

Cooma Region Waterwatch Update

MAY/JUNE 2011



Our catchments in MAY– What does your data say?

May has seen cooler temperatures, including in our rivers! These cooler water temperatures are corresponding with increased levels of Dissolved Oxygen, which was recorded as being between 75 and 100% saturation across monitored streams.

Overall we have been seeing a slight drop in water levels this month, although in some waterways there was a small flush of water towards the end of the month, due to rainfall in the eastern parts of the catchment. These fluctuations can be seen in the flow level graphs of NOW monitored streams in our catchment (as shown in diagrams to the right).

Turbidity was 0 at nearly all sites at time of recording, except for two sites on the Murrumbidgee and Numeralla Rivers where low levels of turbidity were recorded towards the end of the month.

Nutrient levels were generally very low across most sites, and ECs were within acceptable levels. The exception to this is the Cooma Creek where phosphate and EC levels continue to remain elevated. pH was within acceptable levels at all sites.

Weather (as at Cooma Visitor's Center) for May

Long term av. rainfall for May: 31.8 ml

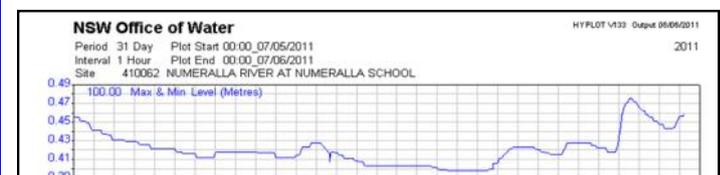
(Source: www.bom.gov.au)

Total monthly rainfall: = 30.3 ml

Maximum temperature for May: 20.0 °C

Minimum temperature for May: -6.5 °C

River heights (Source: www.realtimedata.water.nsw.gov.au)



Water quality parameters tested by Waterwatchers in our local waterways

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 1000µS/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.

Our Waterwatch data is generated by our team of dedicated volunteers. Without them this program would not be possible! Thanks to all volunteers that have contributed data this month.

If you would like to find out more or become involved in the Waterwatch program please contact your local Waterwatch Coordinator.

COOMA REGION WATERWATCH CONTACT:

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
Web: www.coomawaterwatch.org.au

NATIVE SEED COLLECTING– A great skill to have

Numeralla Landcare will be hosting and participating in a Greening Australia native seed collecting workshop on Saturday the 18th of June, at Numeralla Hall (10-2pm). The workshop will cover the basics of native seed collecting, followed by a site visit to a local property to demonstrate seed collecting techniques. This workshop will be of interest to anyone caring for or enhancing native vegetation in their communities or on their own property. By collecting seed from locally found native plant stock, plants can be encouraged to revegetate via seeding and or be propagated for replanting that have the same genetic traits as those already adapted to their local environmental conditions and so have the best chance of survival.

Places are still available for anyone that may be interested to join. The workshop is at no cost to participants and lunch is provided. If you would like to come along please contact Antia on 0429778633 by the 15th June.

MONARO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONDUCT RIPARIAN ASSESSMENTS

In April, the Monaro High School Environmental Group assisted Waterwatch by conducting riparian assessments (also known as RARC) along the Murrumbidgee River. This information is used to record riparian condition along our rivers and is an important indicator for identifying factors which may be contributing to river health. RARC assessments are repeated yearly to monitor change over time, and look at factors such as vegetation cover, levels of native vs exotic plants represent, habitat availability etc.

The sites monitored by MHS students had never been surveyed before and so the students have helped to gather important baseline data for the Waterwatch program on that part of the river. The students involved in this survey were fantastic and worked really diligently to generate some high quality data. Thanks to all those involved...Waterwatch would love to have you along to help again at anytime!!!

Numeralla River In-stream Works Project

A contractor has now been appointed by the Murrumbidgee CMA to carry out the in-stream structural works component of the Numeralla River In-stream Works project, which will see erosion control structures put in place on two eroding stream banks on the Numeralla River upstream of the Kybeyan River confluence. The contractor will begin work at the end of June.

After the structural works are complete, the site will be revegetated over the coming months by the Numeralla Landcare Group, which is a partner with the Murrumbidgee CMA in this project. If you would like to participate in the revegetation works by coming along to a Numeralla Landcare Working Bee in spring, please contact Jim Wharton on 64533254.

Coming Up.....

- ◆ **World Environment Day**– 5th June
- ◆ **Next Waterwatch sampling weekend**- 18/19th June
- ◆ **GA Seed Collecting Workshop** (free, includes lunch)- 18th June, 10-2pm, Numeralla Hall + site visit. Please book your place. Contact Antia 0429778633 or antia@coomawaterwatch.or.au by 15th June
- ◆ **'The Bidgee from behind the Lens' Photo Competition**– 18th July (entries close), for more information contact Murrumbidgee CMA, Wagga Wagga Office, 02 6932 3232 or visit the website at www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au
- ◆ **Schools Tree Day**– 29th July
- ◆ **National Tree Day**– 31st July
- ◆ **Macro-invertebrate Training**– 28th August, 2pm, Murrays Corner, Paddy's River
- ◆ **Rapid Assessment of Riparian Condition (RARC) training**– 17th September, 2pm, venue TBA.

We proudly support and are supported by:

