

Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Mineral Resources
Minister for State Development



Friday, 9 October 2009

NSW plunges further into drought

Despite heavy rain in coastal areas, the latest Government figures reveal 67.7% of NSW is now drought declared (up from 65.9%), Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald said today.

“Parts of NSW have experienced dust storms, failed crops, bone dry paddocks and dwindling water supplies, so it’s a horror set of circumstances facing many country communities,” Minister Macdonald said.

“Most of our farmers are feeling the full brunt of this record breaking drought with 27.4% of NSW considered marginal (up from 24.3%) and 4.9% satisfactory (down from 9.8%)”.

“Our crops and pastures rely on good rainfall in September and for many this didn’t eventuate, crushing hopes of a decent harvest for winter crops with many opened up to grazing livestock or turned to hay or silage”.

“Industry and Investment NSW cropping experts are now revising harvest estimates for the 4.3 million hectare winter crop and are expecting to see a sharp decline in some regions over the coming weeks”.

“Most of NSW received average rainfall in September, but this just hasn’t been enough after months of poor rain.

“The lowest September rainfall recordings include 3mm measured at Menindee, 24mm at Parkes, 21mm at Quandialla, 4mm at Tilpa, 17mm at Cobar, 17mm at Hillston, 20mm at Rankins Springs and 17mm at Ardlethan.”

Minister Macdonald welcomed the Commonwealth’s announcement earlier this week to provide \$21.7 million to the Gwydir Valley Pilot Project, to support more efficient irrigation through on-farm modernisation projects.

“Industry & Investment NSW will be involved in this project, which will provide irrigation infrastructure and training for the Gwydir community to deal with reduced water availability.

“This significant project is an investment into our farming future, boosting productivity and protecting food security.”

The NSW Government recently announced a further \$7 million in drought assistance.

“This extension means farmers in drought affected areas can continue receiving a 50 per cent subsidy for the transport of fodder, stock and domestic water and stock to sale or slaughter,” Mr Macdonald said.

NEW DECLARATIONS (moved into drought)

Central North LHPA	Part of District moved from marginal to drought (Whole of District now drought)
Central West LHPA	Part of District moved from marginal to drought
North West LHPA	Part of District moved from marginal to drought

REVOCATIONS (moved out of drought)

Hume LHPA	Part of District moved from drought to marginal
Tablelands LHPA	Part of District moved from drought to marginal

ALTERATIONS (moved between marginal and satisfactory)

DECLINED (satisfactory to marginal)

Cumberland LHPA	Whole District moved from satisfactory to marginal
Darling LHPA	Part of District moved from satisfactory to marginal
Tablelands LHPA	Part of District moved from satisfactory to marginal

IMPROVED (marginal to satisfactory)

Tablelands LHPA	Part of District moved from marginal to satisfactory
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