

MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Tony Kelly MLC
Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Lands
Leader of the House in the Legislative Council
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council**



Monday, 23 November, 2009

Relentless drought tightens its grip

Official drought figures released by Minister for Primary Industries, Tony Kelly, today reveal just 1.9% of NSW is considered satisfactory.

The area of NSW battling drought is 73.6%, a marked increase from last month (up from 67.7%).

The area of NSW which is considered satisfactory has decreased to 1.9% of the State (down from 4.9%), while 24.5% of NSW is considered marginal (down from 27.4%).

“These figures illustrate the tough conditions in country NSW with almost the entire State now feeling the effects of this relentless dry,” Minister Kelly said.

“Not even the coastal areas of NSW have escaped, they are either drought declared or suffering marginal conditions.

“In fact, the latest drought map of our State only shows one satisfactory patch, which is in the Central Tablelands.

“As summer approaches, we can expect warmer temperatures and hot winds - this combined with the forecast of below average rainfall will see pasture growth and water supplies decline.”

Minister Kelly said that Industry & Investment NSW had estimated that the winter crop harvest was now more than 75% complete and dry conditions had taken a devastating toll.

“Hot, dry weather prompted an early harvest this year and in most parts yields have been disappointing due to a combination of moisture stress and frost damage,” he said.

“Farmers planted 3.2 million hectares of wheat this year, however just 2.6 million hectares is expected to be harvested.

“The NSW cotton crop is forecast at 100,000 hectares, which is still less than 50% of normal plantings.

“While livestock condition and the availability of stock water is reasonable, many areas will face stock water issues over summer if we don’t receive decent rain soon.

“In terms of water supplies, the total storage level is 31% of total storage capacity, up 3.2% on last month and 0.6% lower than the same time last year.”

NEW DECLARATIONS (moved into drought)

Hume LHPA	Part of District moved from marginal to drought
New England 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)

Nil

ALTERATIONS (moved between marginal and satisfactory)

DECLINED (satisfactory to marginal)

New England LHPA	Part of District moved from satisfactory to marginal
North Coast LHPA	Whole District moved from satisfactory to marginal

IMPROVED (marginal to satisfactory)

Tablelands LHPA	Part of District moved from marginal to satisfactory
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More information

[NSW drought maps](#)
