



Wardell

May 2026

Wardell Gauge (Richmond River)

Height at gauge	Expected consequence
7.65m	Probable Maximum Flood (PMF)*
4.57m	Peak Height - March 2022 Extensive flooding impacting properties around Wardell. All access roads cut by floodwaters.
3.40m	MAJOR FLOOD HEIGHT Floodwaters enter properties in South Ballina, Pimlico, Empire Vale and East Wardell.
2.82m	Cabbage Tree Island isolated as floodwaters cut Back Channel Rd.
2.70m	MODERATE FLOOD HEIGHT Peak Height - April 2022
2.40m	Isolation occurs at South Ballina, Keith Hall, Empire Vale and Patches Beach with road closures expected.
2.20m	MINOR FLOOD HEIGHT

*Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) is the largest flood that could conceivably be expected to occur at a particular location, usually estimated from probable maximum rainfall. The PMF defines the maximum extent of flood prone land, that is, the floodplain.

History of Flooding

Wardell sits on the Richmond River and can experience riverine flooding, overland flow, flash flooding and tidal influences.

In the past floodwaters took several days to travel down the Richmond River from Lismore, Coraki and Woodburn. However, in 2022, floodwaters travelled a lot faster and added to water flowing across the land causing major flooding of homes and rural properties. All access roads were cut for a week.

Every flood is different. While NSW SES can provide guidance on what may occur in future floods, it's important to remember that predictions are not guarantees.



Wardell, 2022 | Image credit: David Lowe Cloudcatcher Media

Key Contact Information

NSW SES - 132 500
for assistance in a
flood, storm or
tsunami.

Triple Zero (000)
for life-threatening
emergencies.

Ballina SES Unit
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