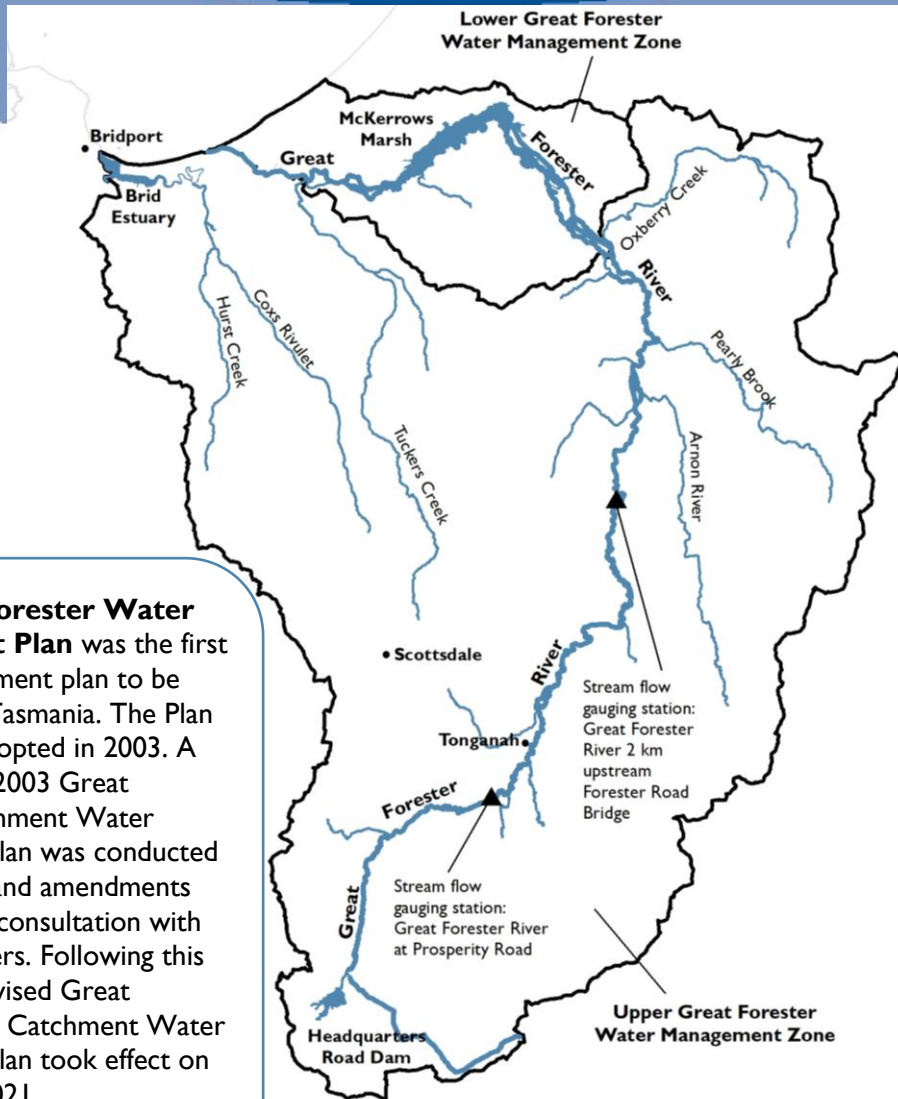


# GREAT FORESTER RIVER CATCHMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25



**The Great Forester Water Management Plan** was the first water management plan to be developed in Tasmania. The Plan was initially adopted in 2003. A review of the 2003 Great Forester Catchment Water Management Plan was conducted in 2018-2019 and amendments were made in consultation with key stakeholders. Following this review, the revised Great Forester River Catchment Water Management Plan took effect on 27 October 2021.

Of note, the agreed managed minimum flow for the summer period remains the same as the 2003 plan at 30 ML/day, measured at the NRE Tas stream flow gauging station on the Great Forester River 2km upstream of the Forester Road Bridge. The purpose of the Plan is to provide a framework for managing the water resources of the Great Forester River Catchment and is a legal document in accordance with the objectives of the Water Management Act 1999. For full details of the current Water Plan go to the NRE Tas Water website.

**The Great Forester River** catchment is located in the north-east of Tasmania and flows 95 km in a northerly direction from Mount Maurice to Bass Strait near Bridport. The catchment covers a total area of 626 km<sup>2</sup>.

The river system is unregulated with a largely natural flow regime that shows a strong seasonal flow pattern (wetter in winter and drier in summer). The average annual water yield is 75,800 ML/year based on the historical flows at the lowest stream flow gauge in the catchment.

**There are currently 400 water allocations** across the Great Forester catchment with a volume of 42,329 ML/year for both non consumptive and consumptive uses. The table below shows the volumes of 393 consumptive allocations across Surety's 1-7.

CONSUMPTIVE WATER ALLOCATION			
Surety Level	Summer Vol. (ML)	Winter Vol. (ML)	Overall Vol. (ML)
S 1	201	170	
S 3	162	0	162
S 5	2,693	9812	12,853
S 6	15,264	2,325	17,658
S 7	0	2,220	2,220
Total	18,320	14,527	32,847

## CATCHMENT LAND USE

Approximately 35% of the catchment is under production native forests and plantation forestry. A further 25% is used for agricultural purposes, with the remaining area supporting a diversity of land uses including mining, urban areas and conservation land. The catchment includes the township of Scottsdale as its major settlement. The layer shown below uses 2019 land use data.

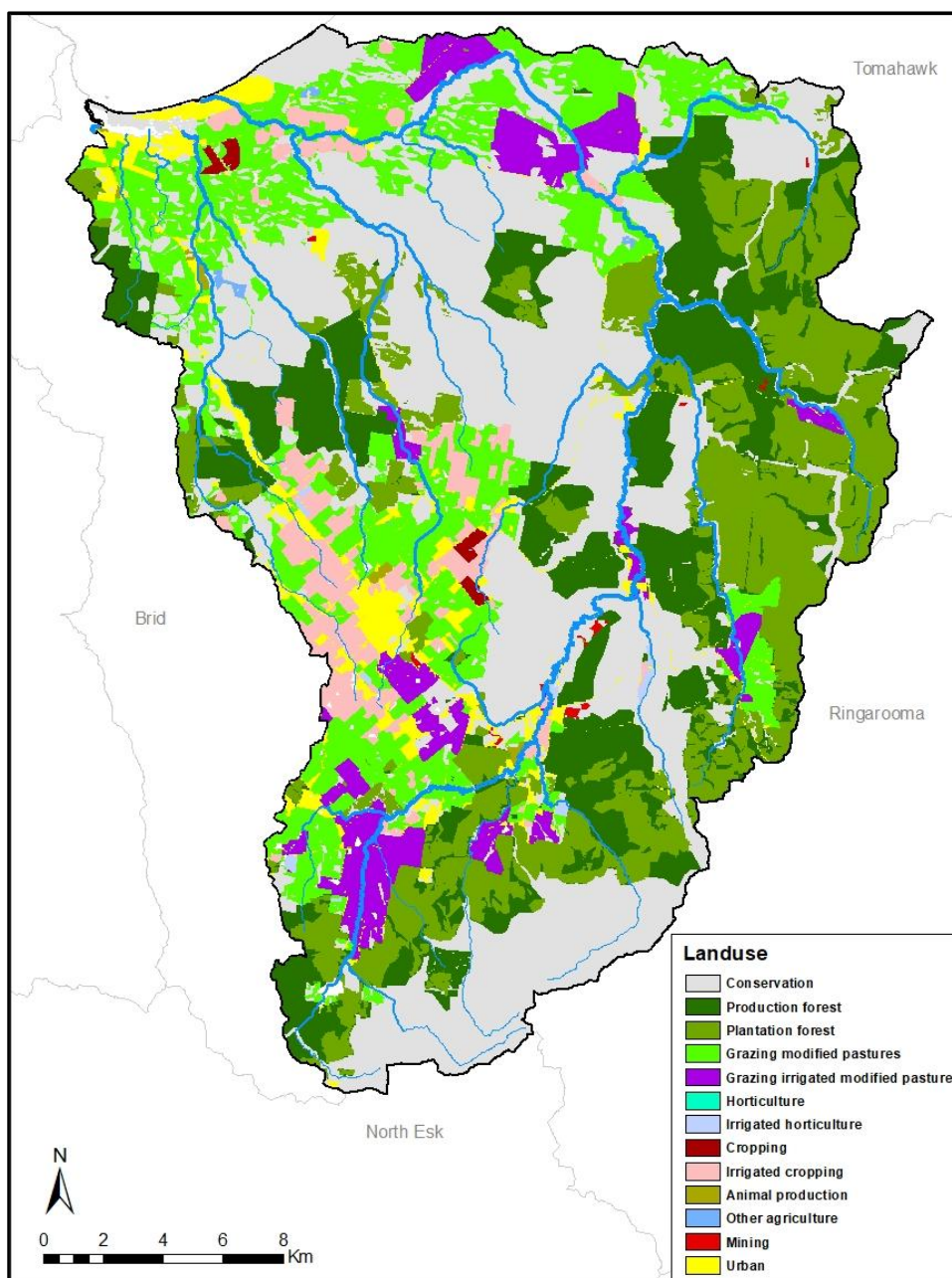


Figure 1. Great Forester River catchment land use

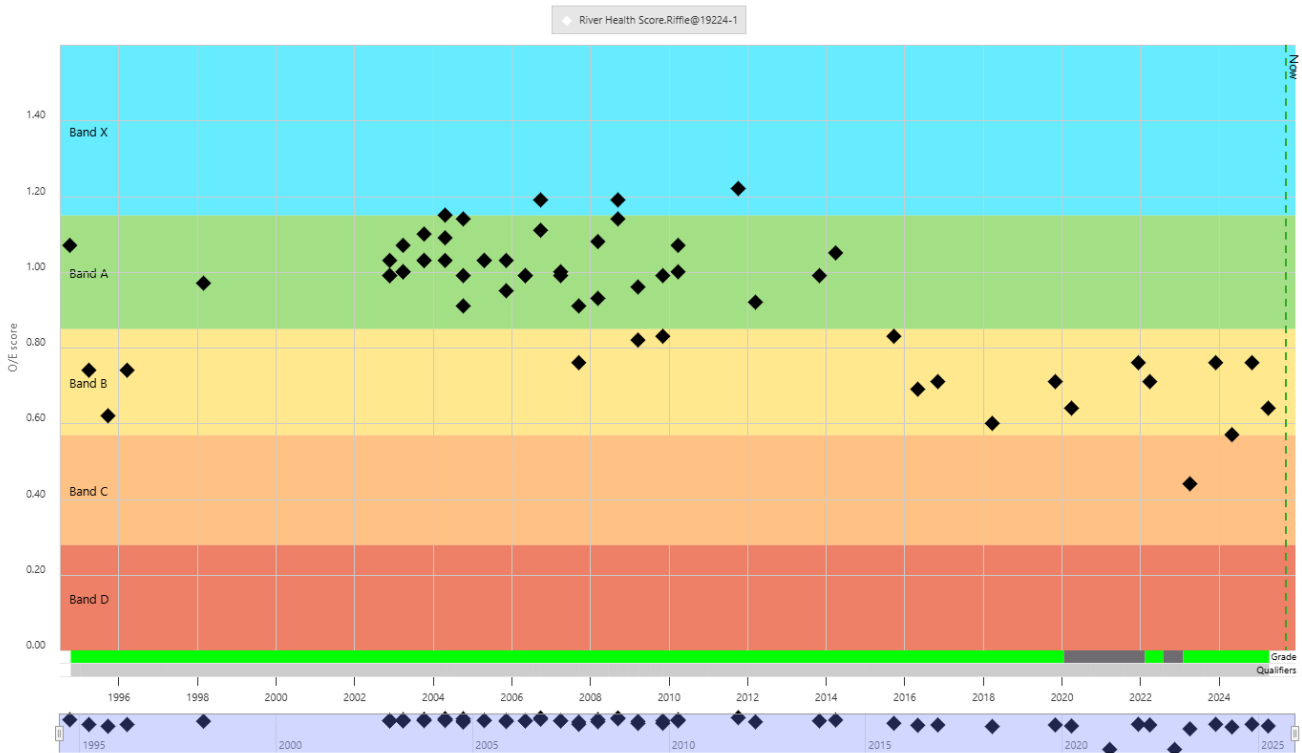
For further information contact your local Regional Water Management Officer at the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania:  
Phone: 1300 368 550  
Email: [Water.Operations@nre.tas.gov.au](mailto:Water.Operations@nre.tas.gov.au)  
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## RIVER HEALTH

Waterbugs (macroinvertebrates) are used globally to monitor the health of rivers as they are sensitive to pressures on river systems (e.g. poor water quality, sedimentation). River health monitoring by NRE Tas focuses on the composition of waterbug communities found on the riverbed; however, other values that are not monitored can also contribute to the health of rivers (e.g. water plants, fish, riverbank vegetation).

NRE Tas has two long-term river health monitoring sites in the Great Forester River, with one site at Prosperity Road (upper-reach) and one site at Old Waterhouse Road (lower-reach). Monitoring since 1995 indicates that the upper-reach was historically in good condition, with most river health scores (O/E scores) equating to band A (equivalent to reference condition). However, since 2014 it has declined and is now considered moderate to poor, with river health scores equating to bands B and C (significantly and severely impaired) (Figure 2). Conversely, monitoring since 2019 indicates that the lower-reach is in good condition, with river health scores equating to band A (equivalent to reference condition), see plot at:

(<https://portal.wrt.tas.gov.au/Data/Chart/ChartId/133/Interval/Latest>)



**Figure 2.** River Health Observed/Expected score at the Great Forester at Prosperity Road site, whole of record.

Band X = above reference condition, Band A = equal to reference condition,  
Band B = significantly impacted, Band C = severely impacted and Band D = impoverished.

## HYDROLOGY SUMMARY

The following pages show plots of long-term streamflow (full period of available record), short term (last 5 water years) streamflow and rainfall, and last years flow, rainfall and restriction data, split into winter (May 2024 –November 2024) and summer (December 2024 – April 2025) seasons.

Over the period from May 2024 to April 2025:

- Annual yield and annual rainfall were around average.
- There were no water restrictions in the catchment during summer.
- A total of 17 days were under restriction for winter (May), noting that the gauge record shows flows above thresholds however releases from irrigation schemes upstream were impacting the gauge readings at this time.



Full flow record, 1970 - 2025

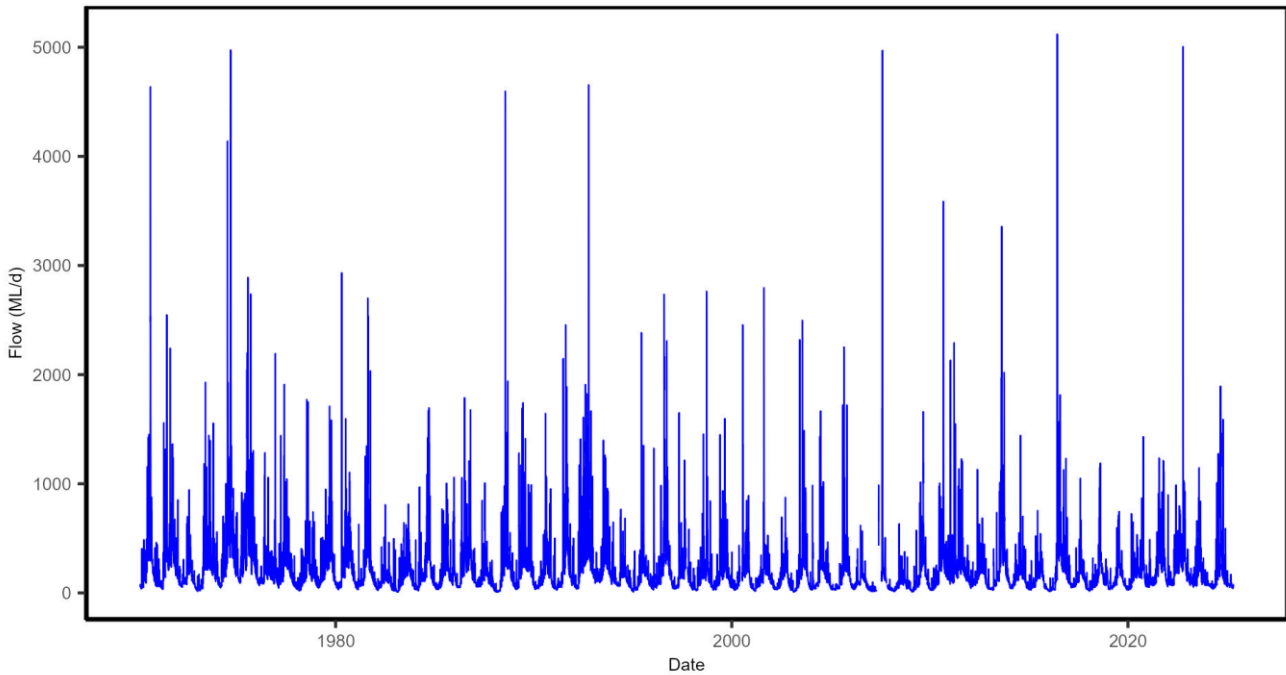


Figure 3. Mean daily flow in the Great Forester River at the Forester Road streamflow gauging station, whole of record.

Full record of yields in water years 1970 - 2024

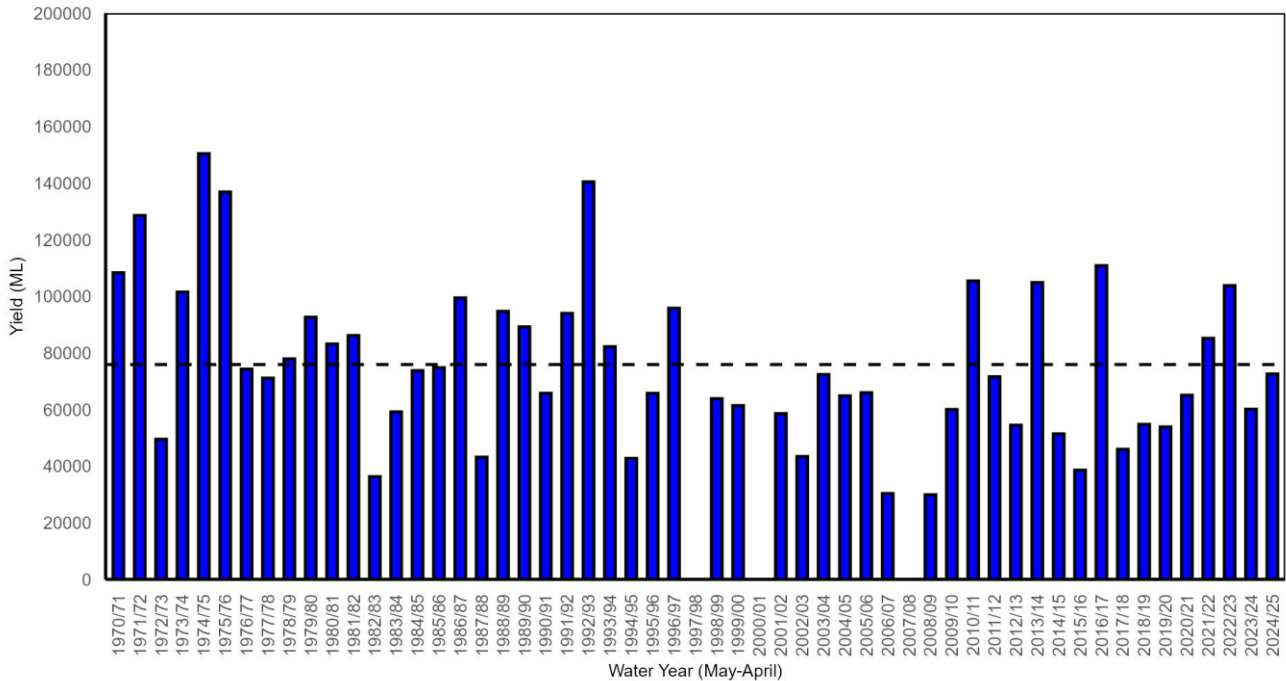
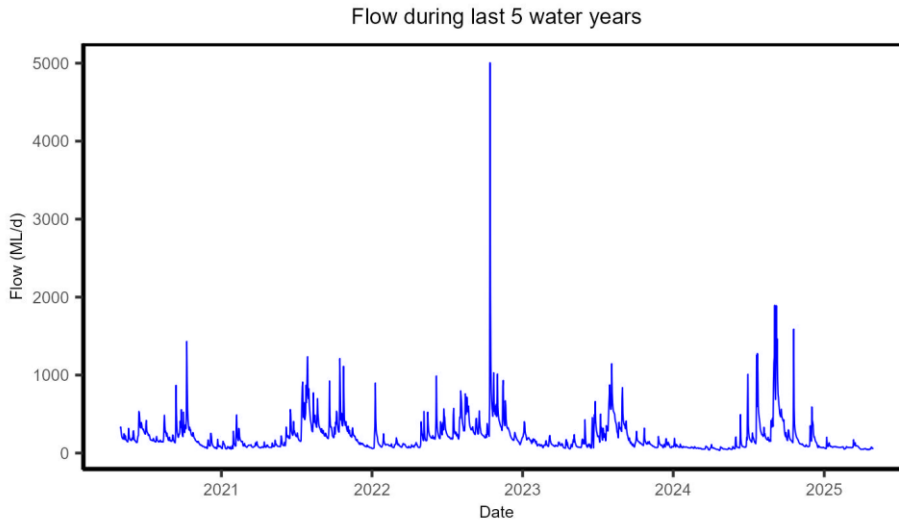
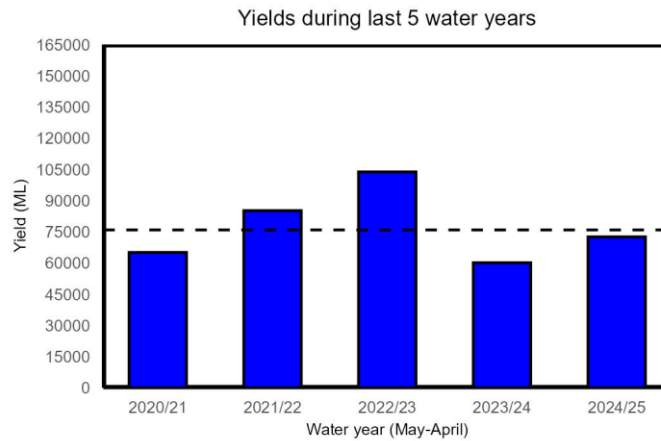


Figure 4. Yields in the Great Forester River at the Forester Road streamflow gauging station. Water years with <95% of the daily flow record available are excluded. The long-term mean yield is shown as the dashed horizontal black line (75,800 ML).

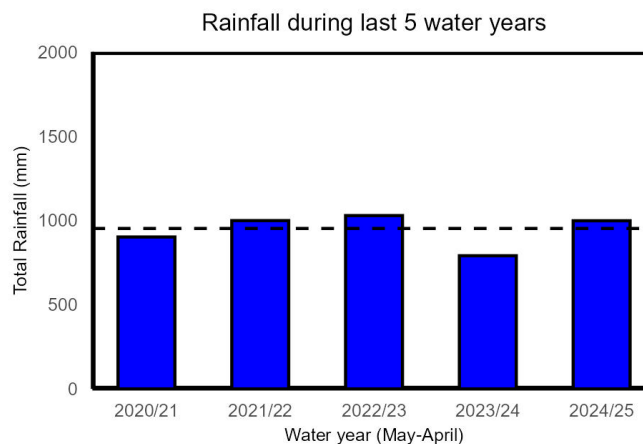
For further information contact your local Regional Water Management Officer at the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania:  
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**Figure 5.** Mean daily flow in the Great Forester River at the Forester Road streamflow gauging station, last five years.

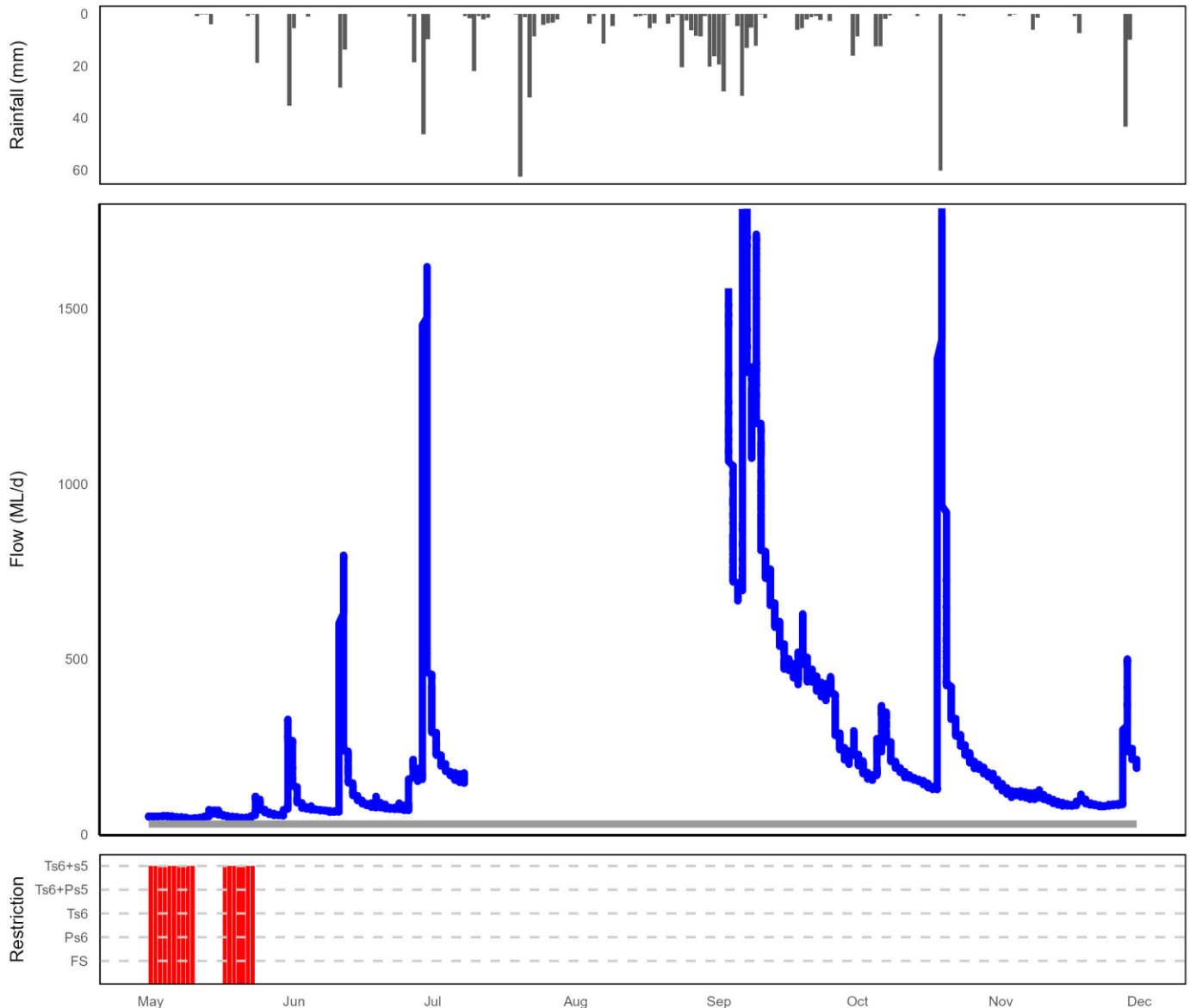


**Figure 6.** Yields in the Great Forester River at the Forester Road streamflow gauging station for the last five years. The long-term mean yield is shown as the dashed horizontal black line (75,800 ML).



**Figure 7.** Total rainfall at the Scottsdale BoM weather station during the last five water years. The long-term (1970-2025) mean total rainfall (951 mm) is shown as the black horizontal dashed line.

### Rainfall, low flows and restriction periods during winter 2024/2025



**Figure 8.** Summary of rainfall, low flows and restrictions in the Great Forester catchment during winter (May-November) 2024.

Top plot: total daily rainfall (Scottsdale BoM site).

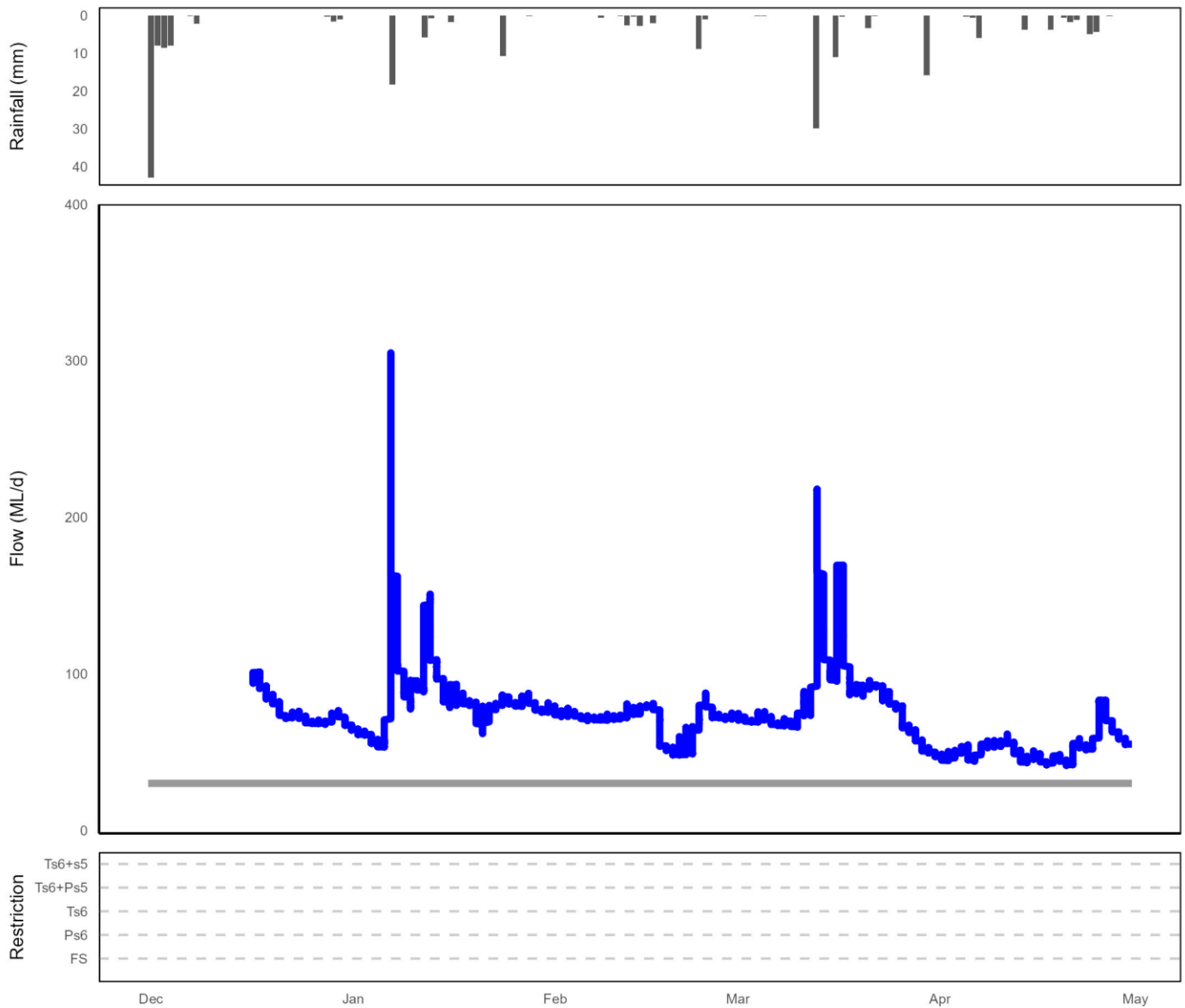
Middle plot: instantaneous flow (<1800 ML/d) Great Forester River at Forester Road station (compliance flow site).

Bottom plot: days when restrictions were in place.

**Table 1.** Restriction levels and total days at each level for the winter period (May - November 2024)

Restriction Type	Days at restriction level in 2023/24	Days at restriction level in 2024/25
Flow Sharing	0	0
Partial Surety 6	0	0
Total Surety 6	0	0
Total Surety 6 + Partial Surety 5	0	0
Total Surety 6 + Total Surety 5	0	17

### Rainfall, low flows and restriction periods during summer 2024/2025



**Figure 9.** Summary of rainfall, low flows and restrictions in the Great Forester catchment during summer 2024/25 (Dec-April).

Top plot: total daily rainfall (Scottsdale BoM site).

Middle plot: instantaneous flow (<400 ML/d) Great Forester River at Forester Road station (compliance flow site).

Bottom plot: days when restrictions were in place.

**Table 2.** Restriction levels and total days at each level for the summer period (Dec 2024 – April 2025).

Restriction Type	Days at restriction level in 2023/24	Days at restriction level in 2024/25
Flow Sharing	0	0
Partial Surety 6	3	0
Total Surety 6	0	0
Total Surety 6 + Partial Surety 5	0	0
Total Surety 6 + Total Surety 5	22	0

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Email: [Water.Operations@nre.tas.gov.au](mailto:Water.Operations@nre.tas.gov.au)

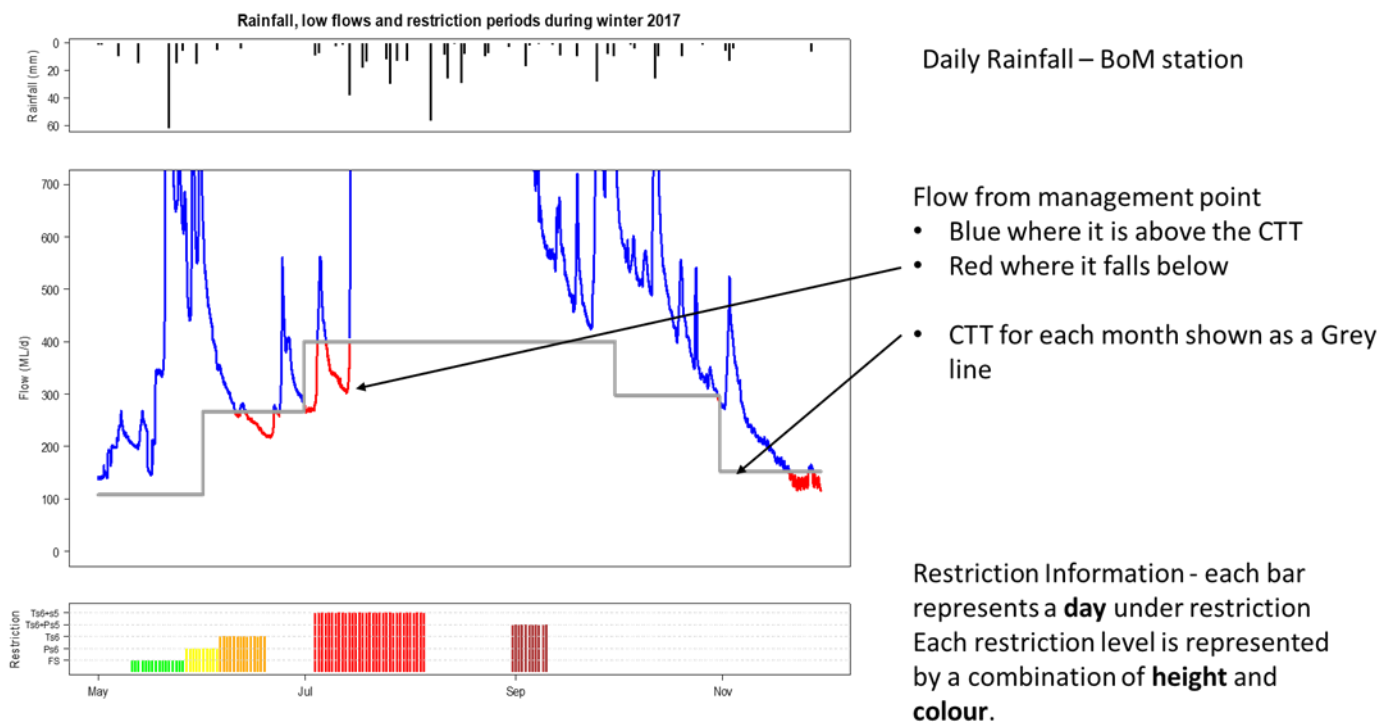
[nre.tas.gov.au/water](http://nre.tas.gov.au/water)

August 2025

## EXAMPLE ONLY

# Rainfall, flow and restriction plot legend

**NOTE:** This is a hypothetical example to assist in interpreting the plots in the main body of this document.



### Flow Restriction definitions:

FS = flow sharing (only some catchments), shown in GREEN

Ps6 = partial surety 6 ban, shown in YELLOW

Ts6 = total surety 6 ban, shown in ORANGE

Ts6+Ps5 = total surety 6 and partial surety 5 ban, shown in BROWN

Ts6+s5 = total surety 5 and 6 ban, shown in RED

## EXAMPLE ONLY

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August 2025