

Annual Waterways Report

Gordon - Franklin Catchment

Water Assessment Branch

2009

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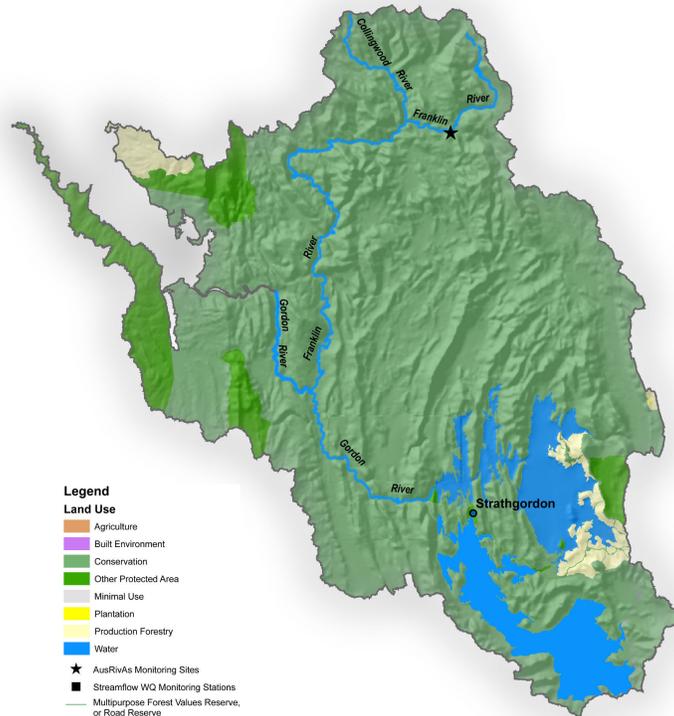
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Gordon-Franklin Catchment

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1. About the catchment

The Gordon-Franklin catchment is the largest of the nominated 48 land & water management catchments in Tasmania (5,900 km²), and lies almost completely within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The only significant human-related activity that has had a significant impact on the catchment has been the construction of a hydro-electric power scheme that resulted in the creation of the two largest lakes in Tasmania, Lake Pedder (242 km²) and Lake Gordon (272 km²). Water from both these lakes is used to generate power through the Gordon Power Station, which discharges into and consequently regulates flow in the lower Gordon River.

Some of the highest rainfall in Tasmania occurs in this catchment, which ranges broadly between about 1600 mm in the driest parts of the catchment to over 2500 mm in the wettest areas. Drainage from the entire catchment is discharged into Macquarie Harbour, where there is a substantial aquaculture industry based on salmonid production and a tourist industry largely focussed on access to the lower Gordon River and the World Heritage Area.

2. Streamflow & Water Allocation

Streamflow

There are no streamflow monitoring stations maintained in the Gordon-Franklin catchment as part of DPIW's state-wide monitoring.

Water Use Restrictions

There are no water restriction triggers in existence for the Gordon-Franklin catchment.

Water Allocation

The Gordon-Franklin catchment had a total of 1.87 ML in licensed allocations for 2008. The following table shows the breakdown of the allocations.

	Total Allocation (ML)
Irrigation	-
Stock & Domestic	-
Water supply	-
Commercial	1.87

The total of this water allocation is taken directly from rivers and streams, with none held in storage.

3. River Health

The Australian River Assessment System (AUSRIVAS) is a standardised national system for assessment of river condition that uses benthic macroinvertebrates.

The AUSRIVAS models predict the aquatic macroinvertebrate fauna that would be expected to occur at a site in the absence of environmental stress such as pollution, habitat degradation or flow regulation. A comparison of the macroinvertebrates expected to occur at the test site with those actually collected (O/E ratio) provides a site specific measure of the biological impairment of the test site. Further details about AUSRIVAS can be found at:

www.ausrivas.canberra.edu.au/ausrivas

A single site is monitored for river health by DPIW in this catchment.



Fig: Franklin River at Lyell Highway.

Franklin River at Lyell Highway

This site is located in the upper reaches of the Franklin River and is within the Franklin - Lower Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. The river is in near pristine condition and is surrounded by cool temperate rainforest. The only disturbance is in the form of a small picnic and tourist information area and a riverside walking track (Franklin River Nature Trail).

The river at this site is approximately 20 metres wide and is characterised by riffle and run sequences over boulder / cobble substrate. Water quality is excellent with low conductivity and turbidity.

Combined season AUSRIVAS assessments have classified both the riffle and edgewater habitats as equivalent to reference (Band A) since Spr03/Aut04. Single season assessments of the riffle habitat have classified the site as equivalent to reference (Band A) or above (Band X) on all occasions. Single season edgewater assessments have classified the site as equivalent to reference (Band A) on all occasions.

Name	Season	O/E Taxa Riffle	Band	O/E Taxa Edgewater	Band
Franklin River at Lyell Highway	Spr03/ Au04	1.07	A	0.97	A
	Spr04/ Au05	1.02	A	1.04	A
	Spr05/ Au06	1.01	A	1.03	A
	Spr06/ Au07	1.06	A	1.03	A
	Spr07/ Au08	0.98	A		NS
	Au08/ Spr08	0.98	A		NS

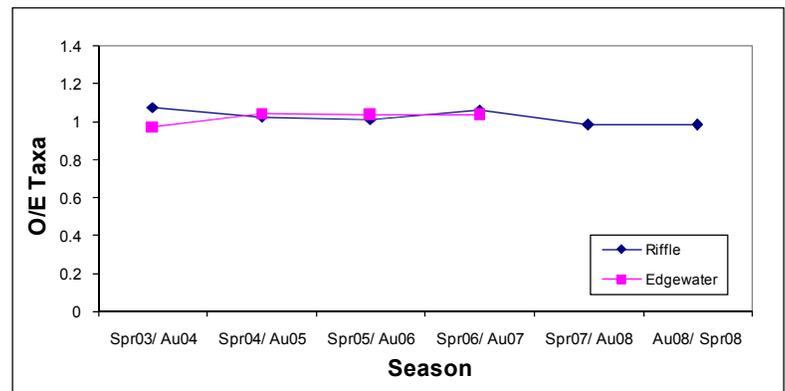


Fig: Combined season AUSRIVAS O/E Taxa scores for the Franklin River at Lyell Highway.