

Haughton River

This brochure describes the flood risk and previous flooding in the Haughton River catchment, last updated in June 2025.

Flood Risk

The Haughton River catchment is a relatively small catchment, covering an area of approximately 1850 square kilometres, located just to the south of Townsville. The headwaters of the Haughton catchment rise in the Hervey Range and its major tributaries include the Reid River and Majors Creek. Barratta Creek, located just to the south, acts as an overflow for both the Haughton and Burdekin Rivers in large floods.

The catchment responds rapidly to heavy rainfall and significant flooding can be generated in localised rainfall events, especially heavy rainfall in the Majors Creek catchment. Heavy rainfall over the catchment can cause major flooding of agricultural areas adjacent to the waterways and major flooding of residential and commercial areas in Giru. The township has a levee constructed around it to protect from floods up to about 2.30 metres on the flood gauge.

Previous Flooding

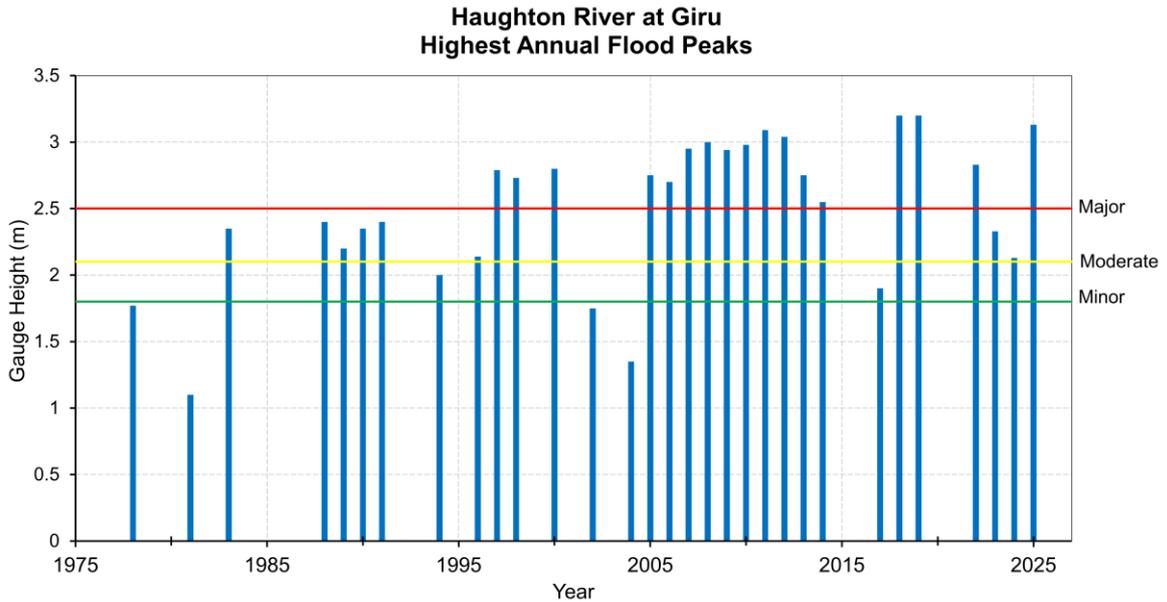
Flood records for Giru go back to 1978, with a history of frequent major flooding. Significant recent floods include 2010, 2011, 2018, 2019 and 2025.

In 2019, an active monsoon trough and slow-moving low-pressure system over the northern tropics produced extremely heavy rainfall in tropical Queensland from late January into early February. Record multi-day rainfall across the Haughton River catchment resulted in significant flooding. The Haughton River at Giru reached its equal highest level on record at 3.2 m at 1:23 pm on 31 January 2019. Notably, Giru remained above the major flood level for close to nine days as a result of the prolonged rainfall.

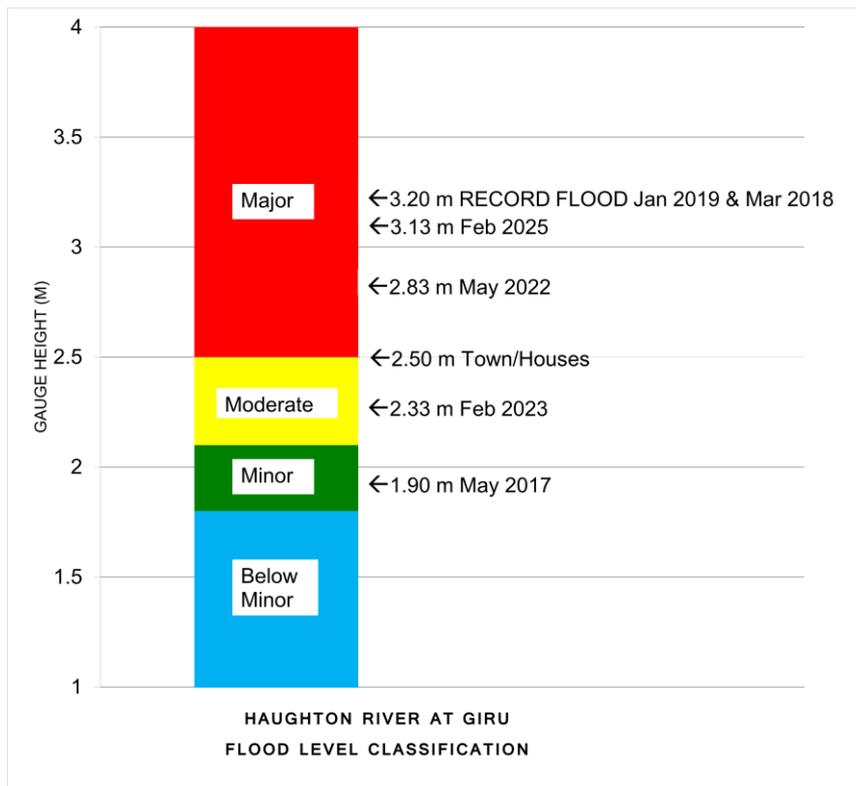
The other instance of the Haughton River at Giru reaching its equal highest recorded level of 3.2 m occurred on 1 March 2018. Prior to this, the highest flood on record was 3.09 m in February 2011, causing widespread inundation of the Giru township. More recently in February 2025, an active monsoon trough and several tropical lows produced a prolonged period of heavy rainfall over parts of northern Queensland with water levels reaching 3.13 m at Giru.

Flood Event	Giru
Feb 2011	3.09
Mar 2018	3.20
Jan 2019	3.20
Feb 2025	3.13

All heights are in metres on flood gauges.



Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology



Further Information

- [Latest rainfall and river heights](#)
- For information on the flood warning service for the Haughton River: [Queensland Service Level Specification](#)
- Catchment map: [Black, Haughton and Ross Basins map](#)
- [National Arrangements for Flood Forecasting and Warning](#)