

Water Situation Report

15th July 2021

HEADLINE

Helmsdale, Thurso and Naver have been raised to Moderate Scarcity.

Orkney remains at Moderate Scarcity.

Cree and Wick have been raised to Alert.

Early Warning is in place across the majority of the country and this now includes the Kintyre area.

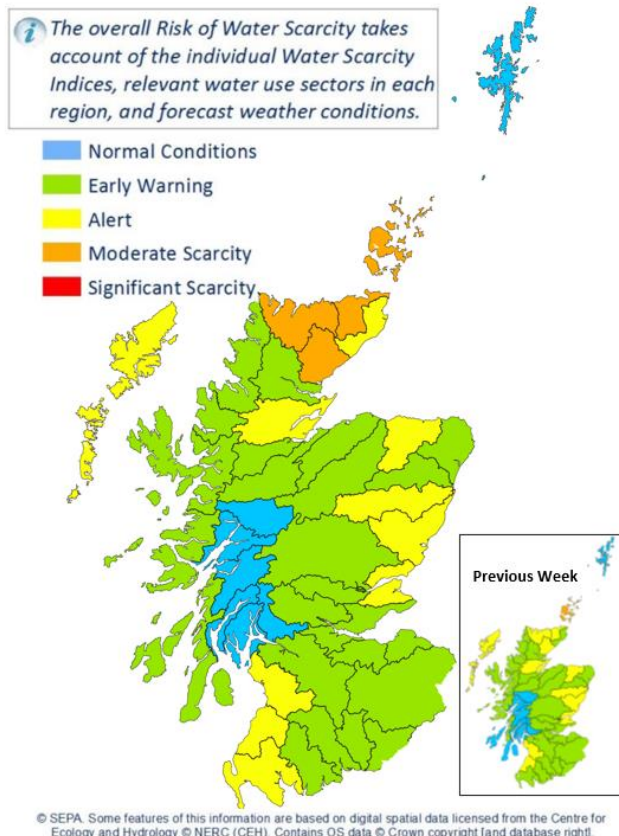
Situation Summary

Due to recent rainfall in parts of the country, locally some river levels and ground conditions show temporary improvement. In the catchments of the Tay and the Spey recovery has occurred in the upper reaches but there remains a soil moisture deficit in the lower reaches.

Helmsdale, Thurso and the Naver areas have been raised to Moderate Scarcity due to persistent dry ground conditions and low surface water flows.

Cree and Wick have been raised to Alert level due to a combination of dry soil moisture and low surface water flows.

Very little - if any - rainfall is forecast for Scotland over the next week, therefore much of the country remains at Early Warning.



Groundwater levels are falling as normal for the summer but so far remain within the normal range for the time of year.

SEPA is monitoring the situation closely and coordinating steps to manage water resources in line with Scotland's National Water Scarcity Plan which is available on SEPA's website: <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/water-scarcity/>.

Advice for water users

Water sources used for irrigating farm land are at risk of becoming limited in the Alert and Moderate areas. We are urging farmers in these areas, especially if taking water from burns and small rivers, to:

- Only irrigate when, and only as much as, absolutely necessary.
- Make sure irrigation equipment isn't leaking.
- Try to irrigate at night to reduce evaporation losses.
- Explore how you and your neighbours in the same river catchment could avoid irrigating at the same time.
- Consider whether you could switch to using groundwater rather than river water if conditions worsen. If you would need a new borehole to do this, your local SEPA office will be able to help and advise.

Managers of golf courses are asked to do the same.

For the most up to date advice please see: [Advice for abstractors](#).

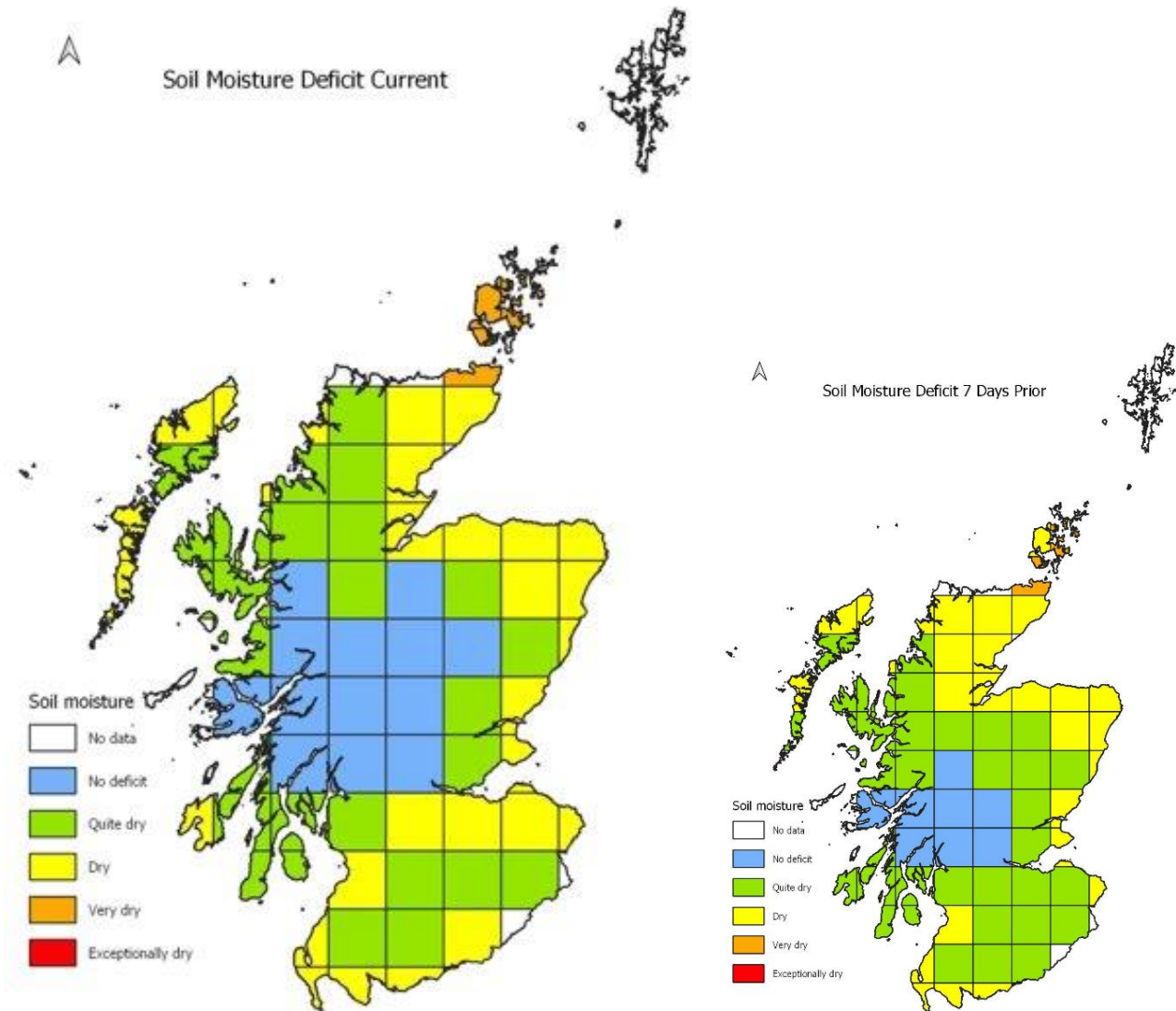
Water abstractors with concerns about meeting licence conditions or wishing to discuss contingency measures should get in touch at the following e-mail address [water scarcity mailbox](#).

Weather forecast (14/07/21)

High pressure building in from the Atlantic will keep Scotland mostly dry for the rest of the week and over the weekend.

The longer-term forecast suggests that, for the UK, there is an increased likelihood of hot, dry weather compared to normal, with a greater chance of impacts from hot weather than normal.

Further details are available in the following figures:



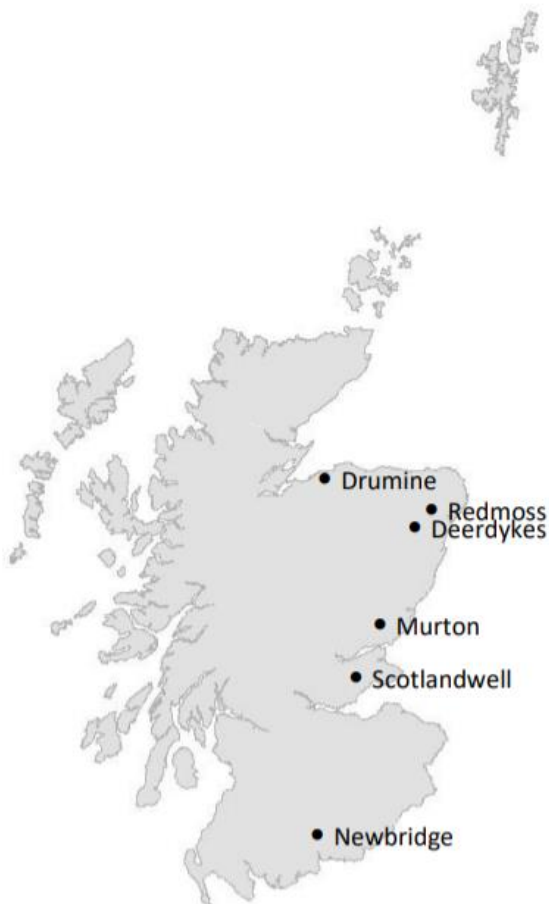
These maps depict the current latest Soil Moisture Deficit (13th July 2021) and 7 days prior for comparison. Based on the MORECS data obtained from the Met Office.



Natural water storage situation

In each river catchment there is some degree of water storage, which can maintain river flows even when it is not raining. This natural water storage is mainly held in lochs and groundwater. When natural storage has been depleted it will take a lot of rainfall for levels to recover.

12th July 2021

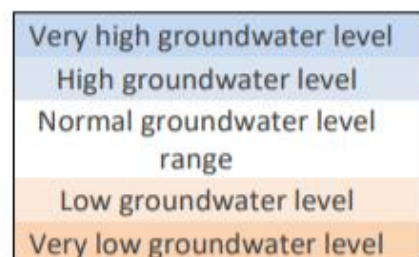


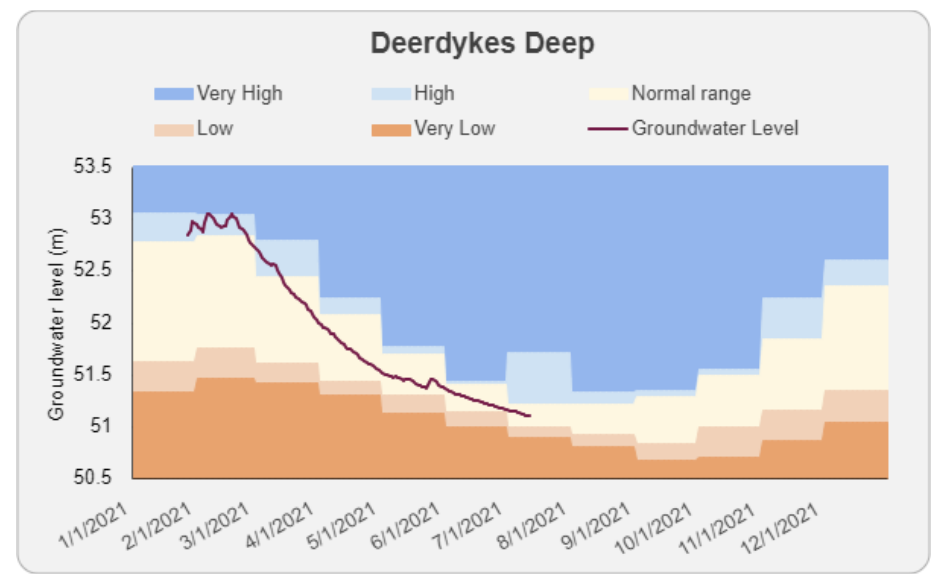
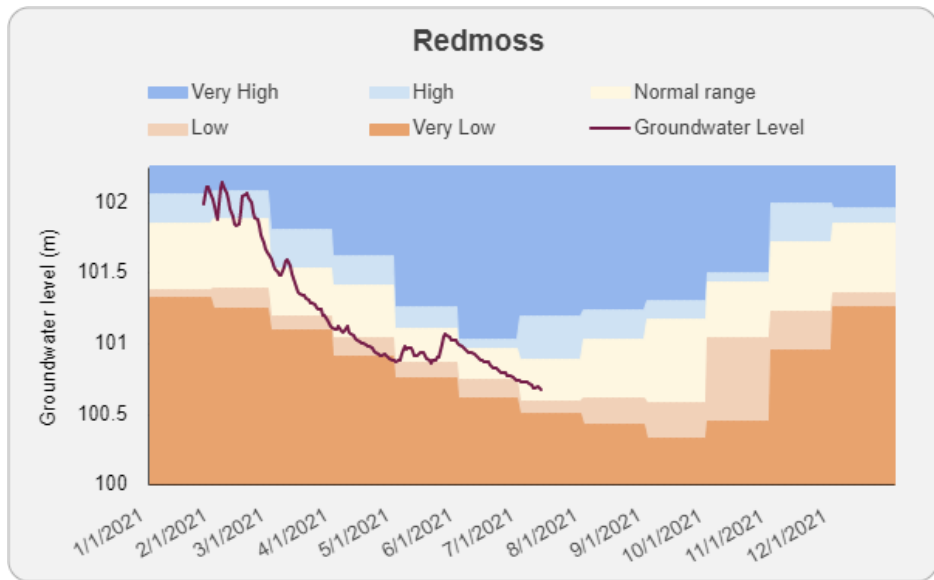
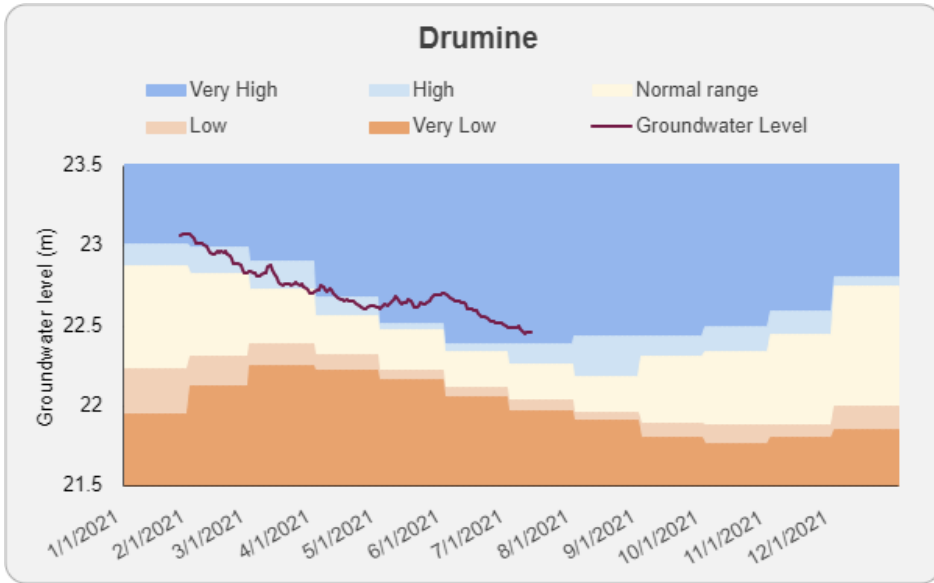
Groundwater levels are still all within the normal or high range for the time of year.

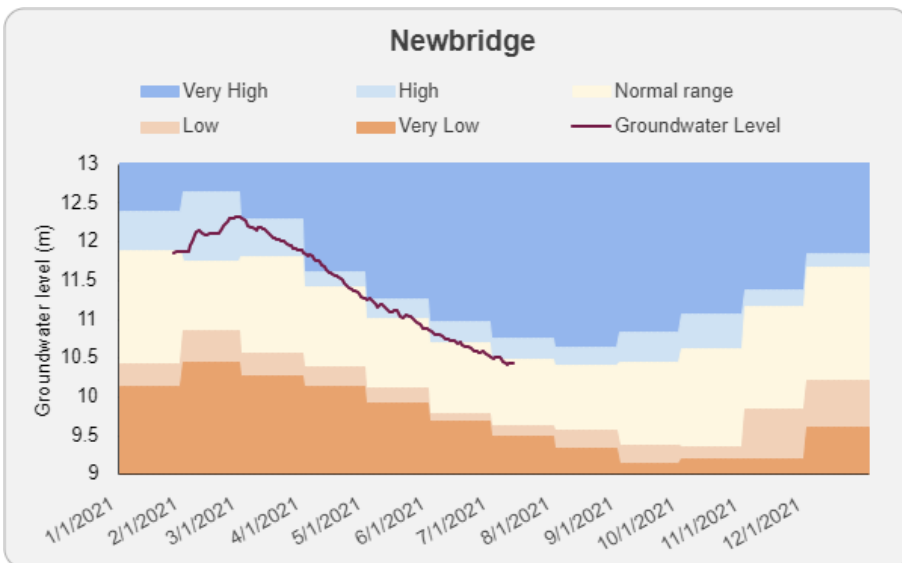
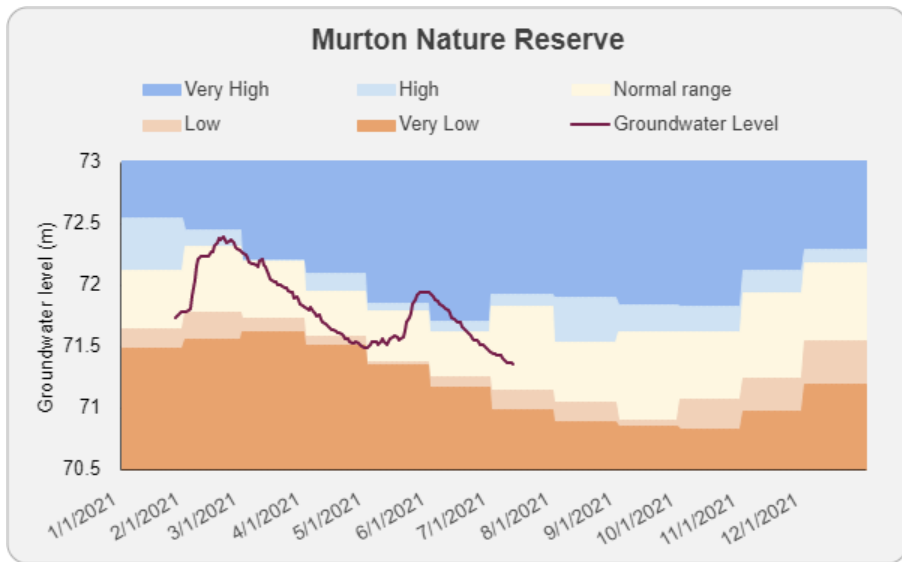
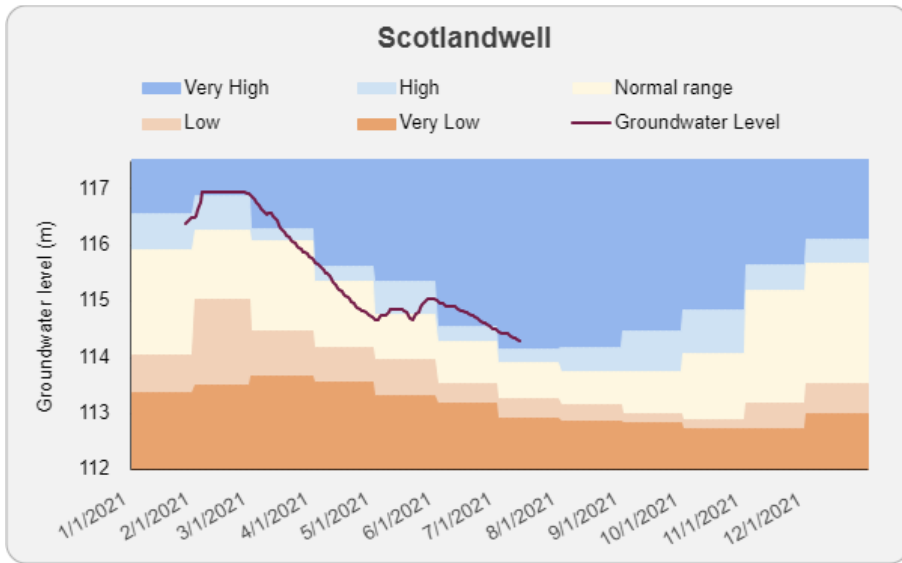
We have up to date data for 11 groundwater level monitoring sites, spread across the east and south-west of the country, giving a good picture of the current situation .

Loch level data is not currently available.

The following charts show the trend in groundwater level (GWL) since start of the year at selected monitoring sites (see map above). The black line shows the recorded groundwater level. This is plotted over level trend bands, which are based on the long-term record of mean monthly level values.







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<http://contactscotland-bsl.org/>

www.sepa.org.uk

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