

Forecasting seasonal streamflow for water management

Water availability in any catchment area can vary enormously from season to season. Managing the available water supply so that, among other things, farmers can irrigate crops, environmental water can be allocated to support native plants and animals, and the risk of flooding can be minimised, is the responsibility of water authorities. They must make judgments such as when (or if) to release water to irrigators and fill or empty storages. The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal streamflow forecasts, together with rainfall and temperature outlooks, assist them with predicting inflows to major water storages, and water demand—crucial inputs for their decisions.



Lake Eildon, an important inland waterway, was primarily built to supply water for irrigation.
Image: Alison Pouliot

Goulburn–Murray Water uses seasonal streamflow forecasts to help manage the filling of Lake Eildon. Due to its size and location on the Goulburn River, Lake Eildon is very important for water supply and flood mitigation. The seasonal streamflow forecasts assist by providing far greater certainty about the likelihood of inflows.



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