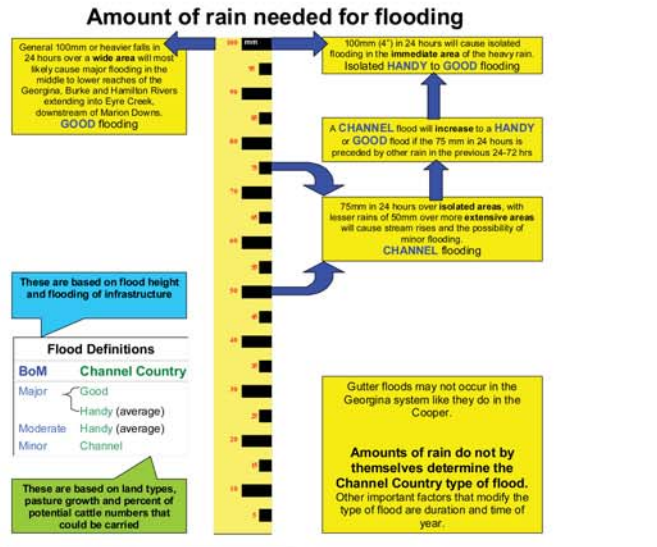


# Georgina River Catchment Flood Rules of Thumb

## How to use this guide:

This guide has used the best information available at present. It is intended to help you assess what type of flood is likely to occur in your area and indicate what amount of feed you might expect. You may wish to record your own flooding guides on the map. You can add more value to this guide by participating in an MLA EDGENetwork Grazing Land Management (GLM) training package. GLM training helps you identify land types and flood zones and to develop a grazing management plan for your property

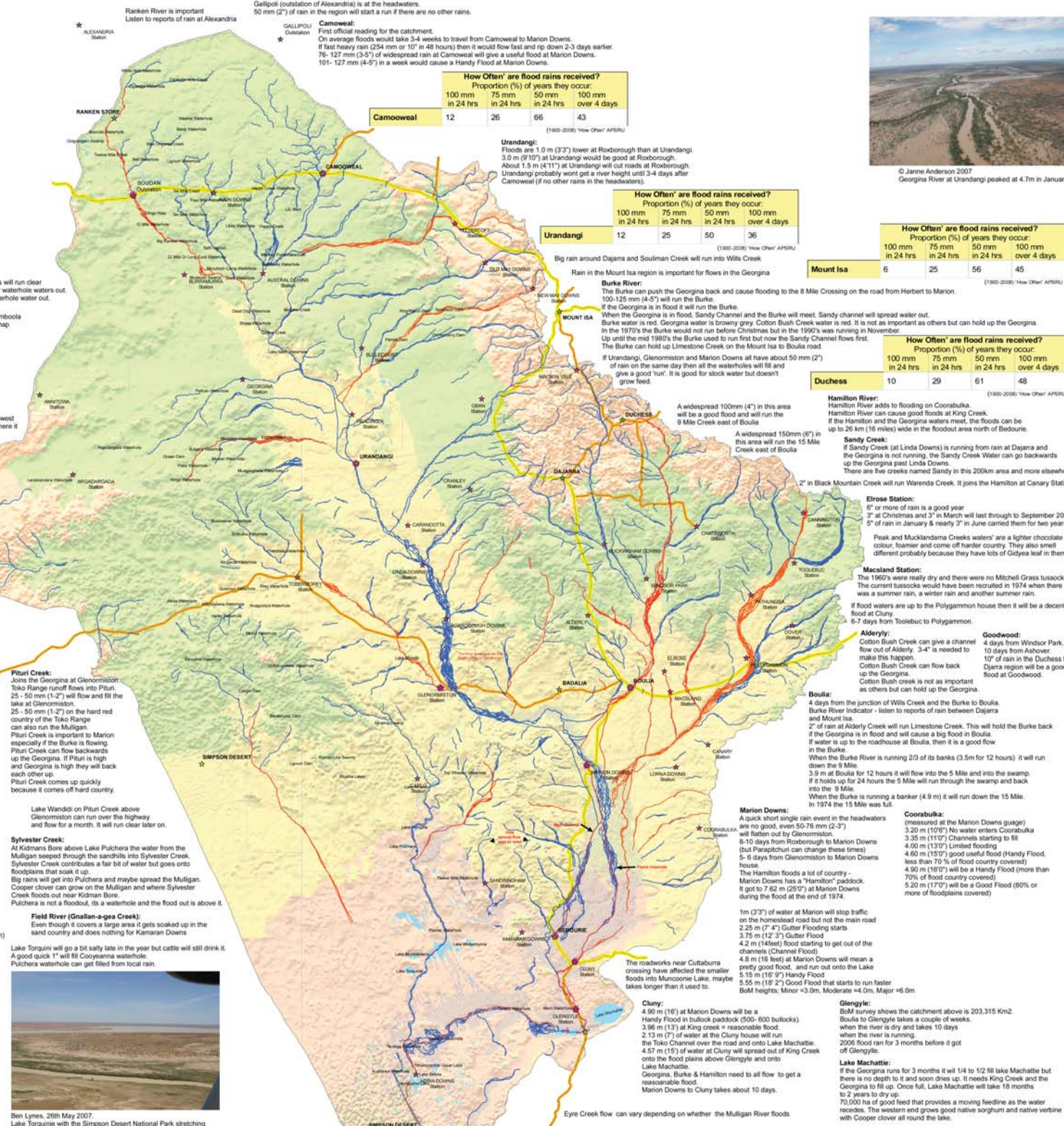
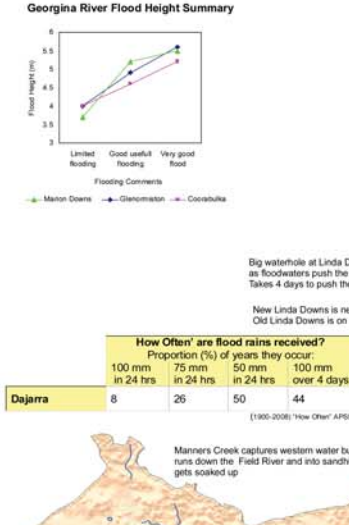


### Channel Country Flood descriptions

Flood type	Description	Land types flooded	Flood extent	Pasture growth which supports:
Good	Good floods are similar to handy floods, but cover a much higher proportion of the floodplain (75% or more) and grow more feed per area than a handy flood.	C1, C3, C2	Flooded across most of floodplains 80-100% flooded	85 - 100% of potential cattle numbers
Handy (or useful)	Handy floods occur when the water escapes from the gutters, connecting up to form the large sheets of water. It can cover up to 50% of the floodplain. There is a large pasture response from these floods but yield and area is less than a good flood.	C1, C3, C2	Pushing out of gutters across floodplain and into swamps and depressions 50-60% flooded	45 - 85% of potential cattle numbers
Gutter	Gutter floods occur when the water escapes from the main channels and spills over to the many small waterways (gullies) that flow from the main channels. These floods promote growth of a good body of herbage and grasses along the gutters.	C1, C3	Pushing out of channels into gutters 5-15% flooded	5 - 25% of potential cattle numbers
Channel	The major channels run and water just spills over banks but does not escape to the surrounding floodplain. Limited feed grows along margins of major channels.	C1	Major channels breaking banks <5% flooded	5 - 15% of potential cattle numbers

### Estimated Summer Flood Pasture Growth in the Channel Country Floodplains.

Flood type	Frequently flooded plains (C1) (kg DM/ha of useful feed)	Swamps and depressions (C2) (kg DM/ha of useful feed)	Occasionally flooded plains (C2) (kg DM/ha of useful feed)
Good	1200-2500	4500-8000	1500-3500
Handy	750-1500	3500-6500	100-250
Gutter	400-1200	2000-4500	No growth
Channel	250-750	1200-2500	No growth



The Georgina is generally faster and narrower than the Diamantina. It is somewhat more influenced by tropical summer rains than the Diamantina and Georgina.

Expect a flood once every 3 years and a big one every 5 years.

For a good flood there needs to be good generalised rain over the whole upper catchment.

Little floods make big floods. The little floods fill up the waterholes, wet the catchment and allow the next one to go further or spread out more.

Local rain is important to pre-wet the ground before the flood waters arrive. The soil is soaked and the waterholes and swamps are filled, thus allowing the floods to spread further.

Rain before a flood doesn't really speed up the flow but stops it flattening as many fences.

A handy flood is made better if there is local rain after the flood: a two more feed will grow.

Where floods occur in succession the second flood will travel more slowly due to vegetation grown from the first flood. The second flood will often flow clearer, because of the vegetation filtering more sediment out and slowing water flow.

You need the water to hold up at a decent (gauge) height for a good flood. This helps water more country and grow more feed.

A flood in March is ideal, it will grow more feed (grass and forbs) when it is warm.

2000 floods killed a lot of feed and there were large fish kills. There was little follow up rain and therefore low moisture so the water was clear and heated which causes fish kills.

**Winter rains:**  
Winter rain in the river doesn't grow much but will grow herbage in the outside country.  
The river country will green up when it warms up later.  
A winter flood doesn't grow as much feed as a summer flood, but the feed lasts a lot longer.

**Livestock:**  
After a winter flood cattle are fat but have soft hides and hooves; you need to put them on the outside country to harden them up before selling (bullocks).

When the River is up, cattle won't graze in the waters because the flies and sandflies are too savage.  
As the waters recede cattle move into the waters to feed. If cattle have a diet of only waterweeds they can sometimes lose their hair.  
Cattle won't normally feed in just flooded areas, they will still feed in the sand dunes.  
When waterholes go clear and smelly, the cattle go off them. If the cattle have to stay on them they get black scours from the salty water.  
Cattle on waterholes that go salty (and smelly maybe) won't get the scours if they were put on before it went salty as they get used to it as it changes slowly. Cattle brought in after the waterholes have gone salty will get the scours and die.  
When fresh water runs out of Kalkidawary it is salty. Horses will dig at the banks to get fresh water.

In drought times Hereford cattle will go up to 15km out into the Simpson Desert and fill up on water only every third day and will still hold reasonable condition.

As the Georgina is not so wide it is not so important to get cattle out before a flood, there is enough high country for them to find it for themselves at Roxborough.  
Marion has to shift cattle in floods.  
Glenormiston does not have to shift cattle.

The transitional limestone belt between the flood country and the hill country is where the most Georgina glycyca grows. This area seems to have more poison.  
Georgina glycyca grows mostly on the eastern side of the River.

