

HEADLINE

An Early Warning is in place for a risk of water scarcity in the Western Isles, Northwest, North and East of the country.

Situation summary

Over the winter SEPA has been reporting on the risk of water scarcity for the year ahead due to the relatively dry winter. Now we have entered the spring/summer season, an Early Warning category has been set in the Northwest, Northeast and East of the country.

Drying ground conditions across the country are likely to lead to increased water usage for irrigation. Groundwater levels are very low for this time of year at most monitoring locations along the east coast, indicating the potential for more limited water resources ahead.

River levels are very low in the north west highlands and western isles.

SEPA are monitoring the situation closely and coordinating steps to manage water resources in line with [Scotland's National Water Scarcity Plan](#).

General and sector specific advice for abstractors is available: [Advice for abstractors](#).

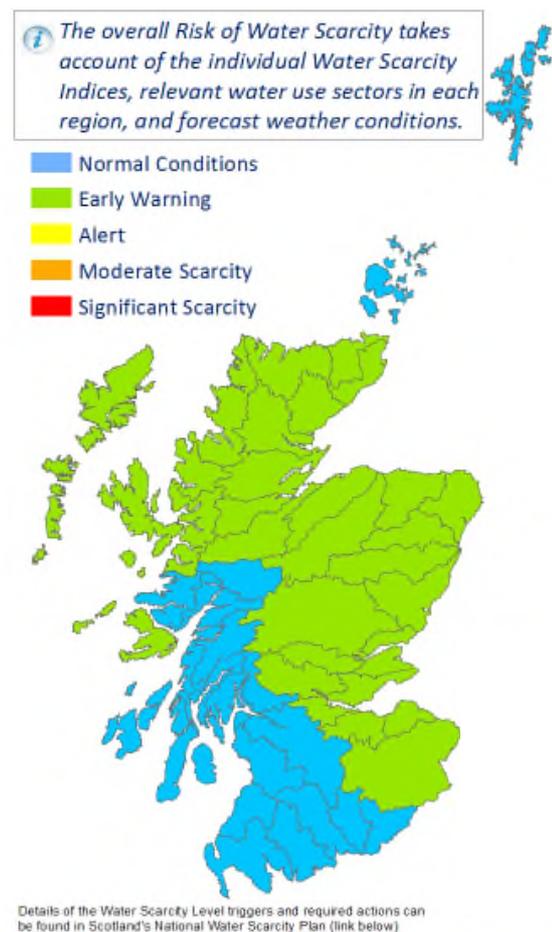
Water abstractors with concerns about meeting licence conditions or wishing to discuss contingency measures should [contact their local SEPA office](#).

Forecast (Met Office 02/05/2019)

There is no major rainfall forecast for the next five days.

The longer-term outlook is uncertain. For May-June-July as a whole, the chances of above- and below-average precipitation across the UK are similar. On balance, drier-than-average conditions are marginally more likely. For further details on the seasonal forecast see the latest 3-month outlook summaries at <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/services/government/contingency-planners/index>.

Figure 1: Current Water Scarcity Level



Further details on the current situation are provided in the following figures:

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Precipitation Indices

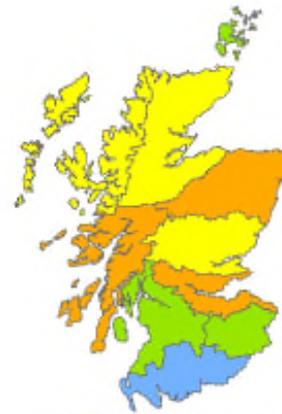
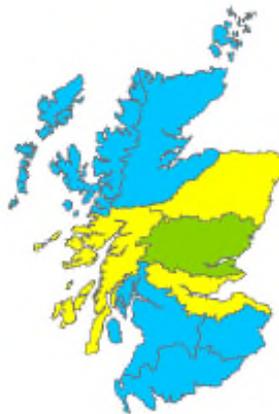
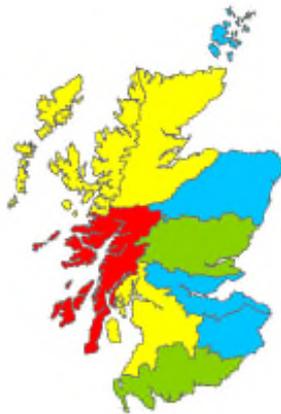
Rainfall over the
past 30 days



Rainfall over the
past 90 days



Rainfall over the
past 180 days

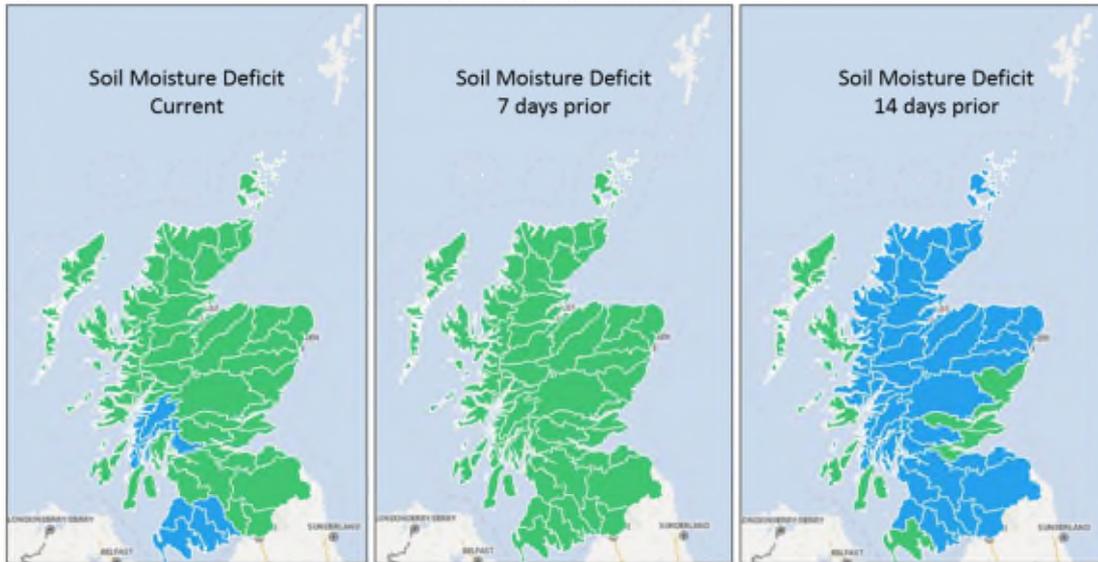


These maps show how low current rainfall totals are for this time of year, relative to historical averages, over the past 30, 90 and 180 days.

-  Normal conditions
-  Quite dry
-  Dry
-  Very dry
-  Exceptionally dry

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Soil Moisture Deficit



*These maps depict the latest Soil Moisture Deficit (SMD) data * and the SMD 7 and 14 days prior.*

**MORECS data obtained from MetOffice*

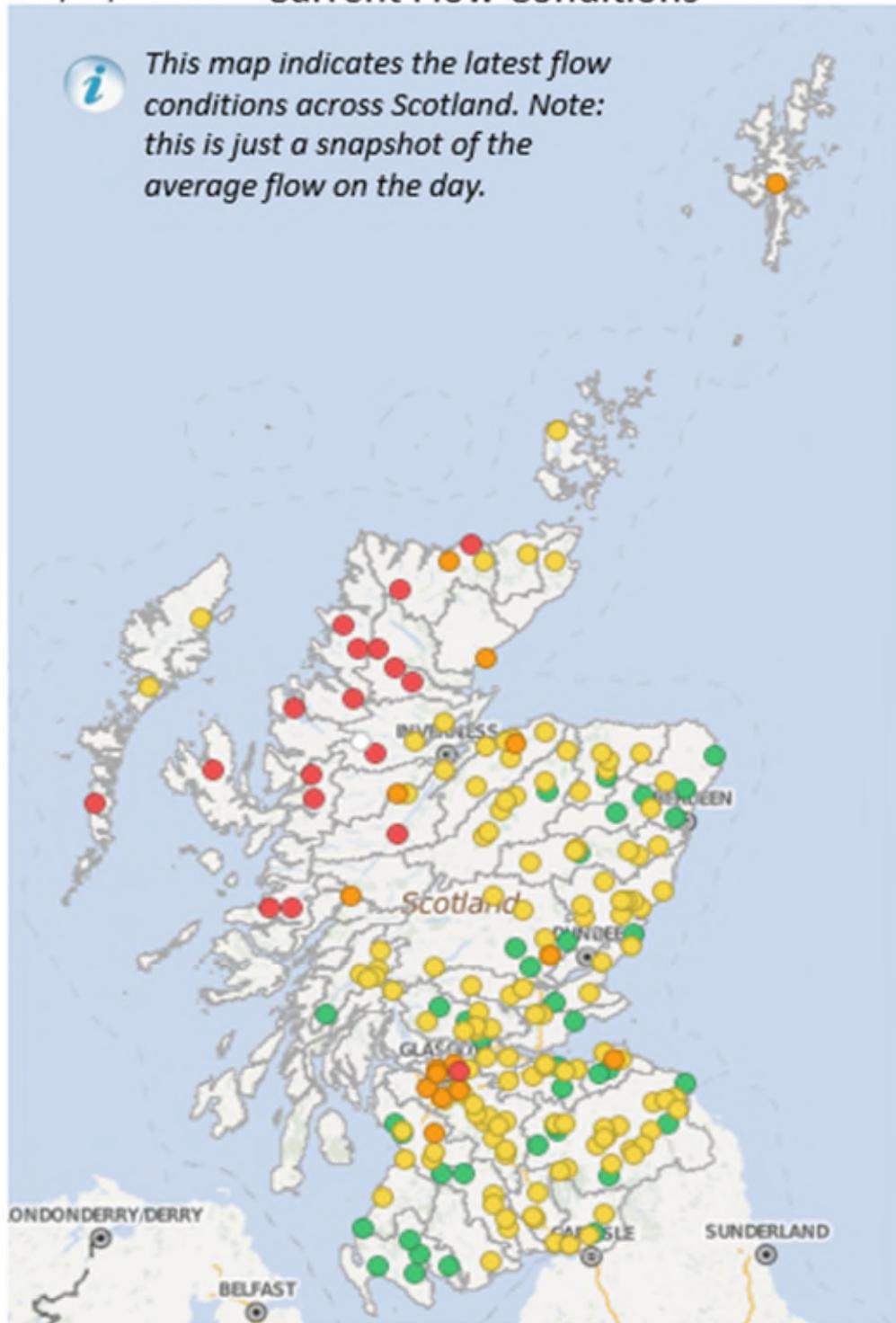


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Current Flow Conditions



This map indicates the latest flow conditions across Scotland. Note: this is just a snapshot of the average flow on the day.



- No data
- Very High
- High
- Normal
- Quite Low
- Low
- Very Low
- Extremely Low



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.

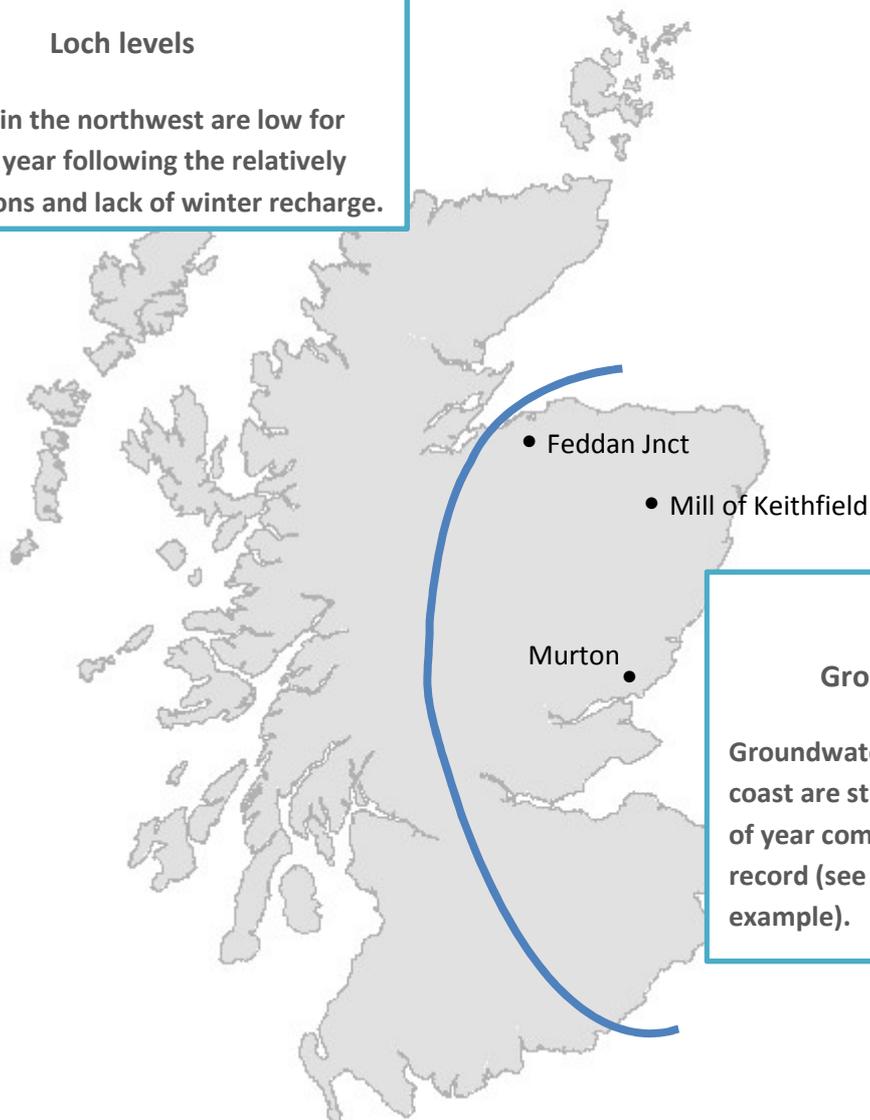
Please note that the map below does not reflect conditions in managed water supply reservoirs.



Northwest

Loch levels

Loch levels in the northwest are low for the time of year following the relatively dry conditions and lack of winter recharge.



East

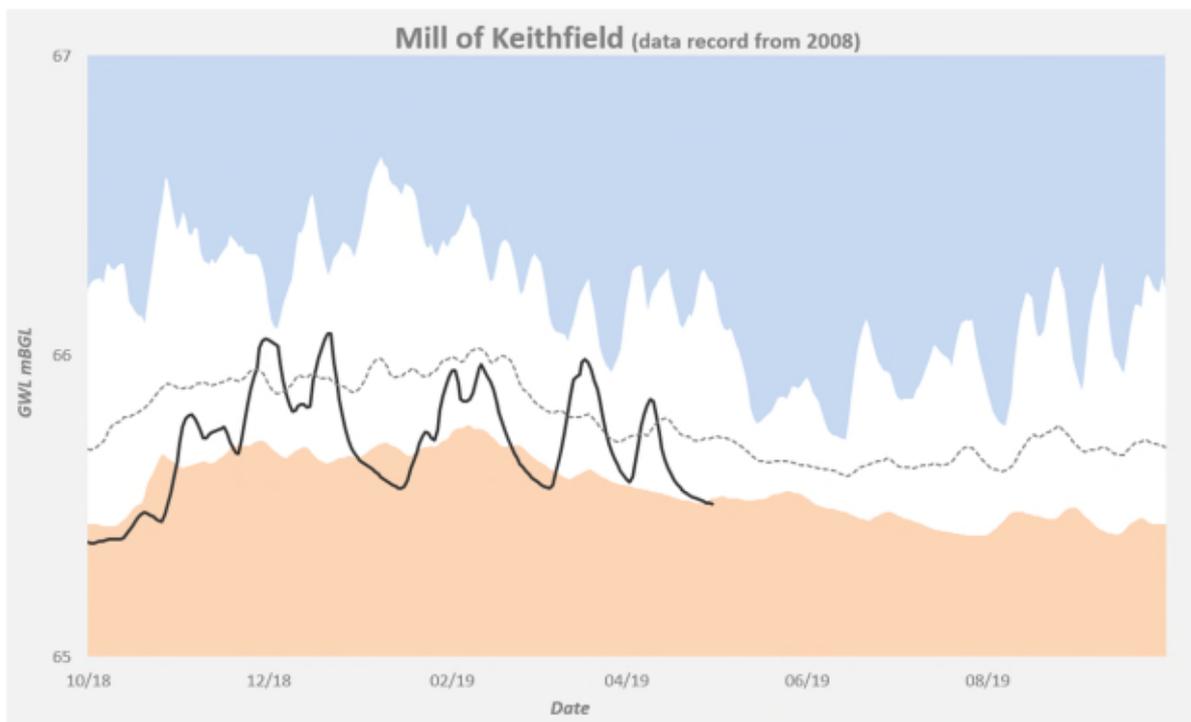
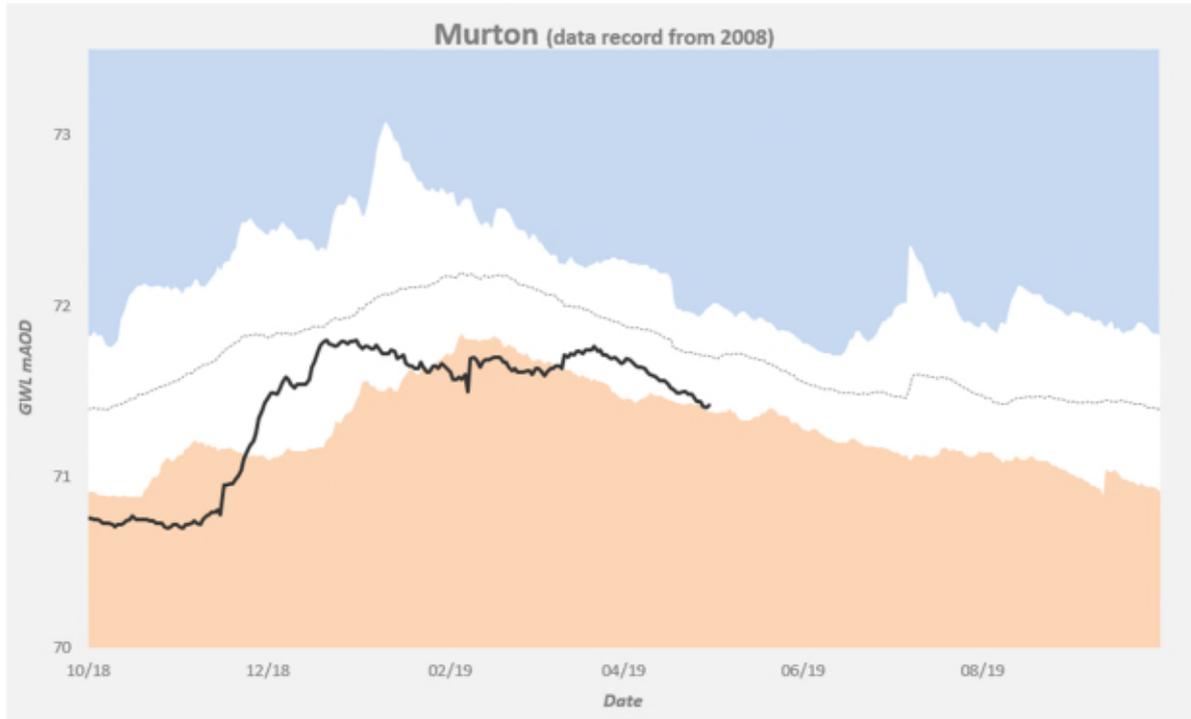
Groundwater levels

Groundwater levels along the East coast are still very low for the time of year compared to the long-term record (see the graphs below as an example).



These charts show the trend in groundwater and loch levels since autumn 2018 at selected monitoring sites in the northeast (see map above). The white zone represents the observed range in the long-term record. The black line shows the actual groundwater level and the dashed line is the long-term average trend.

Record high groundwater level
Normal groundwater level range
Record low groundwater level



Feddan Junction (data record from 2008)

