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Major Flooding Hits NSW After Weekend Snow

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Emergency services remain on high alert across northern New South Wales as major flooding impacts communities along the Namoi and Hunter rivers. The extreme weather follows a weekend of wild conditions, including snowfall in parts of the state's northern tablelands and the Granite Belt region of Queensland.

On Monday, the New South Wales State Emergency Service (SES) issued urgent flood warnings for towns including Gunnedah, Wee Waa, and Narrabri. Rising floodwaters from upstream catchments are expected to continue affecting these areas through the week.

Emergency crews and resources have been deployed to assist with preparedness and response efforts.

In the Hunter region, residents in parts of Singleton and Raymond Terrace were advised to prepare for evacuation. Emergency warnings were issued late Monday afternoon, even as broader severe weather alerts were lifted. Authorities warned that elevated river levels still pose significant flood risks.

Over the weekend, a cold snap brought snow to elevated parts of northern New South Wales and Queensland's Granite Belt. By Monday, Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) forecaster Helen Reid reported that most of the snow had melted due to rising temperatures. The BoM also warned that a strong ocean swell will affect the NSW mid-north coast through Wednesday, potentially increasing coastal hazards.

The SES said it had received more than 3,600 requests for assistance and responded to over 2,000 incidents since the onset of the storm system. In the past 24 hours alone, crews conducted 11 flood rescues, many involving vehicles stranded in floodwaters. A total of 25 flood rescues have been carried out since the weather event began.

SES Deputy Commissioner Debbie Platz identified Gunnedah as a priority concern, noting that flood levels in the region may remain at major flood stage until midweek.

Meanwhile, police and rescue teams are continuing the search for a 26-year-old woman who was swept away in floodwaters at Rothbury, near Cessnock, on Saturday night. The woman was a passenger in a Mini Cooper that became stuck while attempting to cross a flooded creek. The driver, a 27-year-old woman, survived the incident. Police divers and local emergency crews resumed search efforts on Monday.

In a separate incident, a 40-year-old man was rescued in the Hunter Valley after he climbed a tree to escape rising waters. He was pulled to safety by SES responders shortly after falling from the tree and was taken to the hospital for treatment.

Authorities continue to urge the public not to drive through floodwaters and to follow all official warnings and evacuation notices as the severe weather system continues to affect large parts of the state.