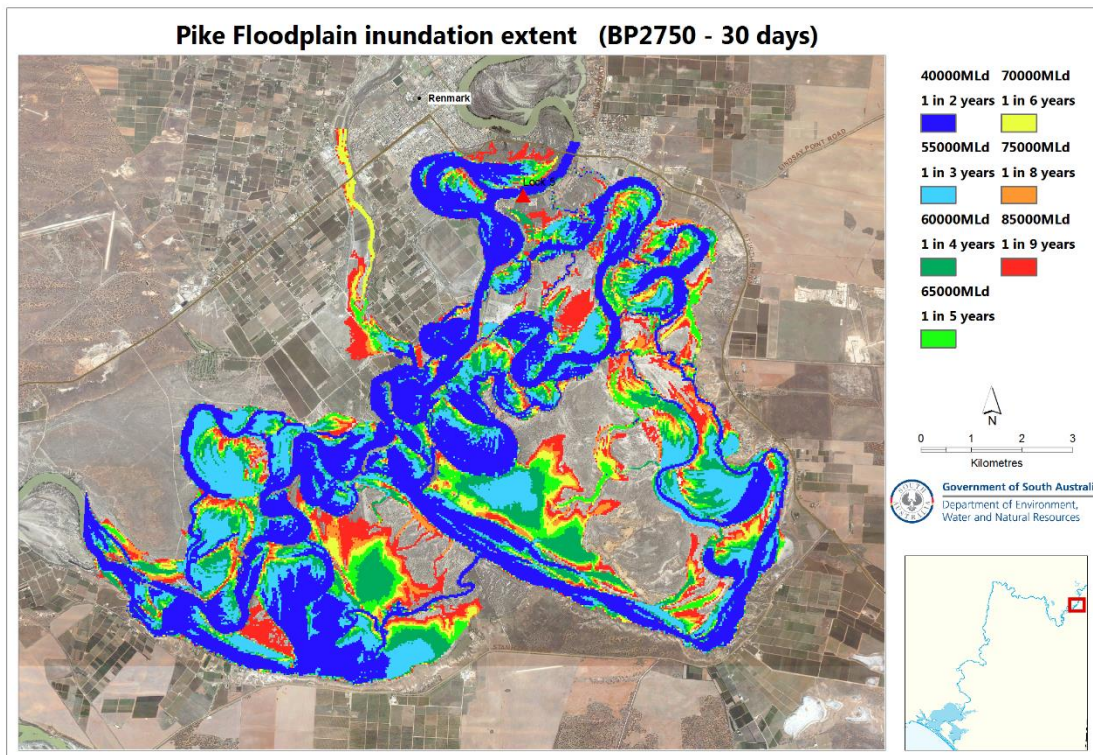


Figure 4.2 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP2750 (30 days)

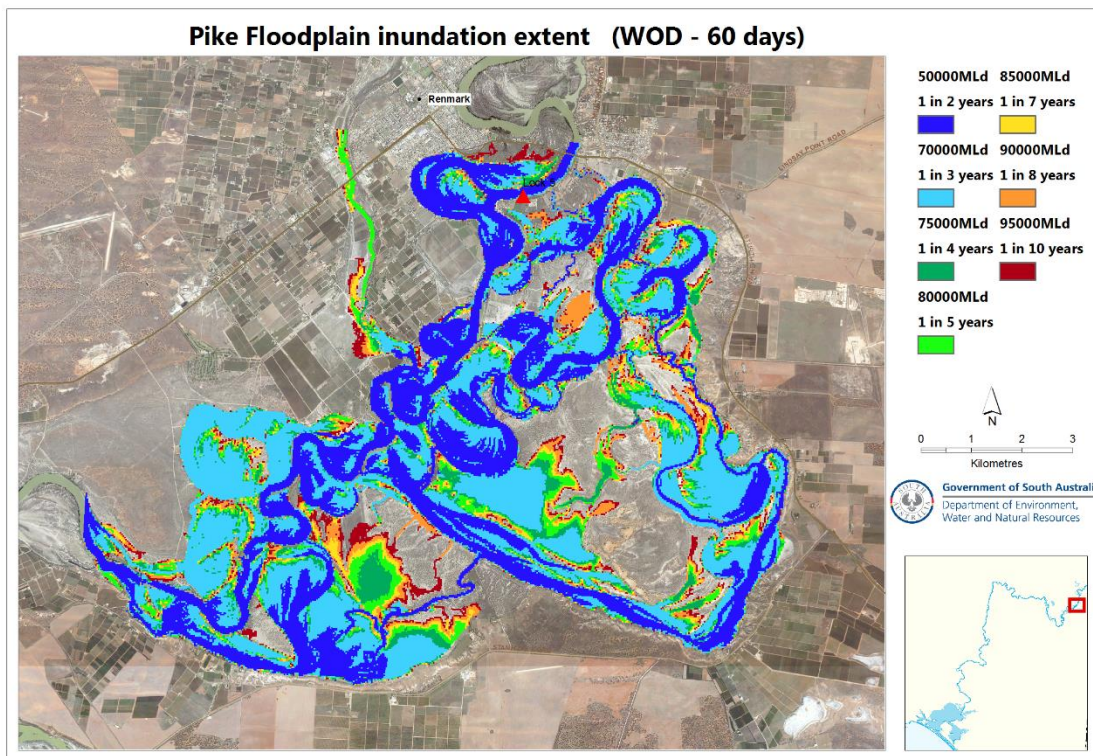


Figure 4.3 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – WOD (60 days)

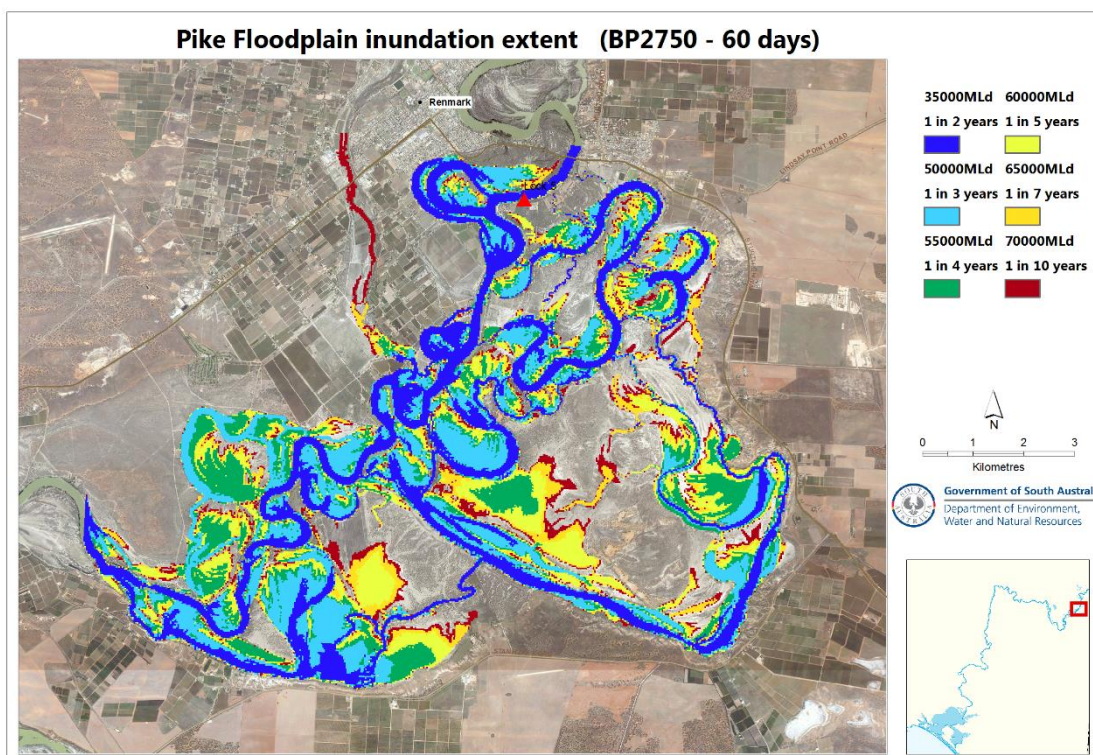


Figure 4.4 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP2750 (60 days)

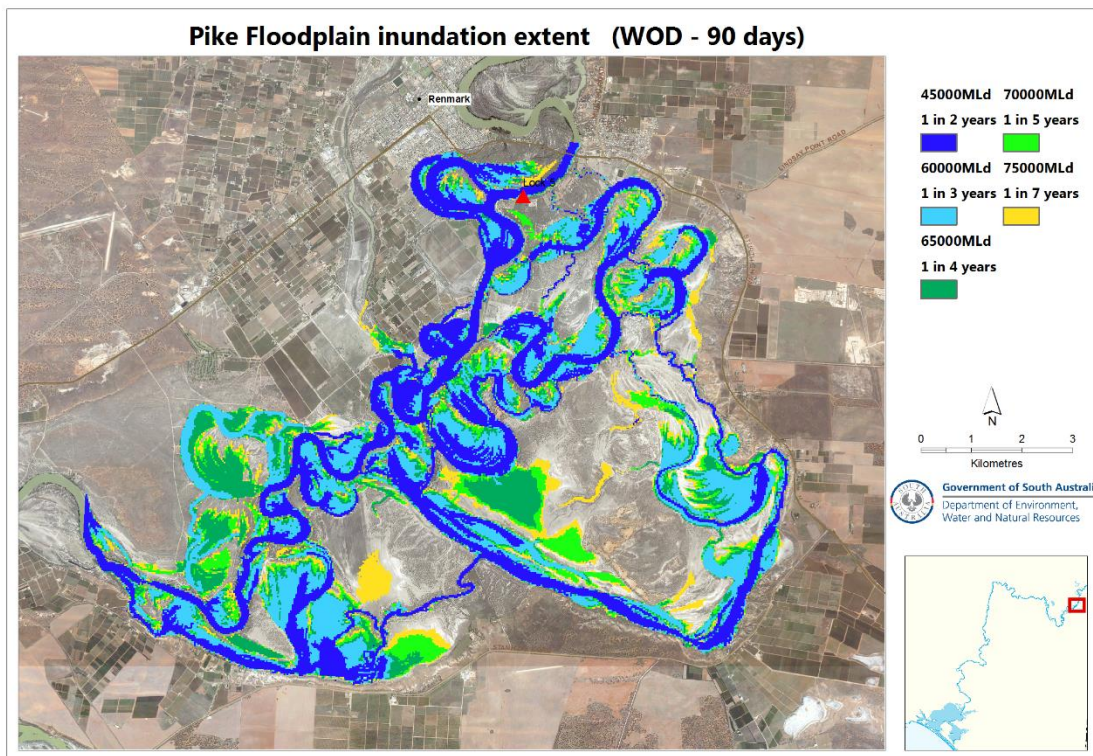


Figure 4.5 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – WOD (90 days)

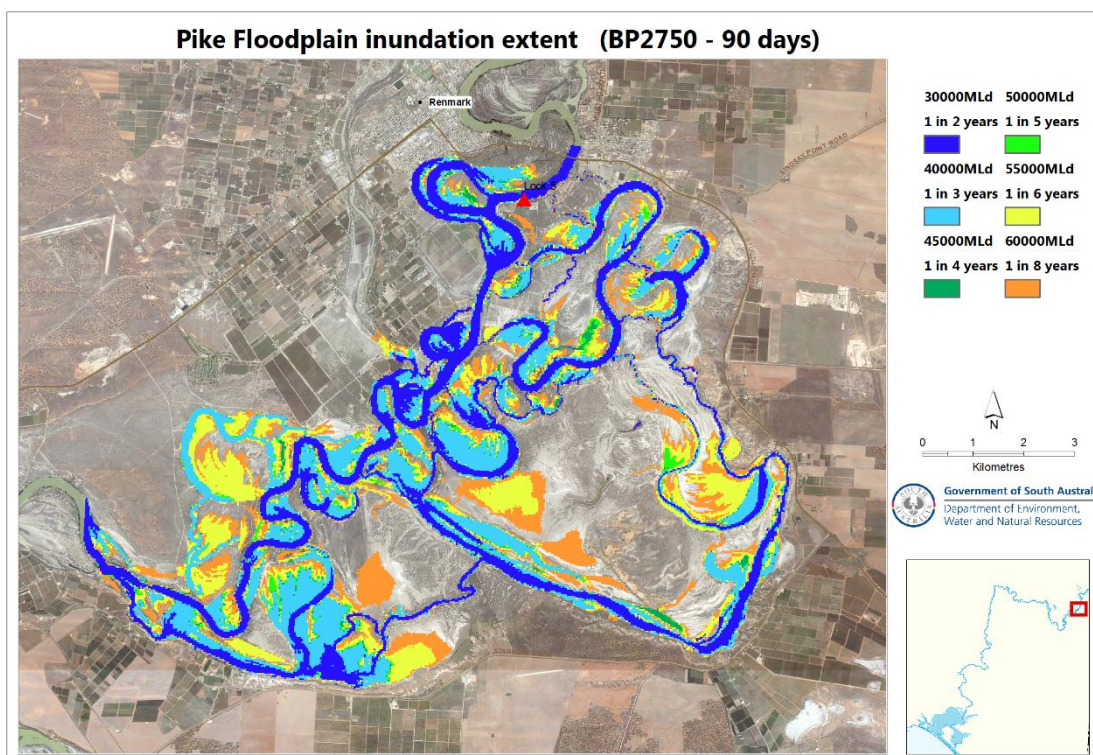


Figure 4.6 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP2750 (90 days)

4.2 Distribution of Velocity

The outputs of velocities were derived from the creeks and channels within the floodplain represented by the MIKE 11 portion of the models (the floodplain itself (modelled in MIKE 21) and the river Murray channel were not included). Modelled velocity values corresponding to each flow rate were extracted from cross sections in 100 m intervals along the channel lengths within Pike Floodplain, and then the distribution of all modelled values were calculated for the following velocity classes;

- 0 – 0.05 m/s (very slow)
- 0.05 – 0.10 m/s (slow)
- 0.10 – 0.15 m/s (slow–moderate)
- 0.15 – 0.20 m/s (moderate)
- 0.20 – 0.25 m/s (moderate–fast)
- >0.25 m/s (fast)

The following figures were produced to understand the difference between current, Basin Plan and natural conditions on the distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain. Similar to flood frequency mapping results, each colour presents a unique ARI event in all figures. For example, as shown in Figure 4.7, under without development conditions the dark green colour represents the distribution of modelled velocity values corresponding to a river flow of around 90 000 ML/day, which was expected to inundate Pike Floodplain once every four years for at least 30 days. For this particular ARI event, it can be seen that in almost 20% of the reaches in the floodplain the velocity is estimated to be within the slow–moderate class (0.1 – 0.15 m/s), while almost 20% of the reaches are within the velocity class of slow (0.05 – 0.1 m/s). Under baseline conditions (assuming a water recovery target of 2750 GL), it was expected that a flow of around 60 000 ML/day inundates Pike Floodplain once every four years for at least 30 days and that distribution changes to 11% of the reaches within the slow–moderate class and 39% of the reaches within the slow class (Figure 4.8).

Similarly, under without development conditions, the dark blue colour represents the distribution of modelled velocity values corresponding to a flow of around 50 000 ML/day, which was expected to inundate Pike Floodplain once every two years for at least 90 days. For this ARI event, it can be seen in Figure 4.11 that in almost 30% of the reaches in the floodplain the velocity is estimated to be within the very slow velocity class (0 – 0.05 m/s) whereas under baseline conditions (assuming a water recovery target of 2750 GL) it was expected that a flow of around 30 000 ML/day inundates Pike Floodplain once every two years for at least 90 days and the distribution increases to 56% of the reaches to be within the very slow class (Figure 4.12).

For flow below 85 000 ML/d, the downstream water level at Lock 4 is lower under natural conditions compared to current conditions with the lock in place (

Table 3.6 and Table 3.7), and as such a larger proportion of the reaches were modelled to have higher velocities, and the distribution across velocity classes is more even. Under current conditions, as flow decreases the velocity distribution increases, particularly for lower flows (below 40 000 ML/d) where there is a large proportion of the creeks in the very slow class when the downstream water level is held constant by Lock 4.

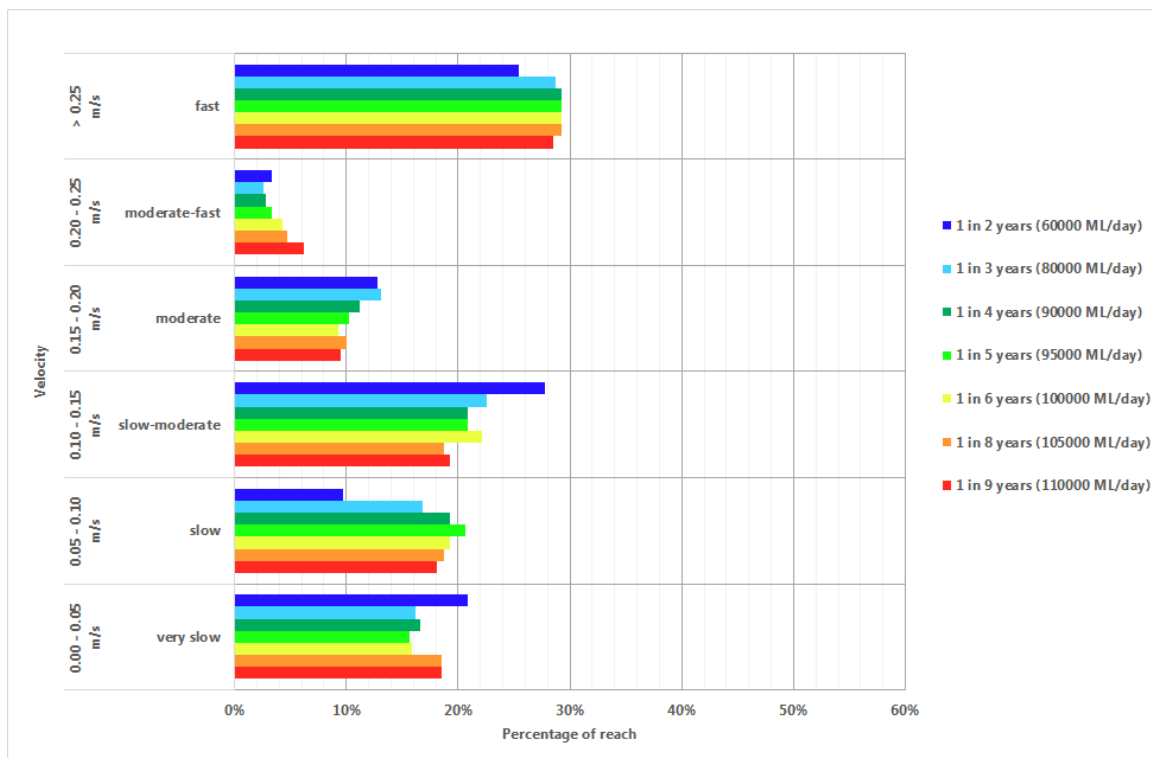


Figure 4.7 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain - WOD (30 days)

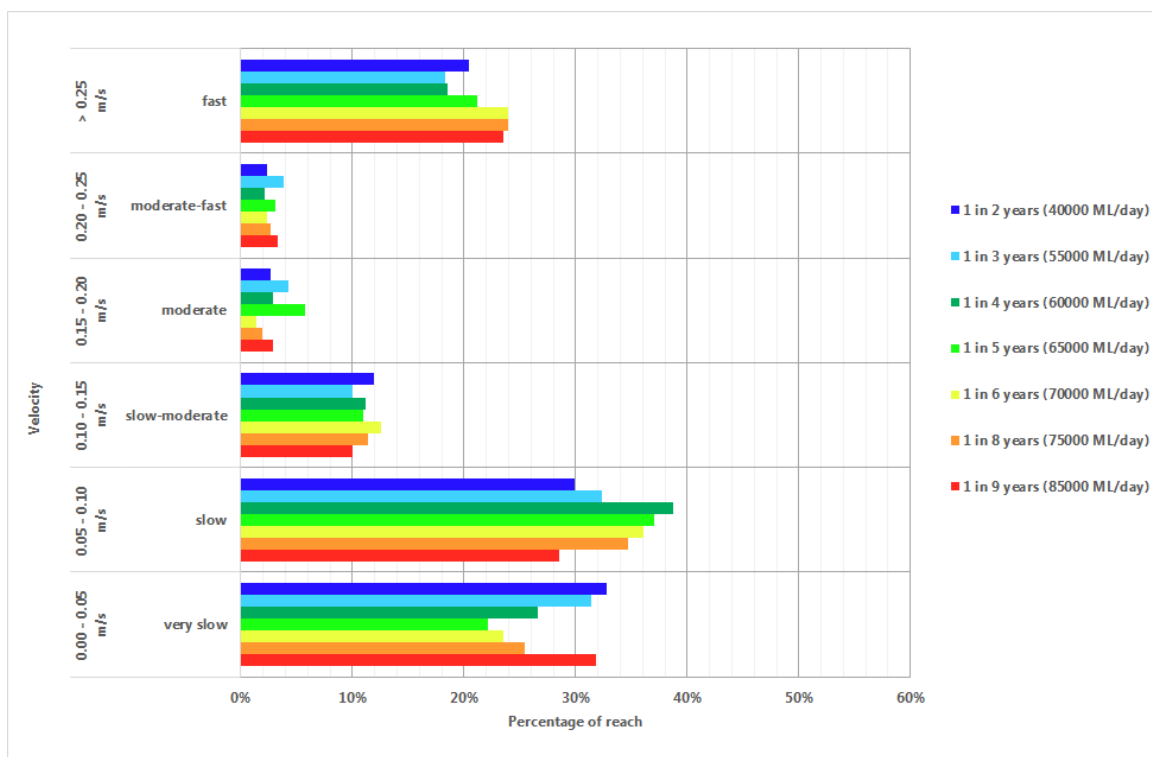


Figure 4.8 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP2750 (30 days)

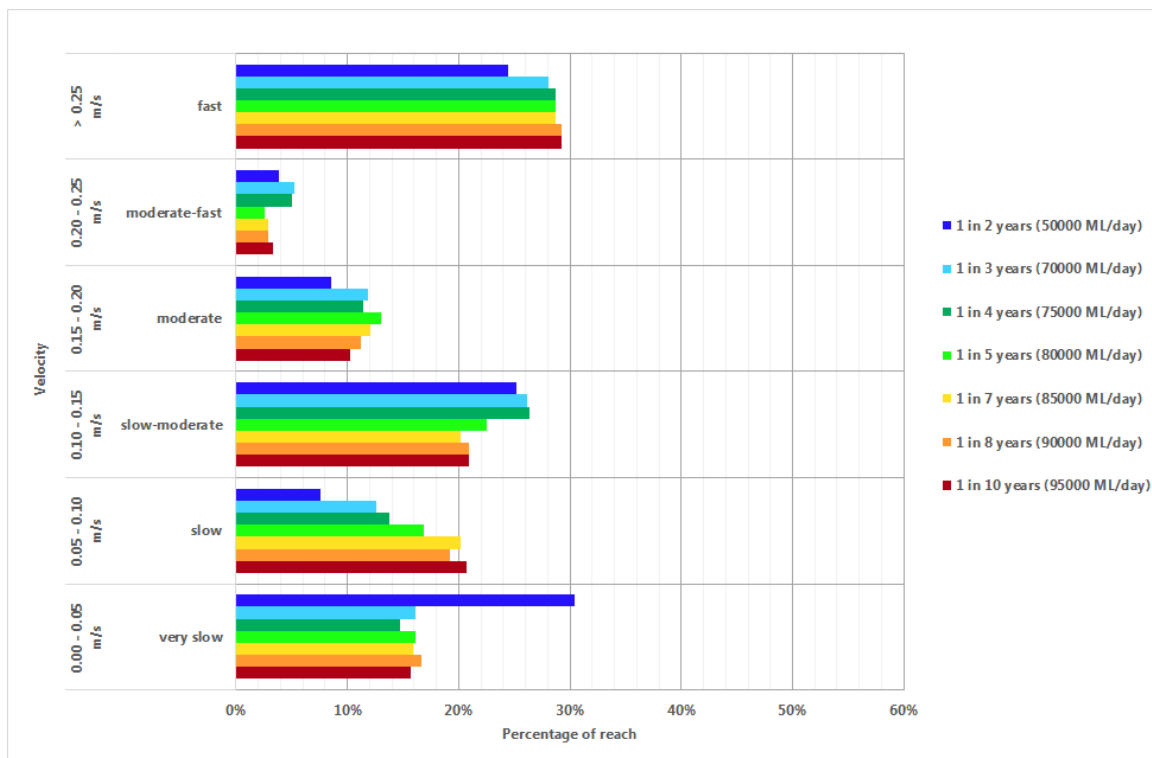


Figure 4.9 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – WOD (60 days)

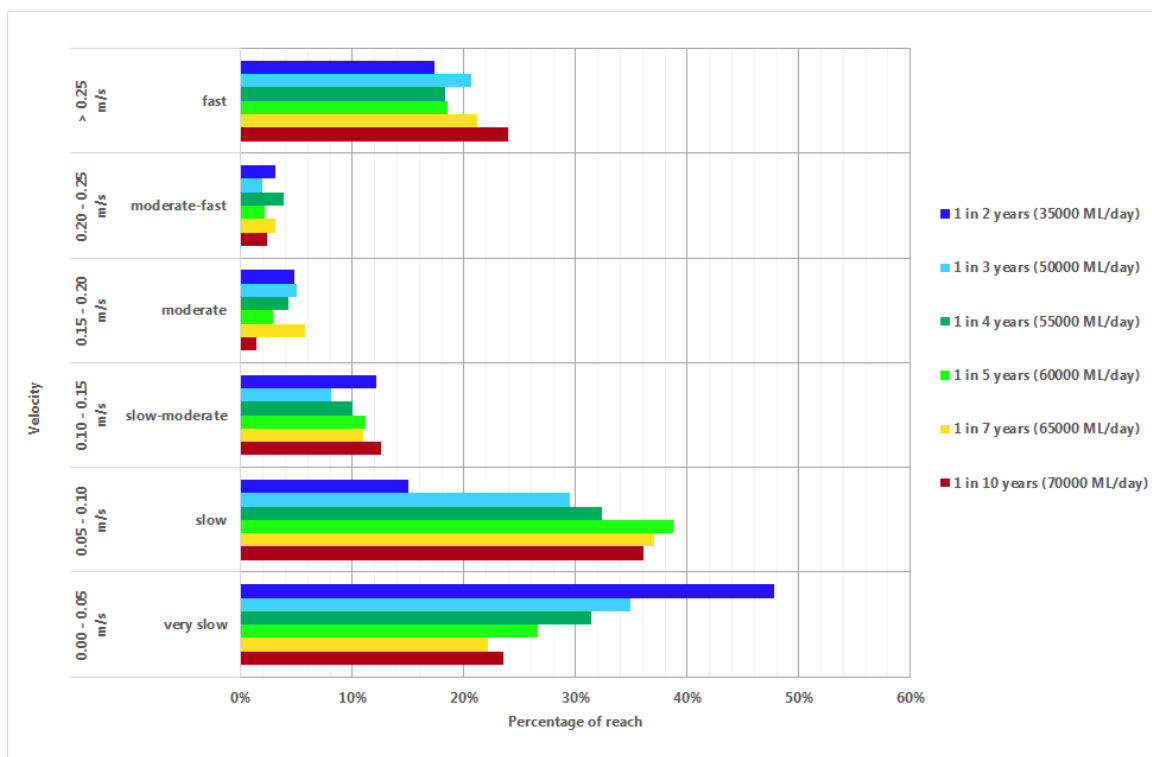


Figure 4.10 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP2750 (60 days)

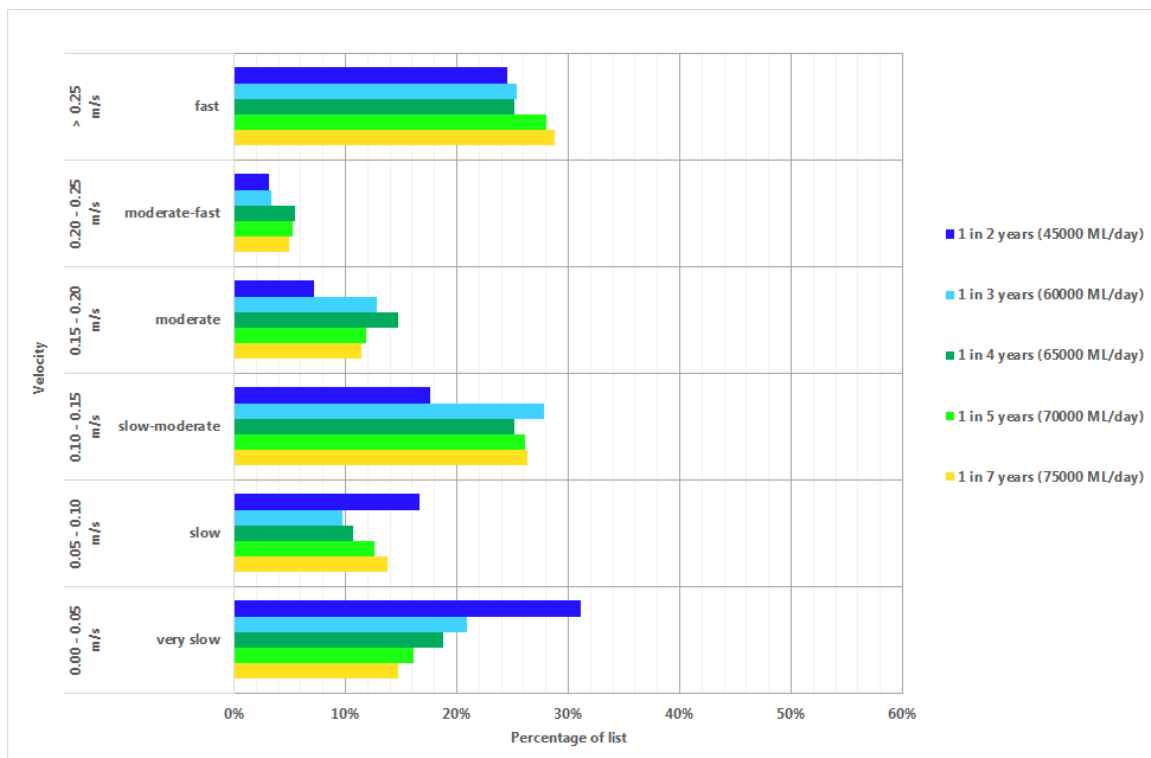


Figure 4.11 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – WOD (90 days)

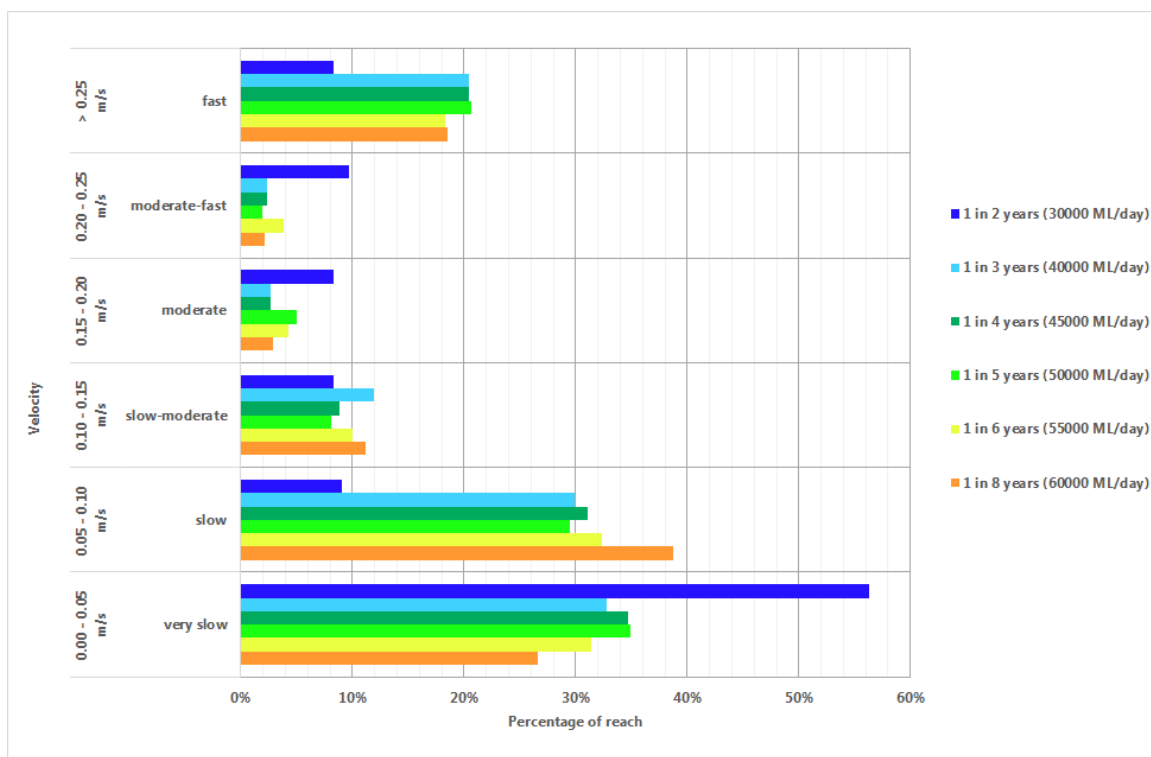


Figure 4.12 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP2750 (90 days)

The following points summarise the findings from the modelling results:

- The frequency of inundation of the floodplain for a given flow is significantly reduced in the baseline conditions compared to the without development conditions.
- Without development conditions show relatively even distributions of velocities throughout the velocity ranges, particularly between the very slow to moderate ranges.
- Baseline flow regimes from current up to 3200RC Basin Plan conditions show the majority of velocities are contained in the very slow to slow velocity categories across all ARIs and event durations, with reach length in the slow–moderate velocity range particularly reduced when compared with the without development velocity profiles.
- Comparison of inundation extents, frequencies and velocity distributions within the floodplain between without development floodplain conditions and baseline conditions indicates that additional flows delivered to the Murray–Darling Basin through the Basin Plan will likely require the implementation of additional measures, such as man-made embankment removals and infrastructure solutions, in order to approach the floodplain benefits achieved under without development conditions.

5 References

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6 Appendix

The outputs flood frequency mapping and distribution of velocities for following scenarios are presented in this section;

- Baseline Condition – Current flow regime (30 days)
- Baseline Condition – Current flow regime (60 days)
- Baseline Condition – Current flow regime (90 days)
- Baseline Condition - BP2400 (30 days)
- Baseline Condition - BP2400 (60 days)
- Baseline Condition - BP2400 (90 days)
- Baseline Condition - BP3200RC (30 days)
- Baseline Condition - BP3200RC (60 days)
- Baseline Condition - BP3200RC (90 days)

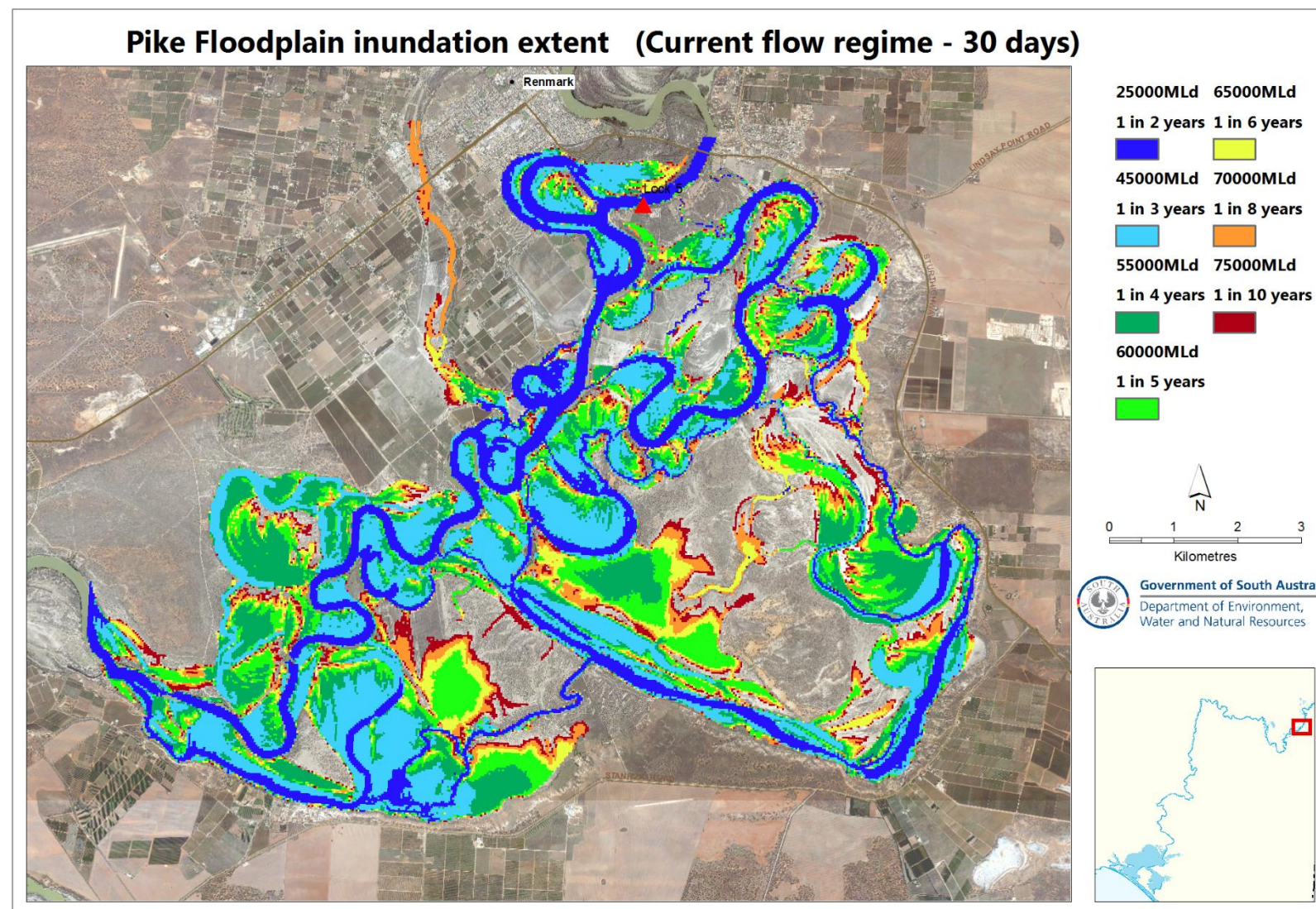


Figure 6.1 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – Current flow regime (30 days)

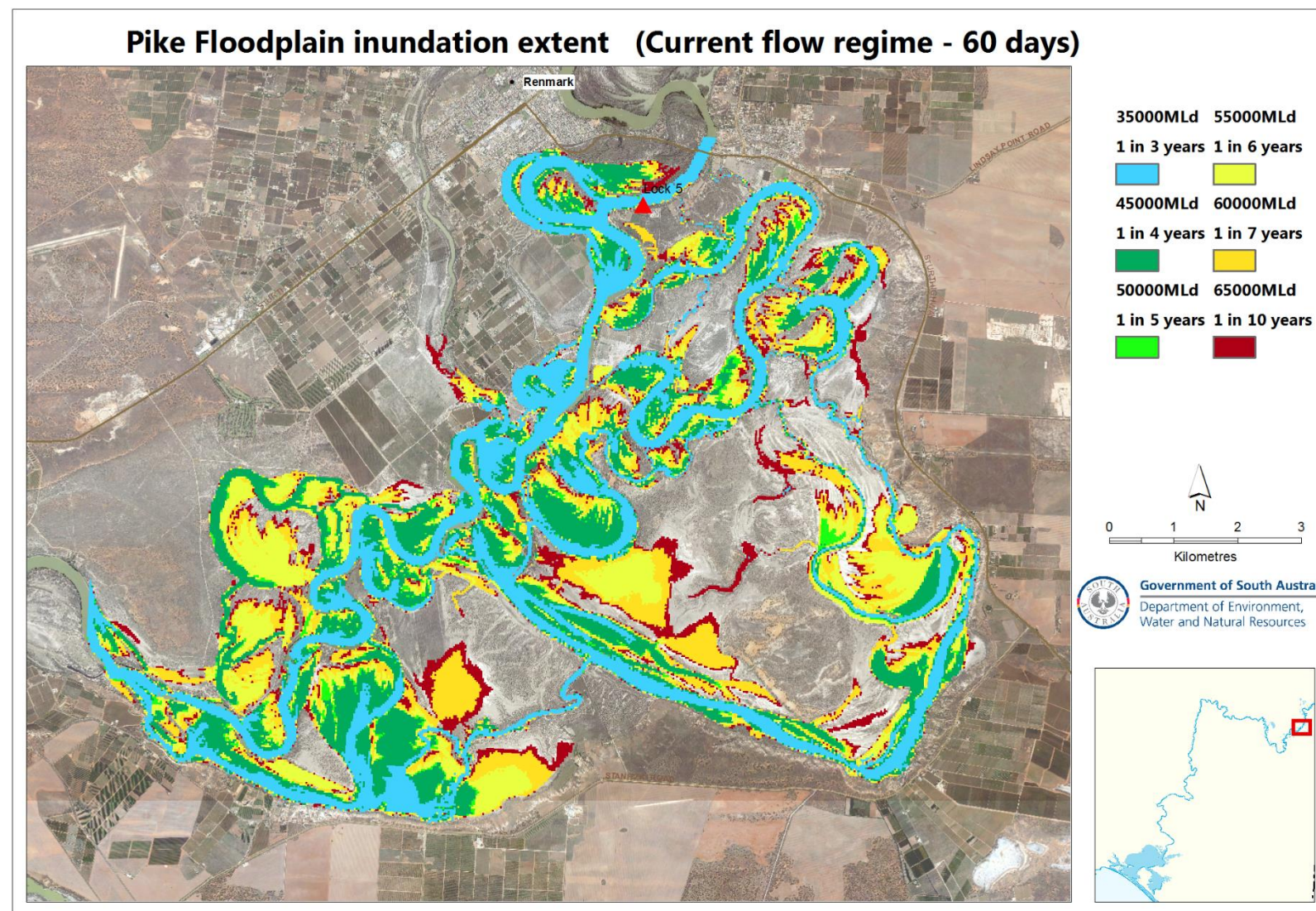


Figure 6.2 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – Current flow regime (60 days)

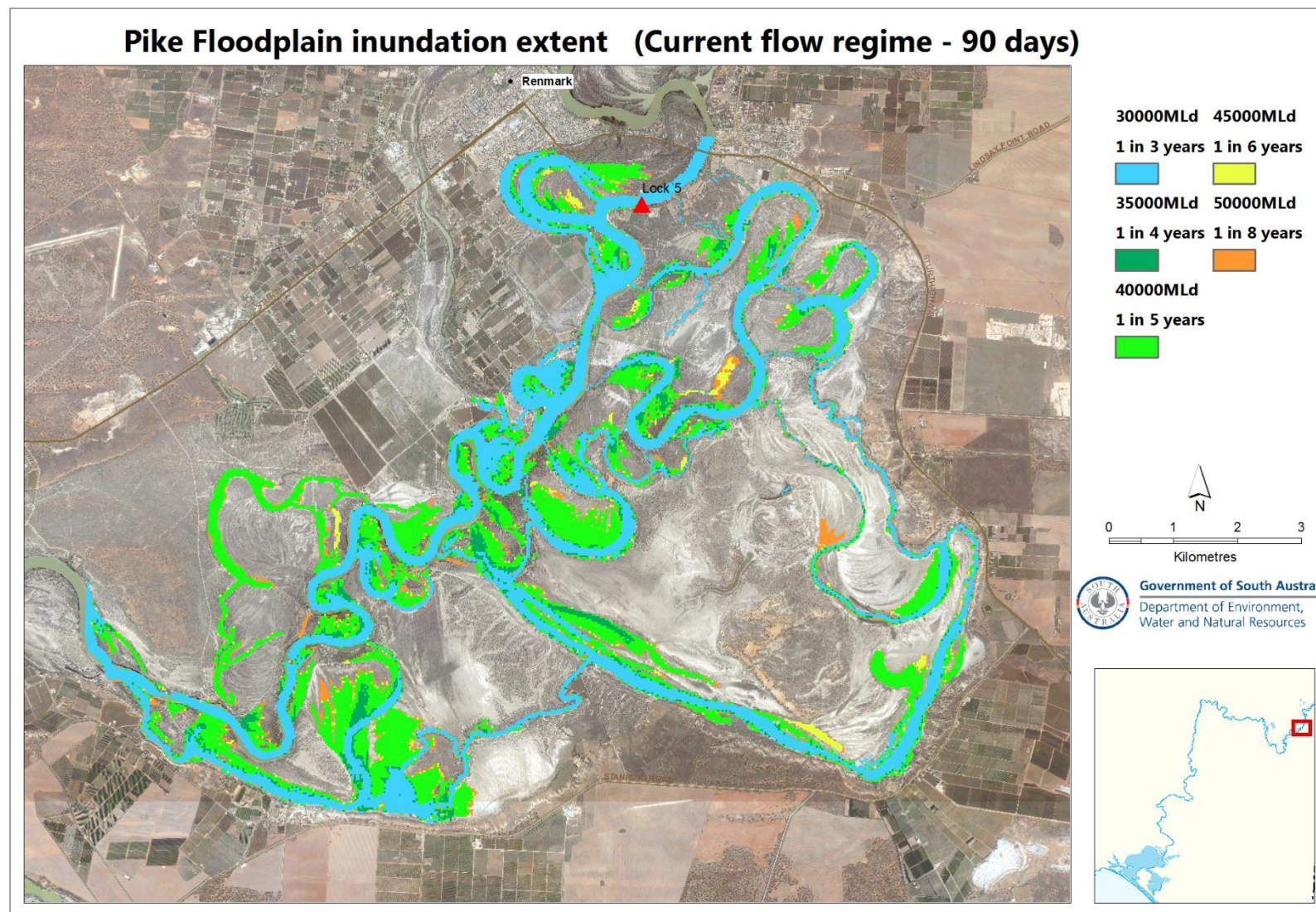


Figure 6.3 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – Current flow regime (90 days)

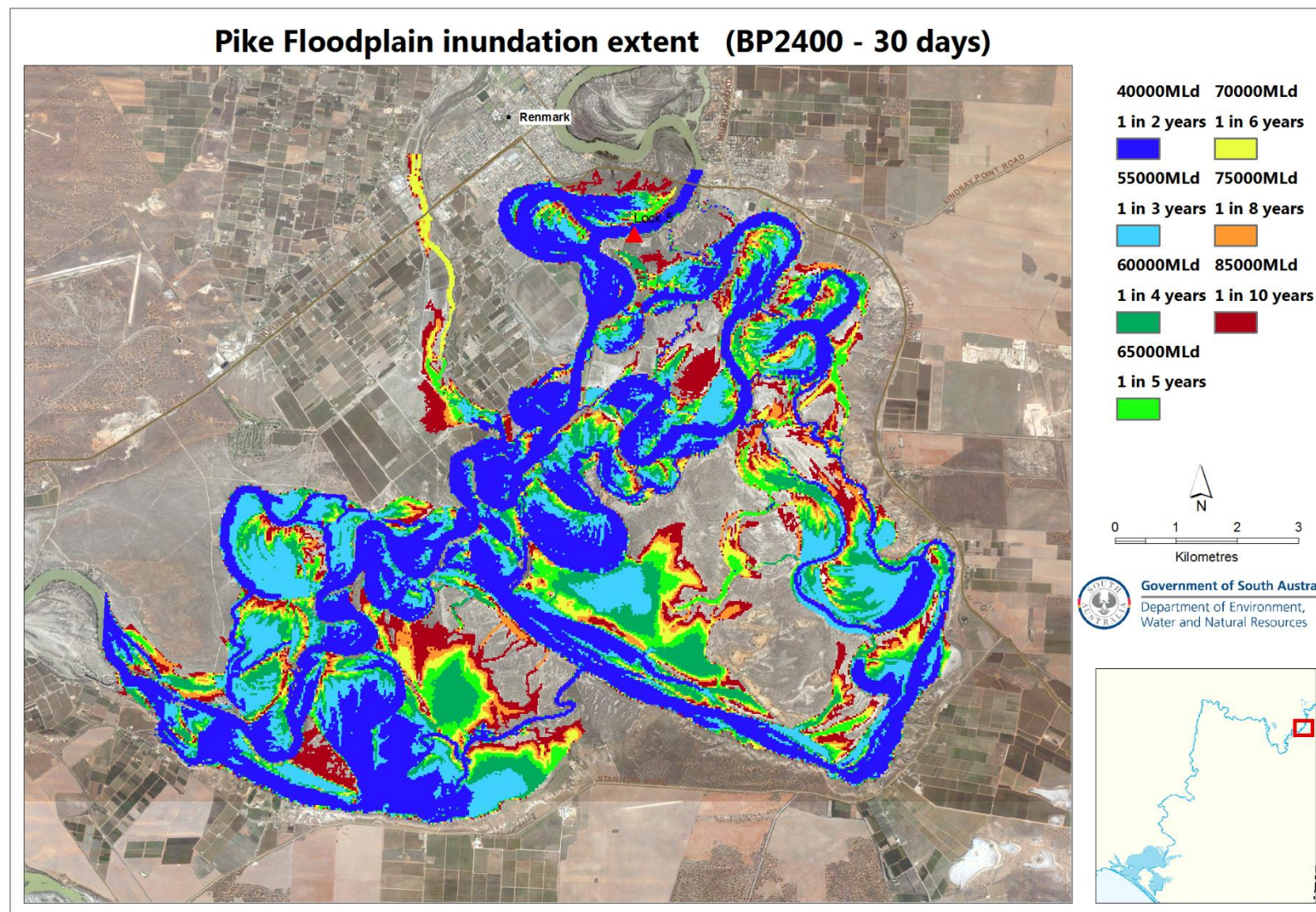


Figure 6.4 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP2400 (30 days)

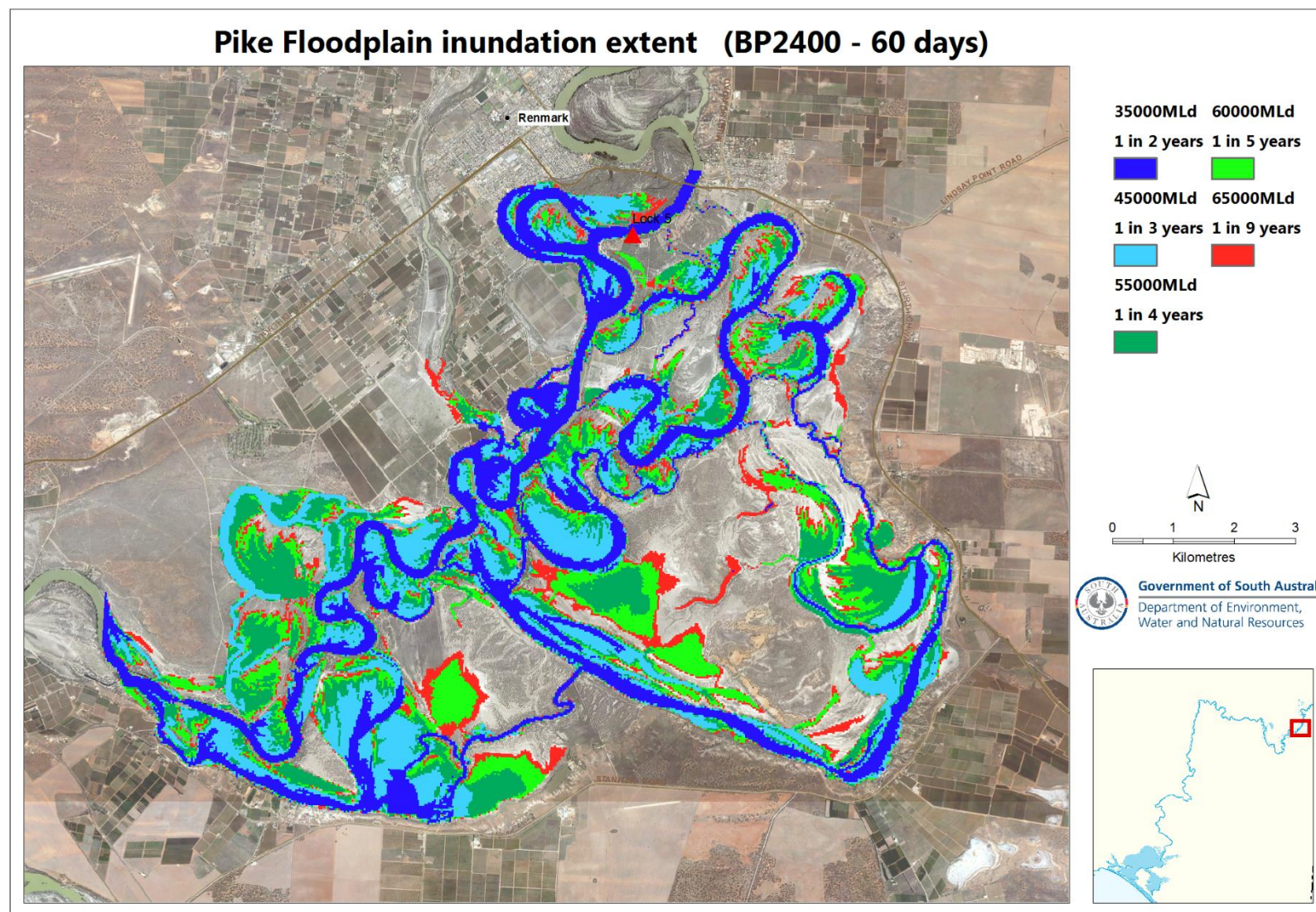


Figure 6.5 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP2400 (60 days)

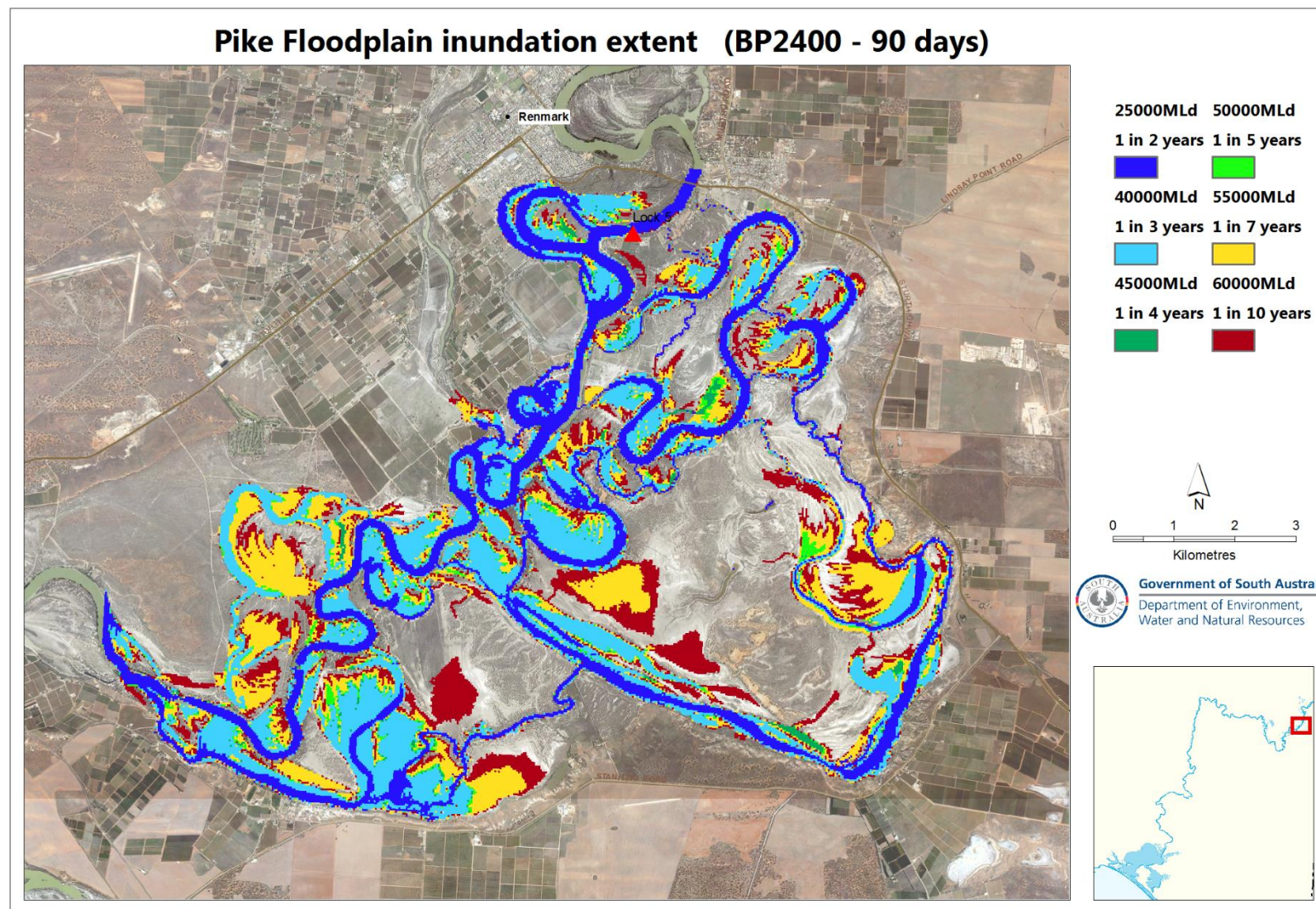


Figure 6.6 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP2400 (90 days)

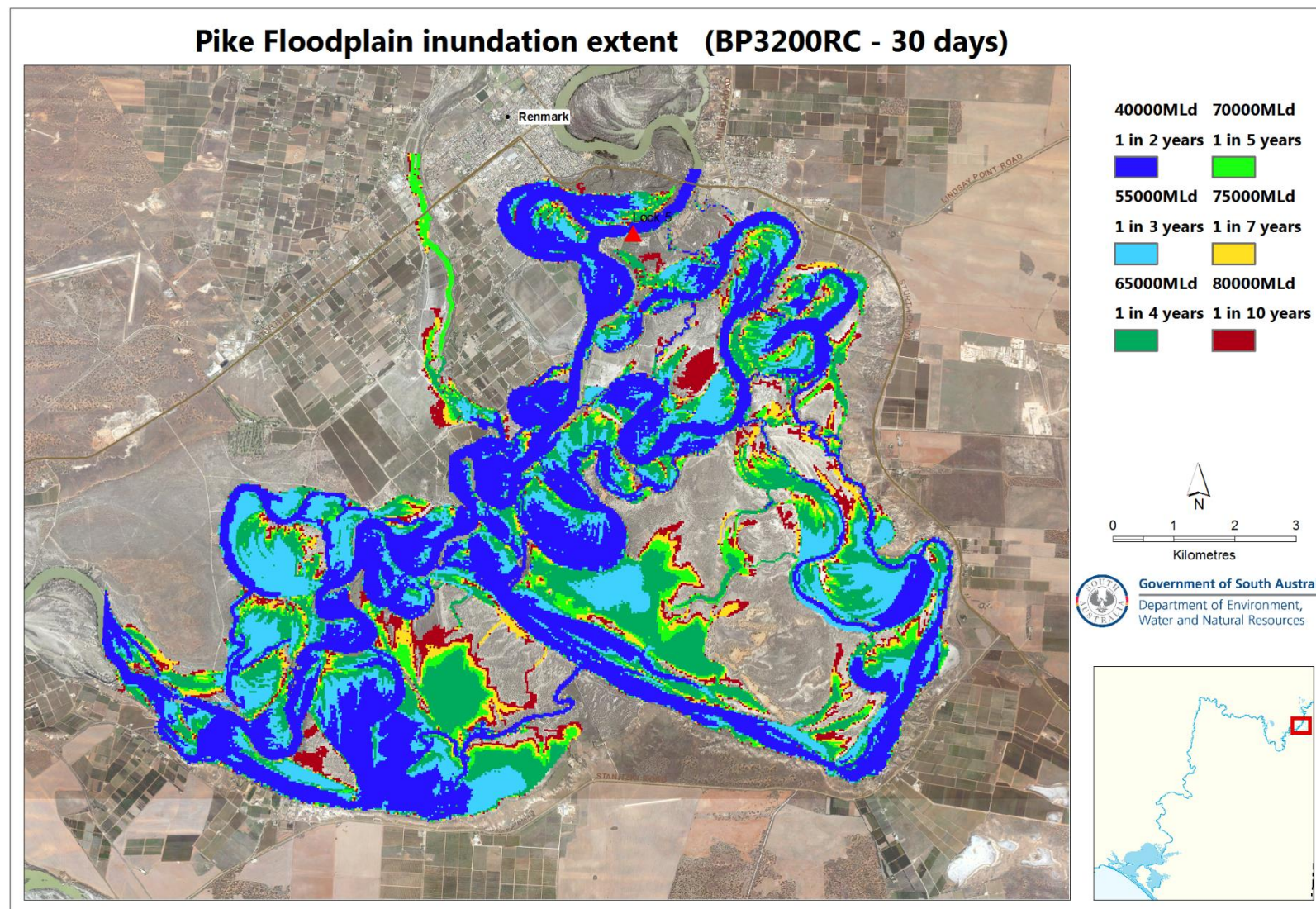


Figure 6.7 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP3200RC (30 days)

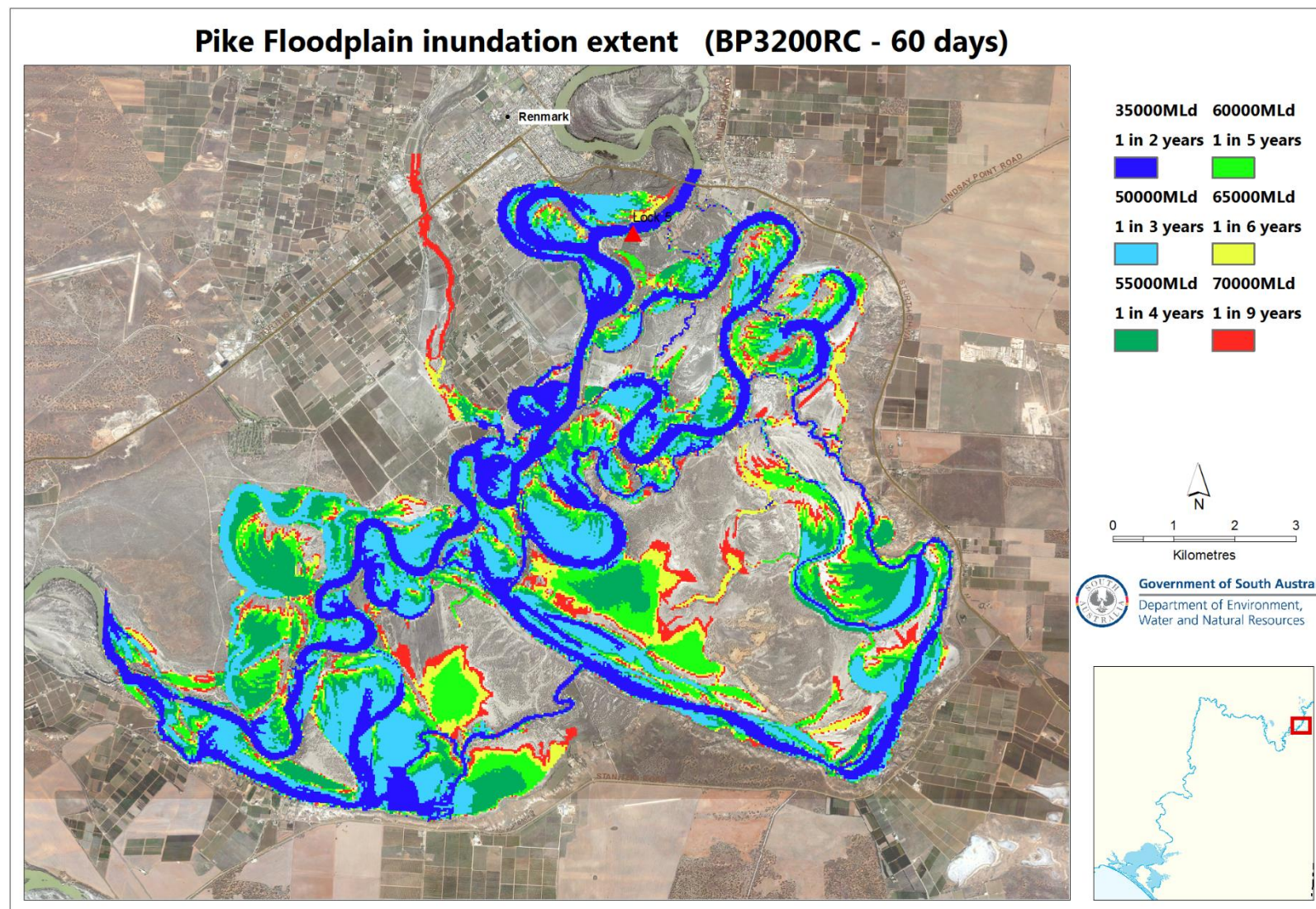


Figure 6.8 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP3200RC (60 days)

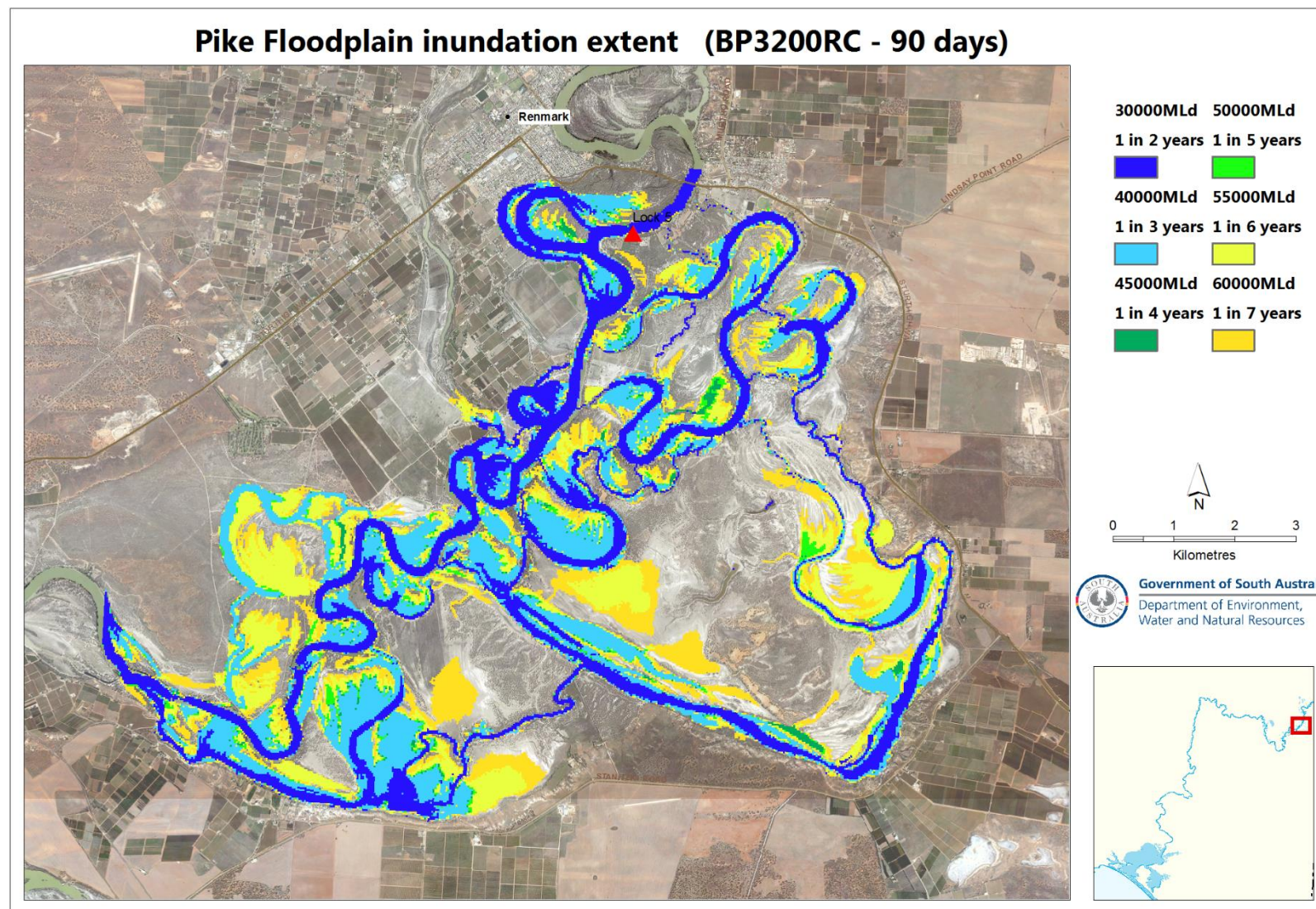


Figure 6.9 Pike Floodplain inundation extent – BP3200RC (90 days)

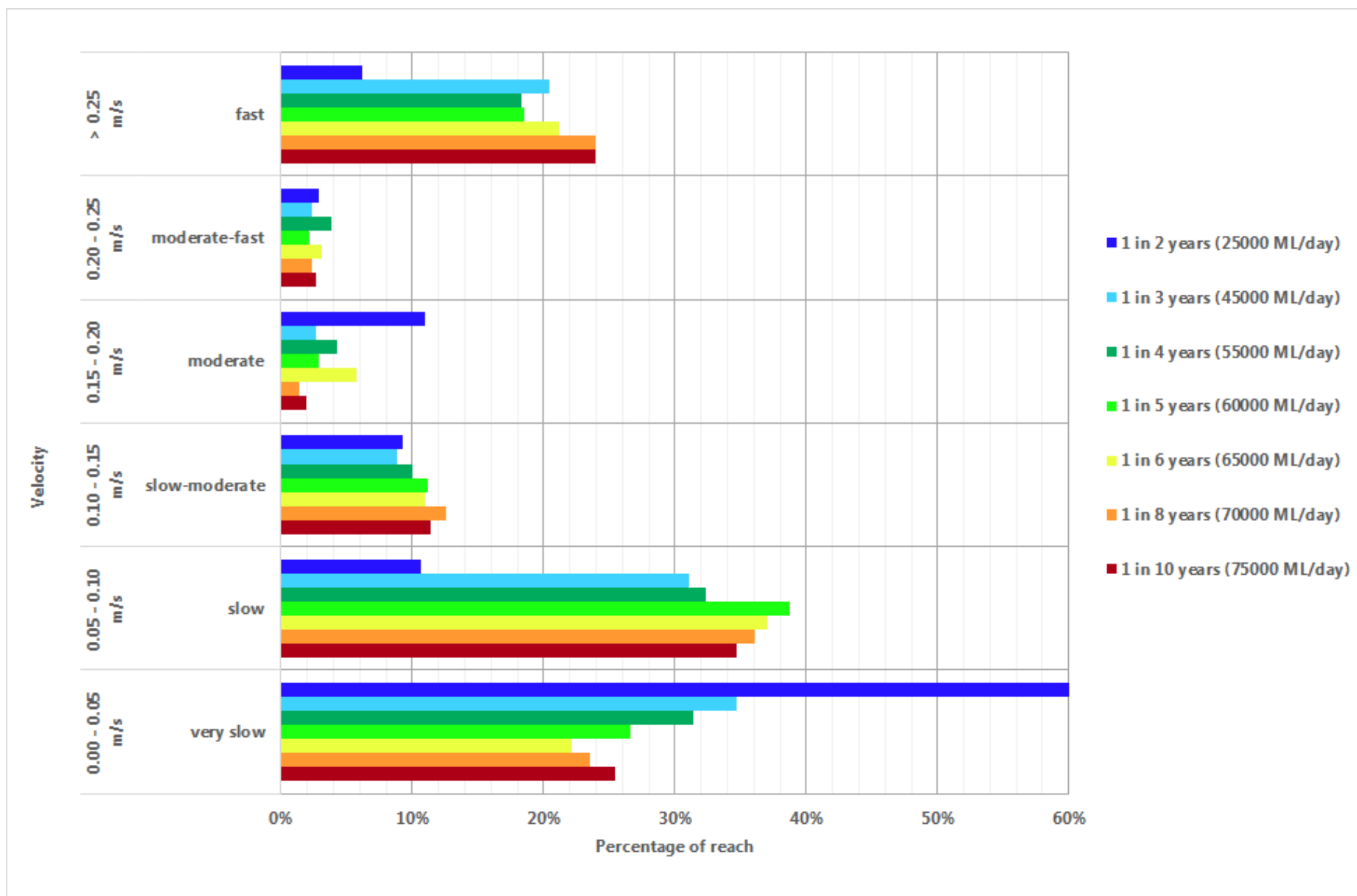


Figure 6.10 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – Current flow regime (30 days)

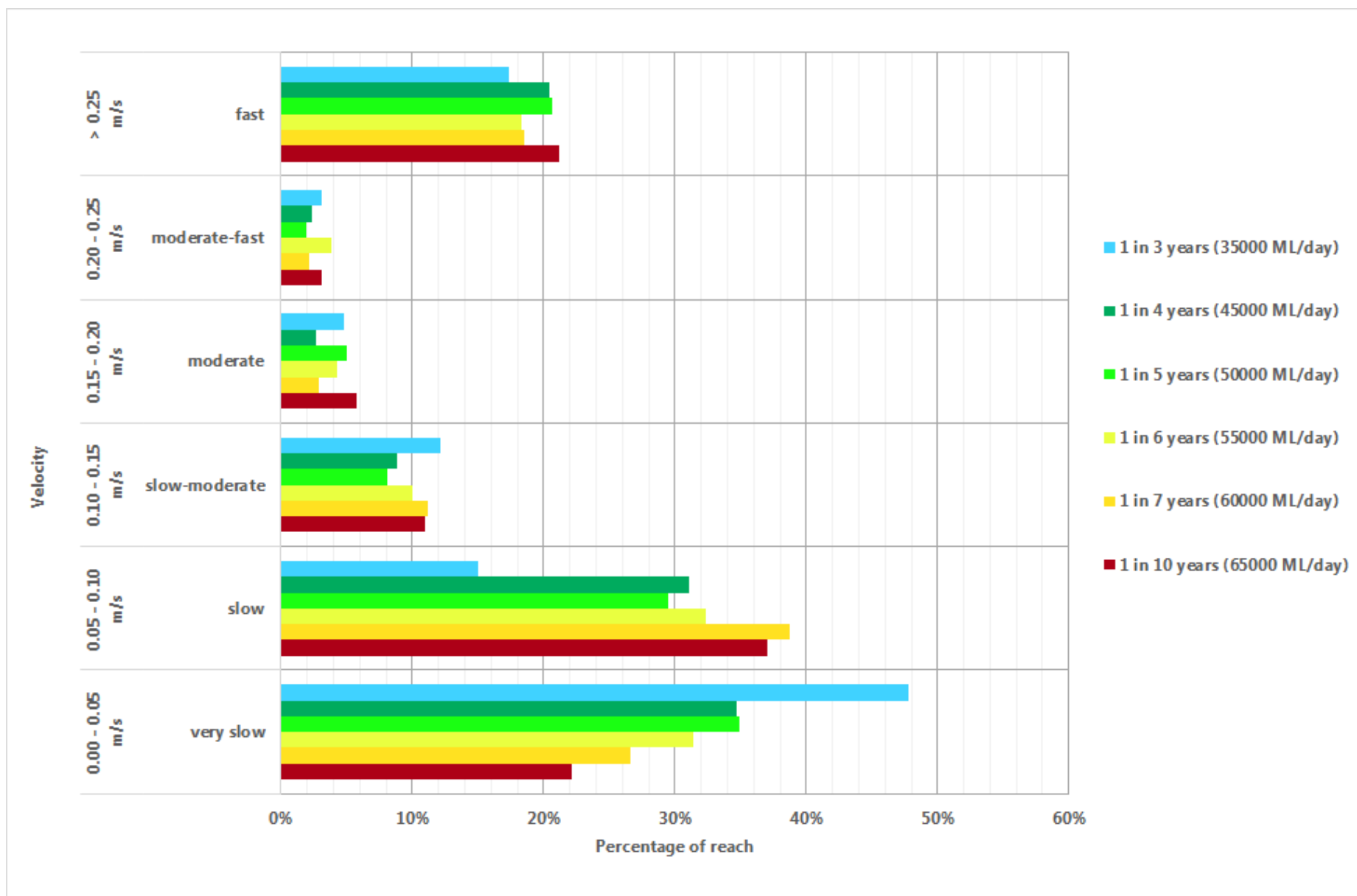


Figure 6.11 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – Current flow regime (60 days)

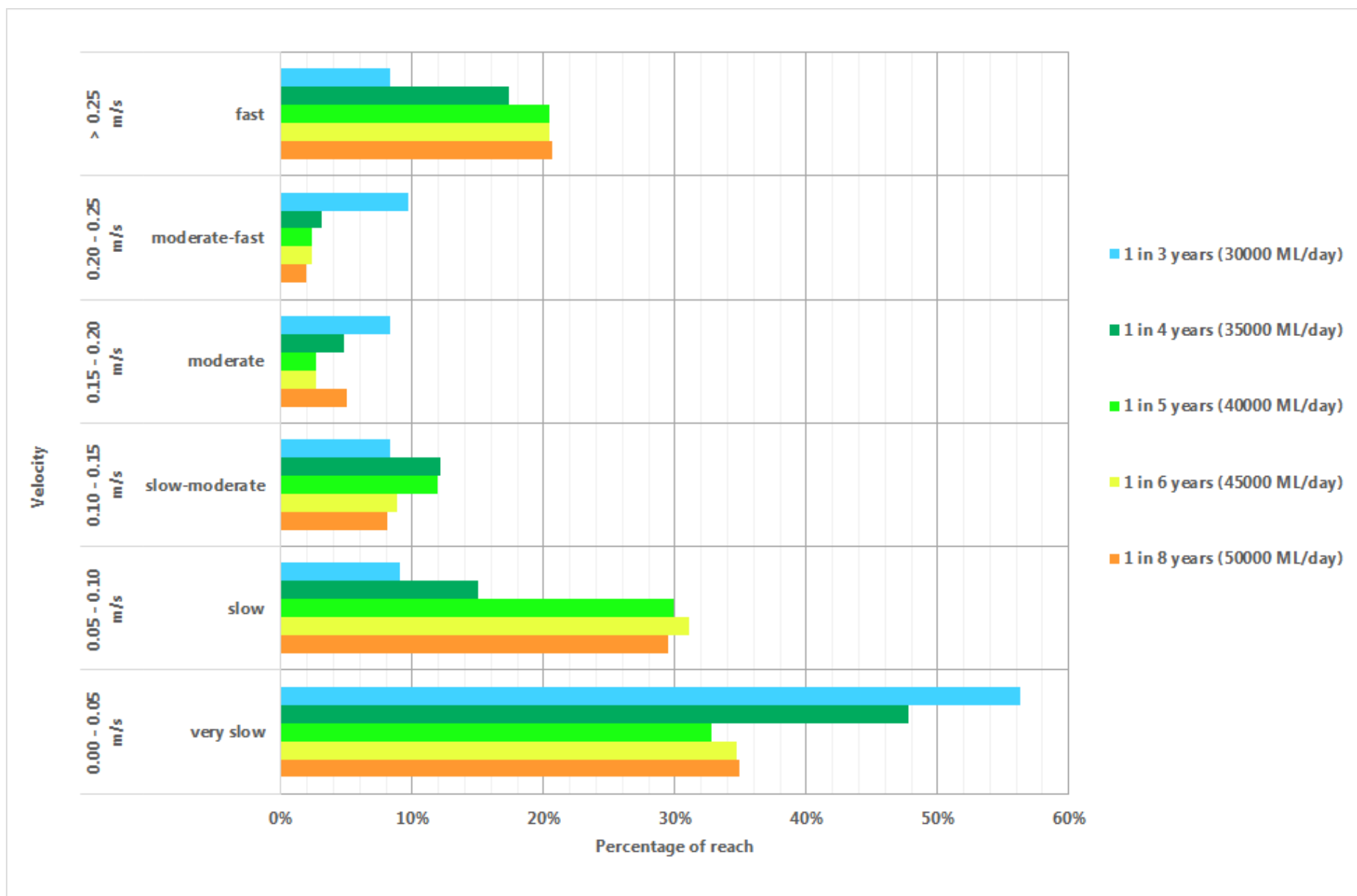


Figure 6.12 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – Current flow regime (90 days)

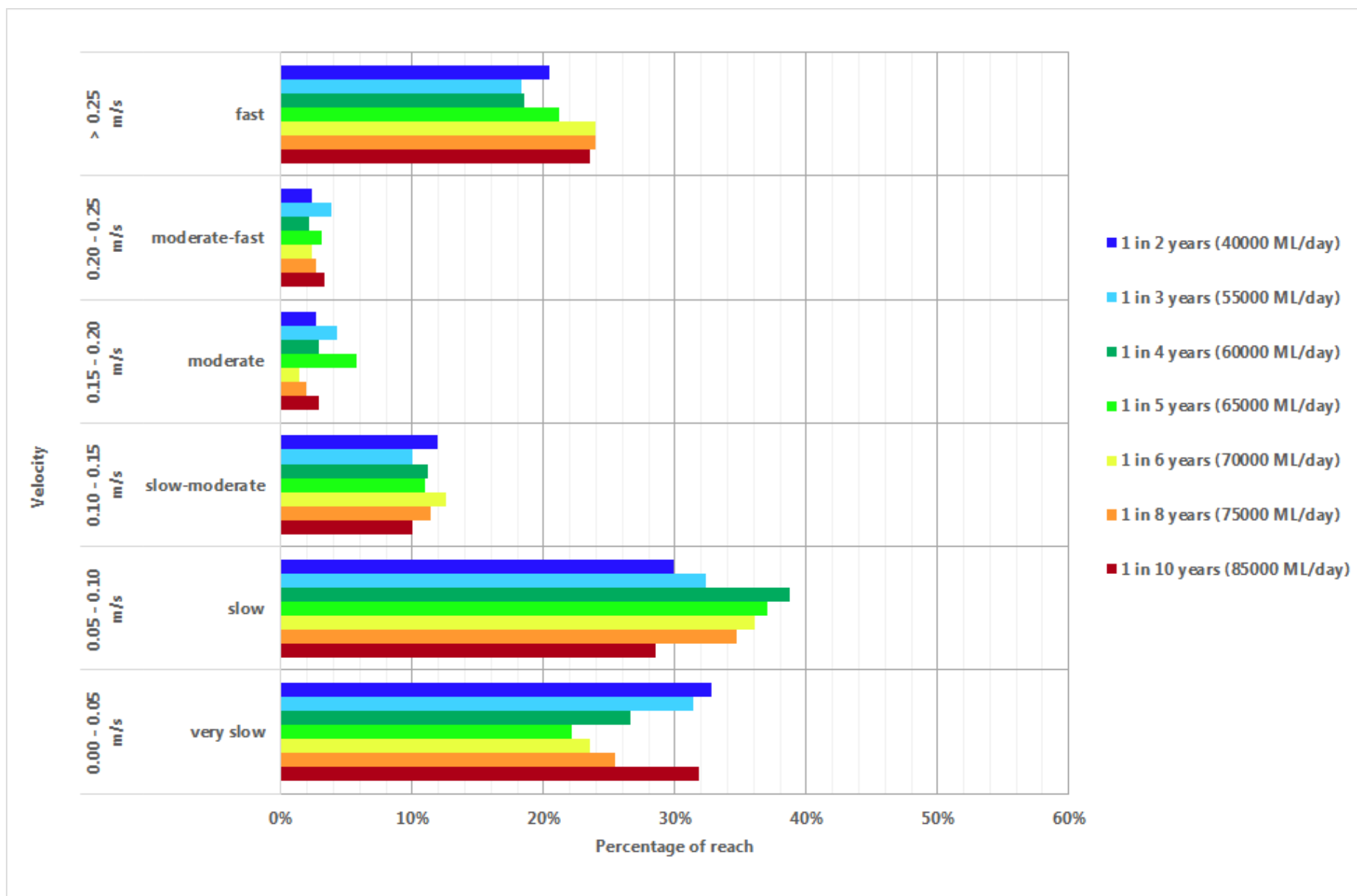


Figure 6.13 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP2400 (30 days)

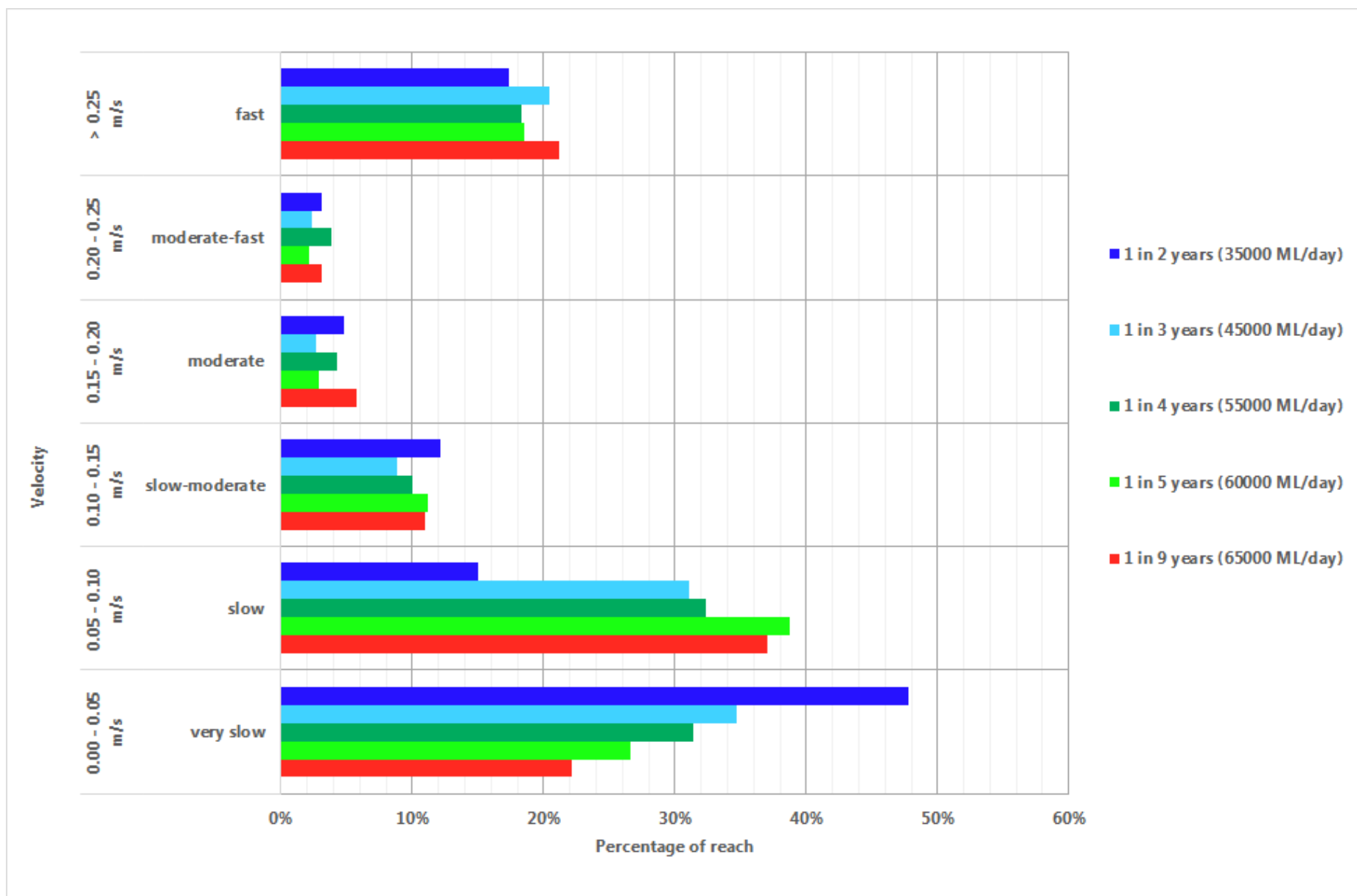


Figure 6.14 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP2400 (60 days)

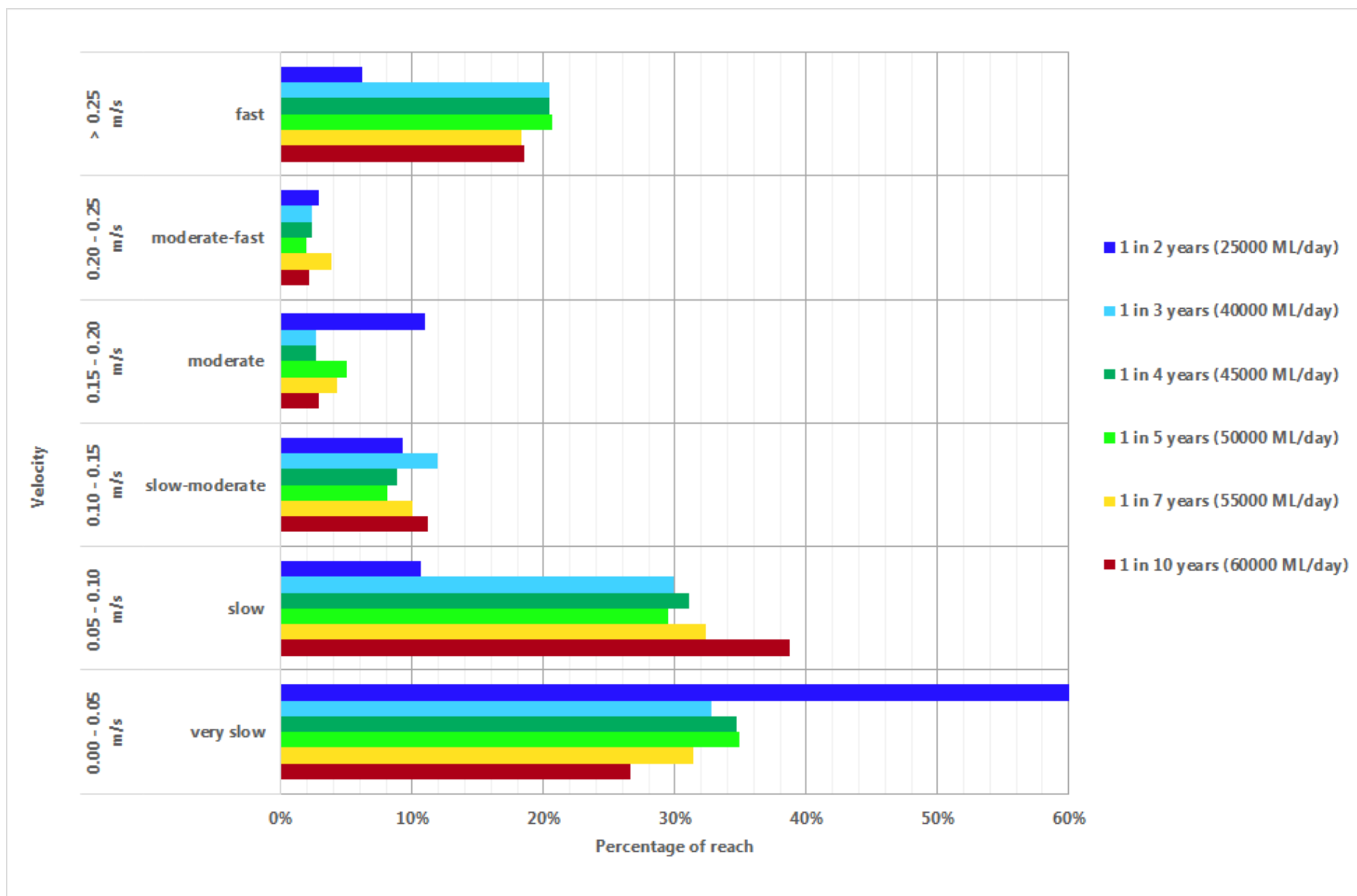


Figure 6.15 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP2400 (90 days)

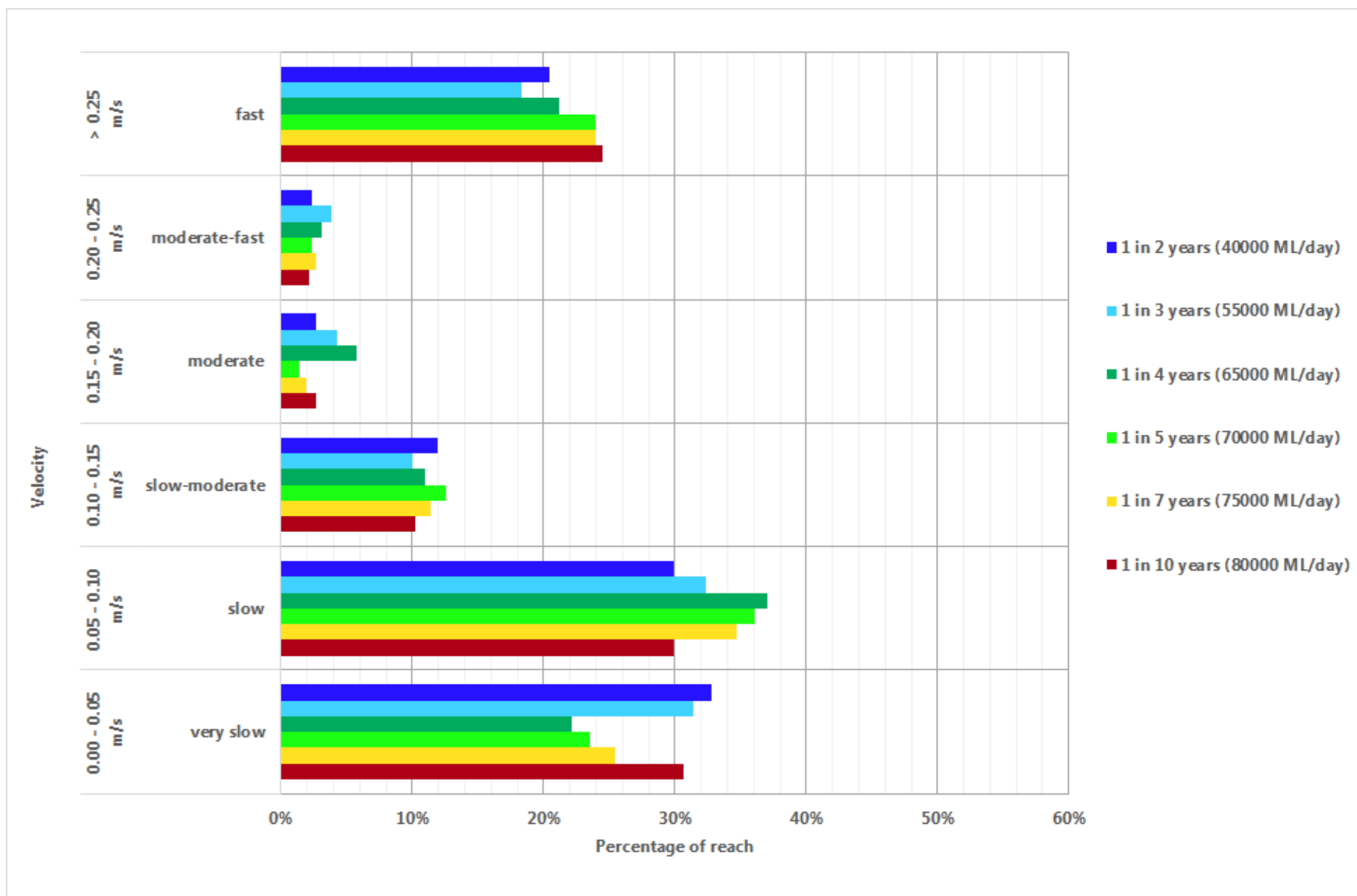


Figure 6.16 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP3200RC (30 days)

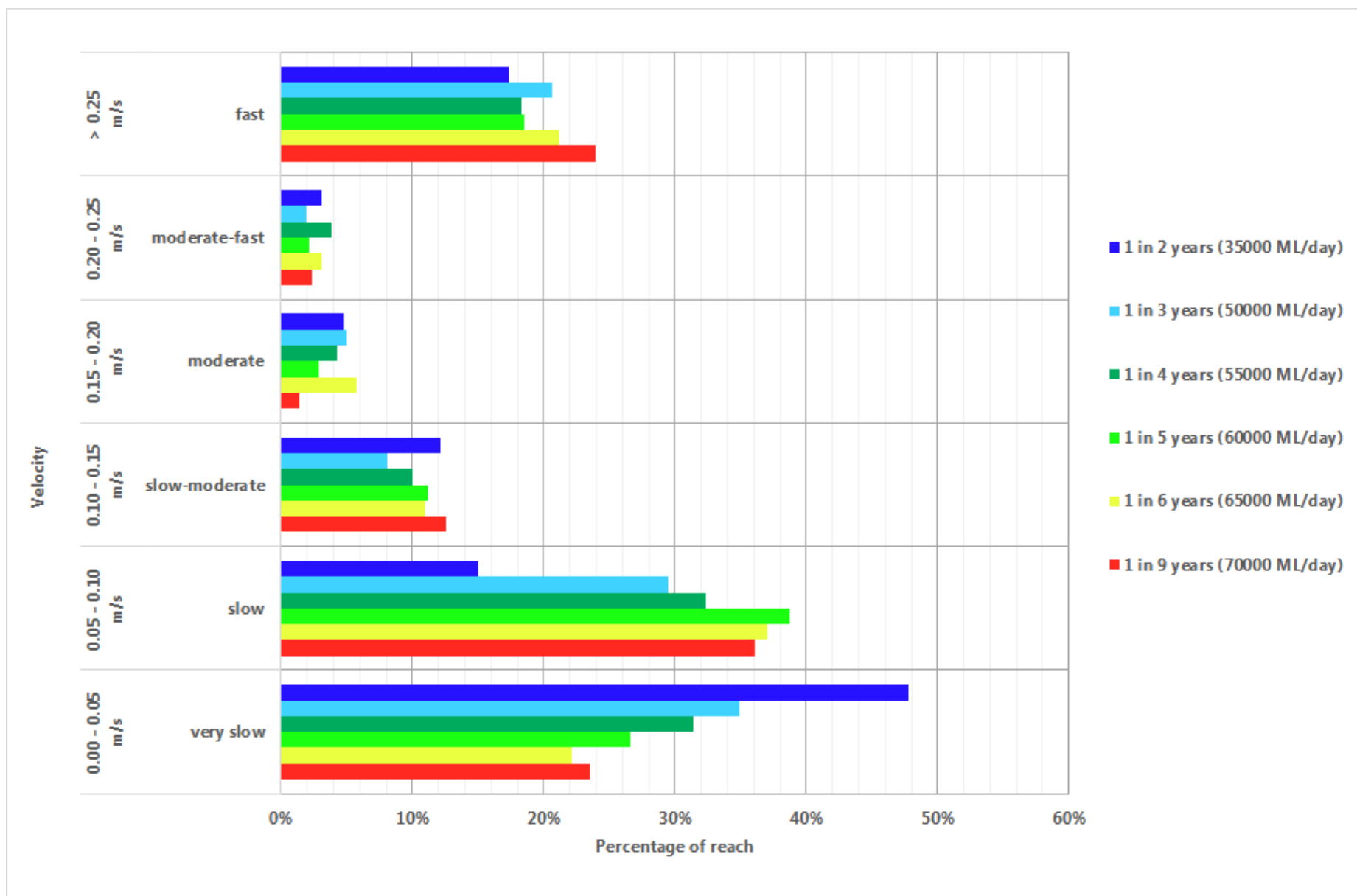


Figure 6.17 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP3200RC (60 days)

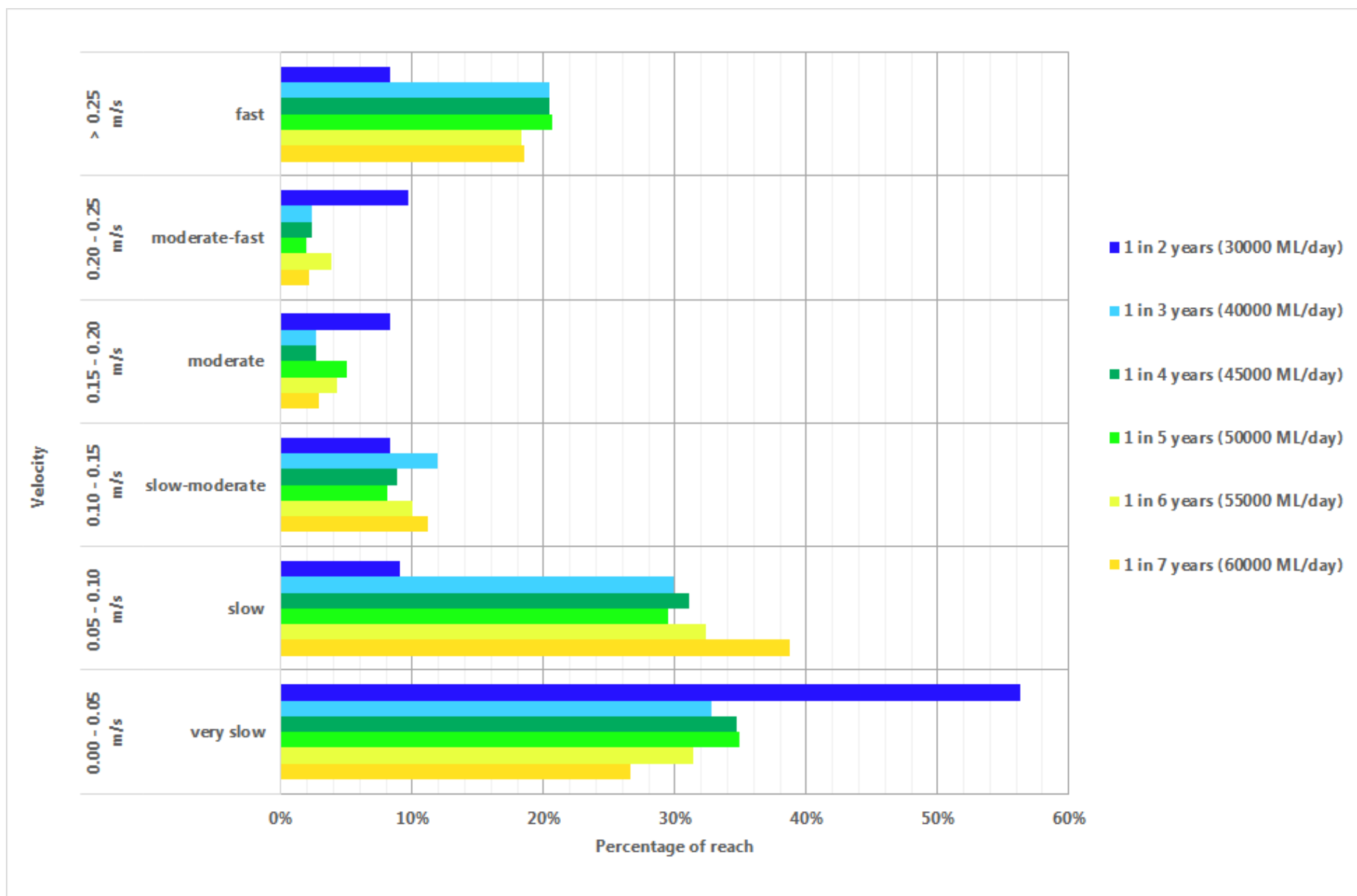


Figure 6.18 Distribution of velocity within Pike Floodplain – BP3200RC (90 days)

