

# Water Scarcity Report

05<sup>th</sup> August 2021



## HEADLINE

**The Helmsdale and Naver catchments have improved from Significant to Moderate Scarcity.**

**Significant and Moderate Scarcity remains in place in many areas of northern and south-western Scotland.**

**The Firth of Forth, Almond and Tyne (Lothian) catchments have been raised to Alert.**

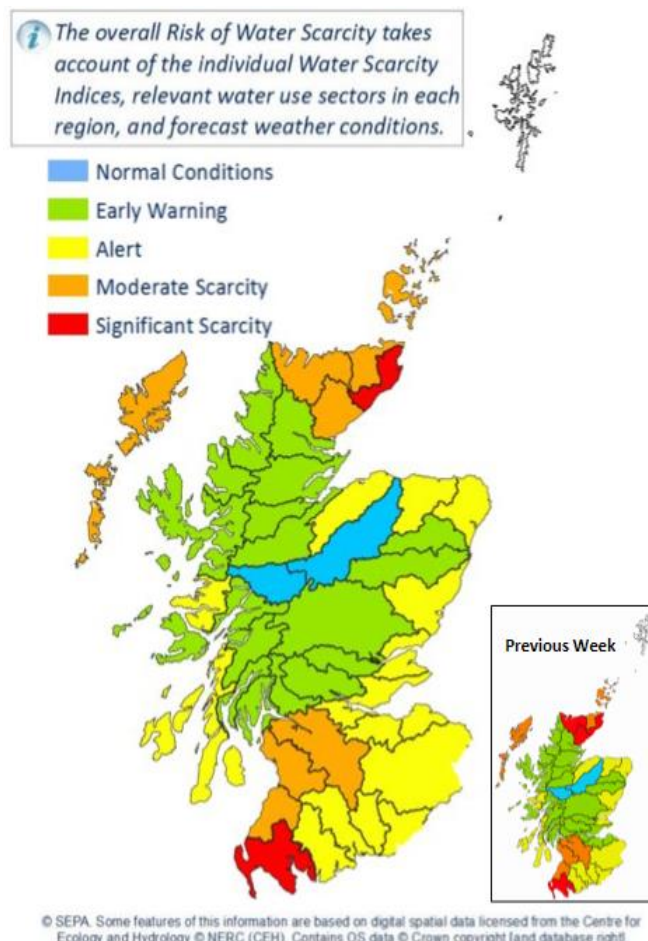
**Many areas in the south and east of Scotland remain at Alert.**

## Situation Summary

Due to very dry ground conditions in the Firth of Forth, Almond and Tyne (Lothian) catchments, the water scarcity level in these areas has been raised to Alert. Recent rainfall has not been sufficient to offset the soil moisture deficit in these areas.

River flows in the Helmsdale and Naver areas have improved and therefore this catchment has been downgraded to Moderate Scarcity.

Recent rainfall has not been sufficient to markedly improve conditions, and so Significant and Moderate Scarcity levels



remain in place for many areas in the north and southwest of Scotland, as well as Orkney and the Western Isles. Much of the east and northeast of the country is now at Alert.

Over the coming week, some surface water recovery is likely in areas where rainfall is forecast. However, a significant and sustained period of rainfall is needed to alleviate the very dry ground conditions and low river flows that persist across much of the country.

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/>.

You can help us by reporting any evidence you see of water scarcity. For details of information that would be useful to us and where to send it see: [Water scarcity in your area | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#).

## Advice for water users

Water sources used for irrigating farmland 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

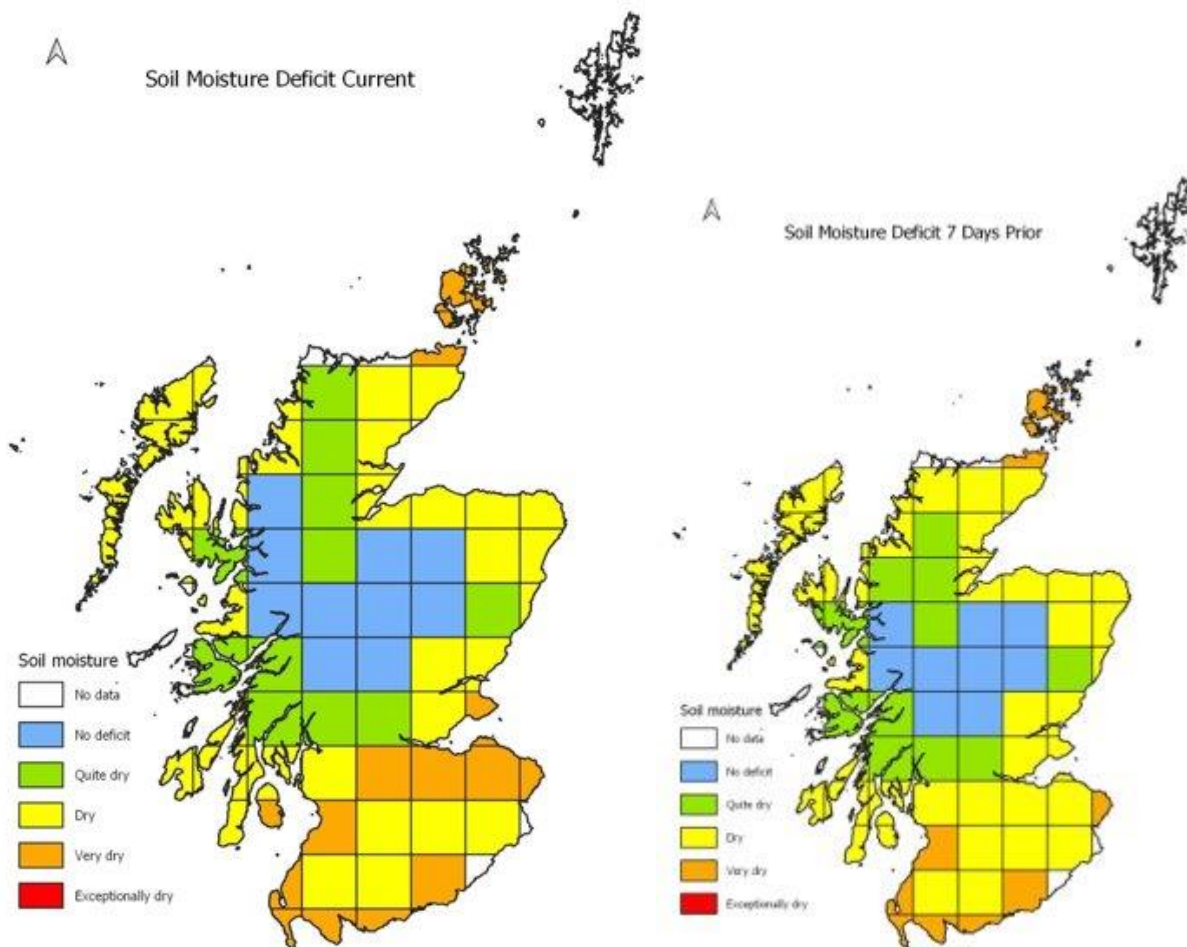
[WaterScarcity@sepa.org.uk](mailto:WaterScarcity@sepa.org.uk)

### **Weather forecast (04/08/21)**

Active showery pattern dominating the country through the coming days, initially in a southerly flow, then from Friday becoming slow moving as the centre of an area of low pressure stalls across central areas of Scotland. Thunderstorms will appear most days, chiefly but not exclusively during the afternoons, also the showers will merge into longer periods of rain at times, particularly during Friday and Saturday.

For the start of August changeable conditions continuing to dominate, with a mixture of sunny and dry periods, showery periods and the chance of longer spells of rain. For the second half of August, more settled conditions are likely; this means drier conditions may become more prevalent, although there is still the risk of showers or thunderstorms at times.

Further details are available in the following figures:



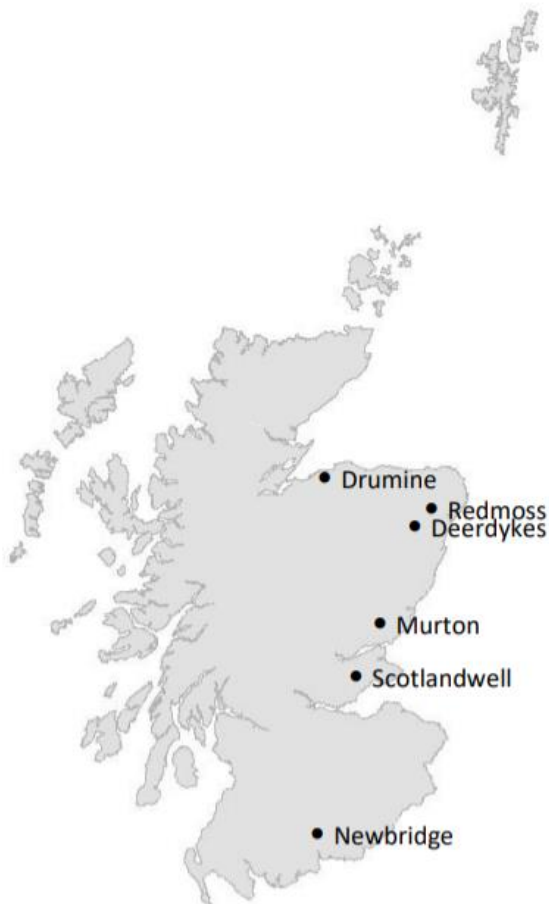
These maps depict the current latest Soil Moisture Deficit (03<sup>rd</sup> August 2021) and 7 days prior for comparison. Based on the MORECS data obtained from the Met Office.



### 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.

3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

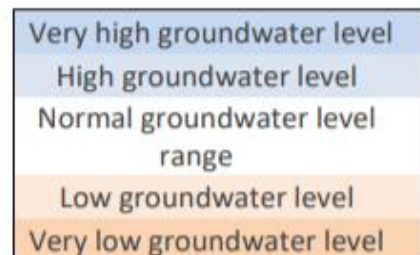


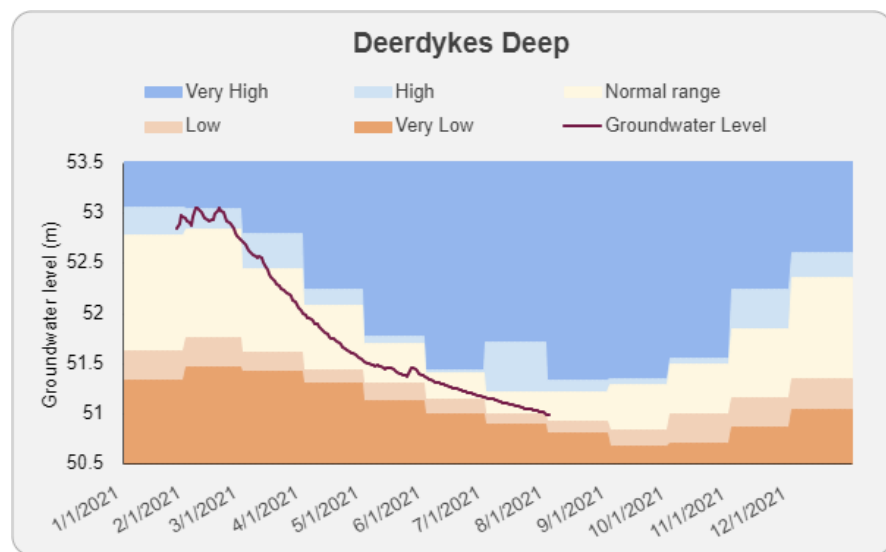
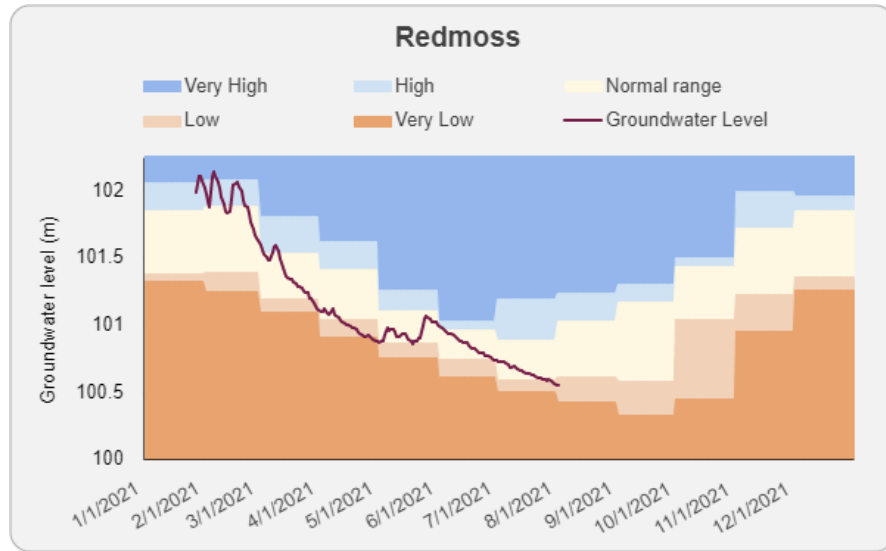
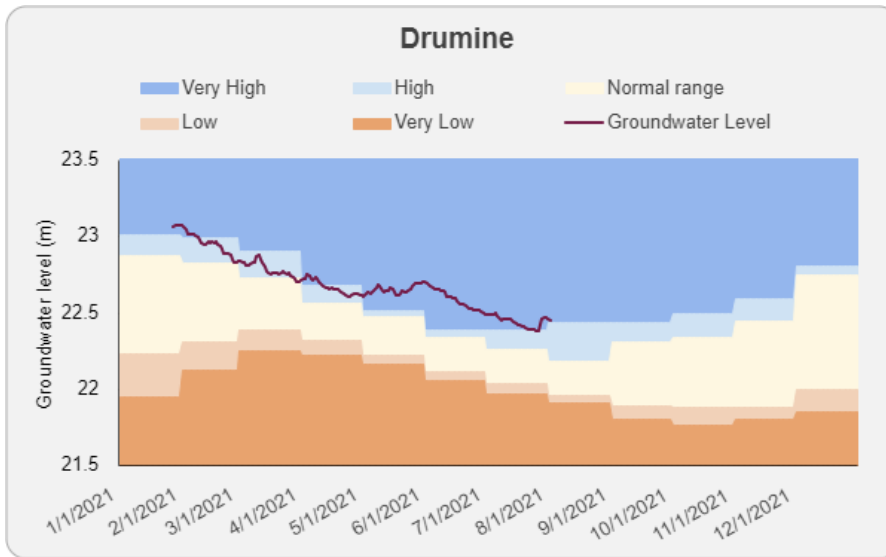
Groundwater levels are falling but remain within the normal or high range for the time of year. At Redmoss in the northeast, groundwater levels have dropped into low for this time of the year.

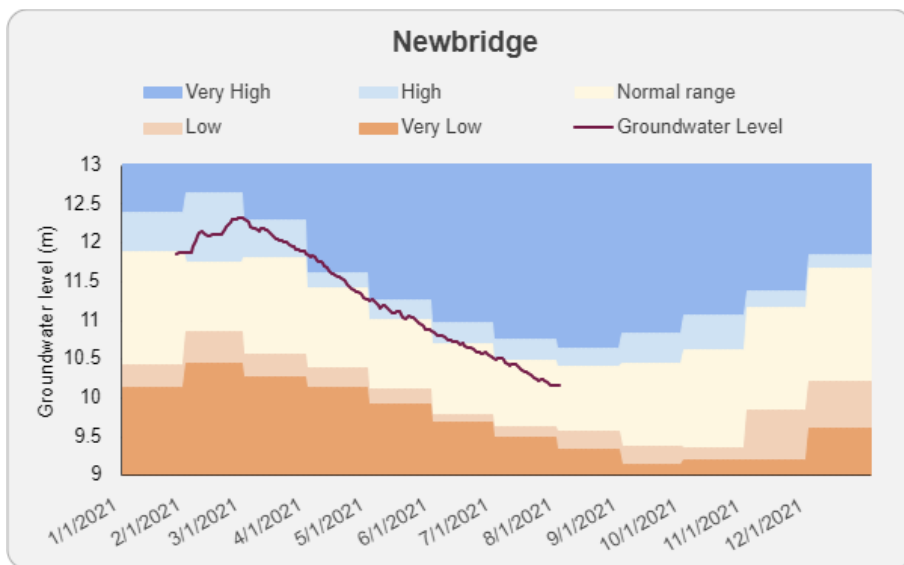
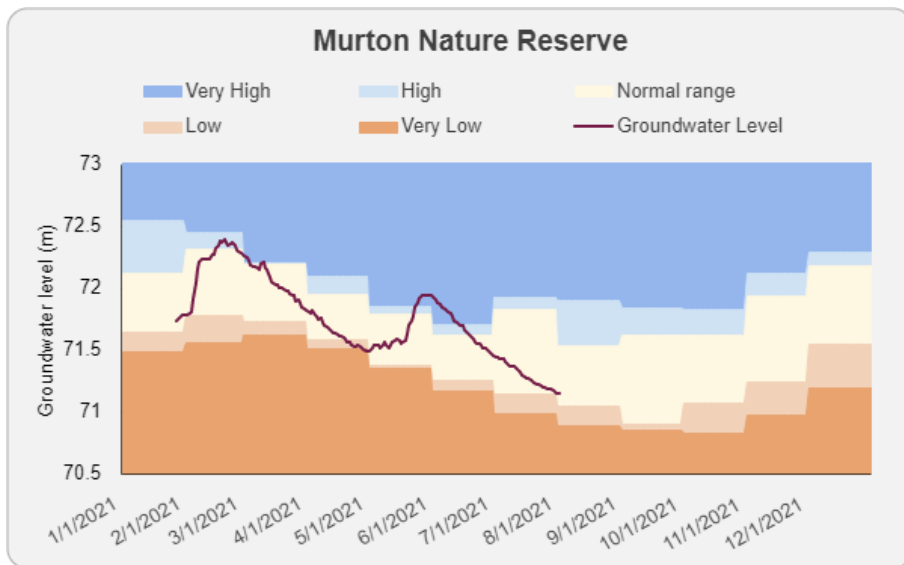
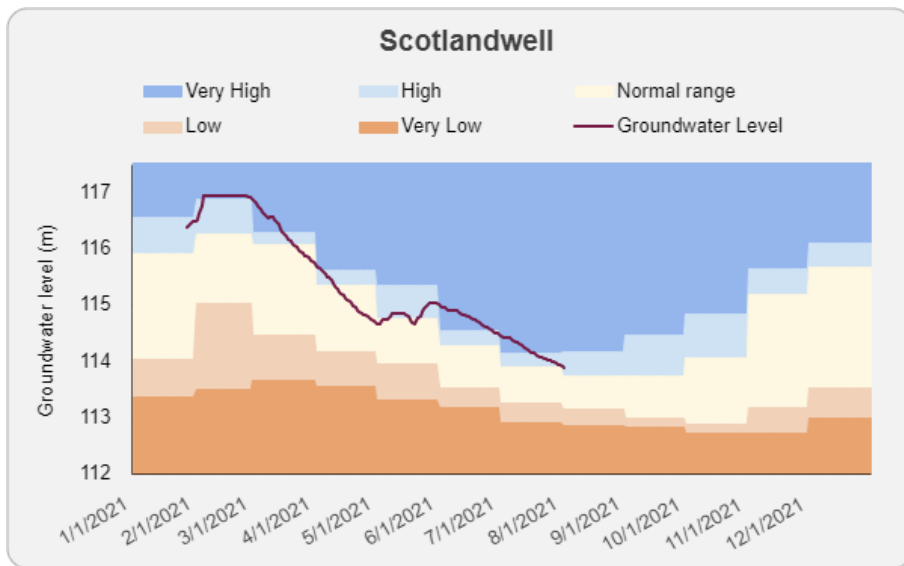
We have up to date data for 11 groundwater level monitoring sites, spread across the east and south-west of the country, giving a good picture of the current situation.

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.







For information on accessing this document in an alternative format or language please either contact SEPA by telephone on 03000 99 66 99 or by email to [equalities@sepa.org.uk](mailto:equalities@sepa.org.uk)

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

[www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk)

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