



# Cooma Region Waterwatch Update

January 2011



## Looking forward to Waterwatch in 2011

A belated happy new year to Cooma Region Waterwatchers and friends. Let's hope 2011 brings plenty of gentle rains and clear rivers. In 2010 Cooma Region Waterwatch volunteers monitored sites along the Cooma, Cooma Back and Rock Flat Creeks and the Numeralla, Bredbo, Kybeyan, Badja and Murrumbidgee Rivers. Some of these sites are currently being monitored by Antia. So, if anyone has an interest to take up Waterwatch along these streams, please contact Antia and one of these sites (along with a fully fitted out testing kit!!) can be yours. It would also be great to get some more sites established on the Murrumbidgee River upstream of Mittagang Rd Crossing.

## First Catchment Health Indicators (CHIs) available for Cooma Region (July-Dec 2010)

Cooma Region 'Catchment Health Indicator' (CHI) ratings for the Jul-Dec 2010 period have now been calculated for the Cooma + Rock Flat Creek and the Numeralla, Badja, Kybeyan, Bredbo and Murrumbidgee River sub-catchments using our water quality data. Based on this, each sub-catchment is assigned a rating from 1 (excellent) to 5 (degraded). All our sub-catchments were rated between 1 (excellent) and 3 (moderate). The Badja River had the best rating in our area (excellent-good), while the Cooma and Rock Flat Creek sub-catchment was rated as 'moderate'. A full CHIP report for the Cooma Waterwatch region will be available soon.

## What does your data say in January 2011?

<b>Weather (as at Cooma Visitor's Center) for January</b> Long term av. rainfall for January: 56.4 ml <i>Source: <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au">www.bom.gov.au</a></i>	<b>Stream flow (ML/day as at 17 Feb 2011)</b> <i>Source: <a href="http://www.realtimedata.water.nsw.gov.au">www.realtimedata.water.nsw.gov.au</a></i>
Total monthly rainfall: = 55.5 ml	Murrumbidgee R. (at Mittagang Xing): 247 ML
Average max temp: n/a °C	Murrumbidgee R. (at Billililingra): 463 ML
Average min temp: n/a °C	Numeralla R. (at the school): 134 ML

Thankyou to all our volunteers who collected data during January. Rainfall events and catchment run-off has meant that turbidity has been variable across the Cooma region. The Murrumbidgee River had elevated turbidity levels at the time of sampling due to storms in the catchment. Generally, higher water temperatures and lower dissolved oxygen levels were found in all streams. Cooma Back Creek ceased to flow. EC and phosphate levels remain elevated in the Cooma and Rock Flat Creeks.

## Water quality parameters tested by Waterwatchers in your local catchments

Turbidity— measure of 'murkiness', can be an indicator of sediment pollution. Levels above 10 NTU can affect aquatic life, if occurring on a regular basis, low levels are desirable.

pH— measure of acidity. Levels between 6-8 pH units are suited for aquatic life. Levels near 7 pH units are desirable.

EC— electrical conductivity is a measure of dissolved solids or 'salts'. EC levels greater than 1000uS/cm are excessive and warrant attention. Lower EC levels are desirable.

DO— dissolved oxygen. Levels below 4.5mg/L cause stress to/death of aquatic life. Higher levels are desirable.

Nitrates/nitrites/phosphates— these refer to bio-available nutrient levels which will influence algal growth and productivity in stream. Excessive nutrient levels are not desirable.

## CONTACT COOMA REGION WATERWATCH:

Antia Brademann (Cooma Region Waterwatch Coordinator), Monaro High School, Mittagang Rd, Cooma NSW 2630  
Ph: 02 6452 4611 Mob: 04279778633 E: [antia@coomawaterwatch.org.au](mailto:antia@coomawaterwatch.org.au) Web: [www.coomawaterwatch.org.au](http://www.coomawaterwatch.org.au)

## Upper Murrumbidgee Feb 2011 Newsletter– now out

Catch up with the latest Waterwatch news in the Upper Murrumbidgee region. Find out about the launch of the Bidgee Demo Reach, Gambusia, Water dragons and River skinks, breeding breakthrough for Macquarie perch, effects of high flows on Waterwatch data, results of the Capital Region Platypus Census and more!

Download your copy of the newsletter at [www.act.waterwatch.gov.au](http://www.act.waterwatch.gov.au) or pick up a hardcopy at Cooma Monaro Shire Council (level 2 foyer) or the Cooma Office of Industry & Investment NSW (foyer).

### Interesting websites/further reading

The **Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach (UMDR)**, incorporating the Murrumbidgee River from Bredbo to Casuarina Sands, aims to demonstrate the improvement of fish habitat and river health for native fish in the Upper Murrumbidgee catchment via showcasing the cumulative benefits of multiple management actions at a single site. This includes the development of a carp reduction strategy for the reach. Find out more about the 'bidgee demo reach by visiting the website: [www.upperbidgeereach.org.au](http://www.upperbidgeereach.org.au)

The **NSW Control Plan** for carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) has now been finalised by Industry & Investment NSW. The plan recognises the scale of the carp problem in NSW and is intended to provide a framework for carp management in NSW by outlining existing actions and identifying priorities for future action. The plan can be downloaded from [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/pests-diseases/freshwater-pests/species/carp](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/pests-diseases/freshwater-pests/species/carp). To request a printed copy please email the Aquatic Biosecurity Unit at [www.industry.nsw.gov.au](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au) or call (02) 4982 1232.

**Snowy Scientific Committee “The adequacy of environmental flows for the Upper Murrumbidgee River”** report was released in Dec 2010. This report evaluates environmental releases to the Murrumbidgee River downstream of Tantangara Dam as well as the management and institutional arrangements in place to facilitate this. These environmental releases are part of a long-term restoration program for montane rivers affected by the Snowy Mountains Scheme. The report can be found at [www.snowyssc.org/pdf/ssc\\_4-2010-adequacy-e-releases-to-upper-murrumbidgee.pdf](http://www.snowyssc.org/pdf/ssc_4-2010-adequacy-e-releases-to-upper-murrumbidgee.pdf). An ABC news report on the release of the report can be found at [www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/10/3134943.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/10/3134943.htm)

### Coming Up.....

- ◆ **Next sampling weekend-** 19th/20th Feb
- ◆ **Numeralla 2011 Fish Stocking Day–** 20th Feb (1pm), meet at Numeralla fireshed to help release Murray cod and Golden perch fingerlings in the lower Numeralla, Kybeyan and Badja Rivers
- ◆ **Koala pellet surveys (Numeralla area)–** 23rd/24th Feb. To assist contact Luke McLachlan (DECCW) on 02 6450 5559 or Luke. McLachlan@environment.nsw.gov.au
- ◆ **Fenner School Seminar “Safe drinking water through source water protection in the ACT” (Lara Odell)** - 24th Feb, (1-2pm), Forestry Lecture Building 48
- ◆ **2011 Murrumbidgee Landcare Awards–** nominations close 25th Feb. For details see: [www.murrumbidgeelandcare.asn.au](http://www.murrumbidgeelandcare.asn.au) or [www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au)
- ◆ **Clean Up Australia Day Paddle (Red Rock Gorge)-** Murrumbidgee River Pine Island to Kambah Pool, 6th Mar (9-3pm). For more info go to [www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/Red+Rock+Gorge](http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/Red+Rock+Gorge) or contact Antia
- ◆ **Groundwater Awareness Week–** 6th-12th Mar
- ◆ **Gambusia Information Meeting–** 8th Mar (7pm), MacArthur House, Lyneham
- ◆ **Algae Workshop-** 12th March (3:30pm-5pm), Australian Botanic Gardens Crosby Education Building. Register by emailing Tanya Noakes ([Tanya.rucoskynoakes@act.gov.au](mailto:Tanya.rucoskynoakes@act.gov.au))
- ◆ **Numeralla Mud Marlin competition–** 19th/20th Mar, all welcome
- ◆ **World Water Day–** 22nd Mar
- ◆ **Earth Hour–** 26th Mar (8:30-9:30pm)
- ◆ **International Day for Biological Diversity–** 22nd May

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