

# THE SPRING FORECAST

## FOR CENTRAL VICTORIA 2008



As predicted by Kevin Long ph. 5441 2394 updated 2-9-2008

### **The developments up to now.**

Last Spring we observed the development of a weak La Nina cycle. It peaked during mid-Summer, yielded good summer thunderstorms and delivered floods to Queensland.

During Autumn we witnessed the decline of that system.

Recently El Nino forces have been building and "The Chinese Effect" is dominating again, just like last Spring. The first eight months of this year delivered about 65% of average rain, yet only 2% of average inflows were yielded to the Central Victorian reservoirs.

In Bendigo, July and August recorded above-average rainfall (approximately 64mm each month).

10<sup>th</sup> August saw the highest daily rainfall this winter (20mm).

Mid-August saw the high pressure cells intensify and move to a more southerly path forcing the low-pressure systems further south. These abnormally high-pressure cells have been common and slow moving.

The rivers in Central Victoria flowed only for about ten days this winter (10<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> August).

Topsoil moisture has been drying out since 11<sup>th</sup> August.

### **Now for the forecast ...**

Below average sea temperatures are dominant in most areas around Australia. This is one of the aspects of the developing El Nino system.

Small areas of above-average sea surface temperature have developed stretching from Perth to the southern tip of India. This will be the main enhancing force to lift our late Spring rains.

Sustained below-average ocean temperatures between the southern tip of Africa and New Zealand will weaken the southern low-pressure systems and cold fronts again this spring. Consequently, little rain will be produced north of the Great Dividing Range, particularly in the Coliban and Campaspe Catchments.

The ocean temperatures west of Broome still lack the above-average temperature required to develop the strong jet-stream moisture flows needed to enhance the Spring rainfall.

(Coliban Water, "take note"). It now appears we will remain in the "drought zone" until at least mid-2009.

The next MJO 5 system is due to pass through during the mid-September.

The passing of this system represents a chance for some early Spring rain - maybe 10mm if we are lucky!

The slow-moving intense High Pressure Cells predispose us to a higher risk of frost damage this Spring.

During this November and December I expect the thunderstorms to yield less than average rain.

Once again, dry conditions will continue this Spring with periods of little rain spanning many weeks.

Again there will be less than average water, grain and hay harvested this season.

**The inflows for Eppalock and the Coliban Reservoirs are likely to be minimal from this point on and most likely less next year. So far only 4,000ML combined total. (Past long-term average 1960-2000 was 222,000ML.)**

It appears my rainfall prediction presented in the Winter Forecast remains on track ...

"60% average rain for Central Victoria for this year" will be pretty close to it.

**Bore water will remain liquid gold for this season, the only salvation for many of us.**

**The rest of us will have to make do with a reduced amount of water.**

**I hope this information will help you plan for the season ahead.**

Regards, Kevin Long

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