



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES



Weekly Drought Brief Monday February 24, 2014

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Recent Precipitation: Almost no precipitation fell in California over the last week. Precipitation totals (in inches) from Monday, February 17 through Sunday, February 23:

- Folsom Dam: 0.0"
- Fresno: 0.0"
- Hetch Hetchy Reservoir: 0.0"
- Los Angeles: 0.00"
- Modesto: 0.00"
- Oroville: 0.04"
- Pollock Pines: 0.08"
- Redding: 0.00"
- Sacramento: 0.00"
- Shasta Dam: 0.00"
- Willits: 0.20"

Near-term Outlook for Precipitation: A prolonged series of storms is expected to reach California this week, with almost all areas of the state likely to benefit from precipitation. The first storm is projected to reach the north coast late Tuesday and spread across the state by Wednesday. Heavy snowfall from this storm is expected above 4,000 to 6,000 feet. A second, wetter storm is likely to sweep across the state late Thursday through early Saturday. A third storm is possible later in the weekend.

** Heavy rain and snow would have to fall throughout California very frequently from now until May to reach average annual rain and snowfall. Even with such precipitation, California would remain in drought conditions, due to low supplies from the two previous dry years.**

Snow survey: The most recent [snowpack survey](#), conducted on January 30, shows California snow pack at 12% of normal. The next snowpack survey is scheduled this week (February 27).

Snow water content: The [current update](#) shows 23% of normal as of February 23.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): [Reservoir Levels](#) as of February 22 are very low, including: Don Pedro 52%; Exchequer 21%; Folsom Lake 30%; Lake Oroville 39%; Millerton Lake 33%; New Melones 44%; Pine Flat 19%; San Luis 33%; Shasta 38%; and Trinity Lake 48%.

Vulnerable Water Systems: The California Department of Public Health has identified several communities facing near-term drinking water shortages. The Department is providing technical and funding assistance to these communities to ensure continued drinking water availability, and continues to monitor across the state to determine where it can provide support. Updated information can be found at the [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#) website.

Fire Danger: 606 fires have been reported across the state since January 1, burning 1,195 acres. CALFIRE reports that this current fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 172 fires, burning 509 acres. 61 new fires were reported over the past week.

Hydropower Generation: Utilities will likely generate less power from hydroelectric dams this year due to the drought and will have to purchase power from the open market, which will likely

come from gas-fired power plants. Rain from the state's last major storm has not significantly improved hydropower generation, though snowpack increases from the recent storm could translate to higher hydropower generation later in the year.

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST WEEK

Federal Government

- **Bureau of Reclamation announces water allocations:** On Friday, water managers from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced [initial 2014 water allocations](#) to those who receive water from the federal Central Valley Water Project. These allocations include 0% projected allocation to agriculture users south of the Delta, similar to the [Department of Water Resources allocation](#) in late January, which reflect historic lows in available water. The Bureau will update these allocations in the coming months based on changes in precipitation and drought conditions.
- **Bureau highlights actions toward greater water reliability:** The Bureau of Reclamation also highlighted last week [longer term actions](#) that will increase the reliability and sustainability of the federal water system in California. These federal actions align with California state government's recently released [Water Action Plan](#).
- **Federal agencies follow-up on emergency aid:** Federal agencies, led by the U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture, are working with state agency counterparts to prepare the [federal government's emergency aid](#) that was announced last week. USDA and the California Department of Food and Agriculture are currently conducting [outreach meetings](#) throughout the state to inform communities of this aid.

State Government

- **Governor and Legislative Leaders announce Drought Emergency Bill:** Governor Brown, Senate Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg and Assembly Speaker John Pérez [announced emergency legislation](#) that provides funding for shovel-ready water projects and emergency assistance to communities hurt by the drought. The proposal also streamlines state rules to enable more water recycling, strong enforcement of water rights and housing assistance to migrant workers. Funding in the bill includes:
 - \$549 million for infrastructure grants to increase storm water capture and use of recycled water, improve management of groundwater storage, and strengthen water conservation.
 - \$40 million from the proceeds of the state's cap-and-trade program to help local water agencies improve their water and energy efficiency, help farmers upgrade irrigation and water pumping systems to reduce water and energy use, and to enable retrofits in commercial and residential buildings that improve water and energy efficiency.
 - \$25 million for emergency food assistance in areas hard-hit by the drought.
 - \$21 million for housing-related assistance to drought victims.
 - \$15 million to help communities that face drinking water shortages access alternative water supplies.
 - \$14 million to improve groundwater management across the state, including help to disadvantaged communities with groundwater contamination exacerbated by the drought.
- **State Water Board approves new actions to conserve water in reservoirs:** The State Water Resources Control Board has approved two new [Temporary Urgency Change Petitions](#) for Santa Cruz and Yuba counties. This action allows local water agencies to reduce flows from their reservoirs to conserve water for later in the year.

The Water Board mandated 20% water use reduction by these water agencies as a condition of approving these changes.

- **State Water Board holds public meetings on drought actions:** The State Water Resources Control Board held a two-day public workshop last week to discuss recent actions to conserve water in reservoirs and other actions to move water where it is needed. The Water Board will hold [another workshop](#) on potential drought actions this week on Wednesday (February 26).
- **DWR works to track new wells:** The California Department of Water Resources sent a letter on Thursday to all well drilling contractors in the state and the local agencies that permit well drilling. This letter reminded well drillers of the legal requirement to report new wells, which is important to monitor drought impacts to groundwater basins. This letter follows-up on action # 12 in the [Governor's Proclamation of Emergency Drought](#).
- **New grants for water management:** The Department of Water Resources [announced allocation of \\$153 million in new grants](#) from bond funds to help stretch water supplies across the state. These funds will enable 138 separate projects to expand water conservation and water recycling programs.
- **CPUC takes action on the drought:** The California Public Utilities Commission will consider a [resolution](#) on Thursday to require water utilities under its jurisdiction to comply with the Governor's call for 20% voluntary reduction in water use. The CPUC regulates all for-profit water utilities in the state, which provide water to approximately six million Californians.
- **Information forums for agricultural communities:** The California Department of Food and Agriculture wraps-up its [series of public forums](#) held across the state to provide information on emergency support for farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers. Forums have been held in Redding, Salinas and Fresno and occur this week in Ventura and San Diego counties.
- **Cost Data:** Cal OES continues to work with state agencies and local governments to gather drought-related costs, which is reported weekly to the Drought Taskforce.
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Taskforce continues to meet daily to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 23 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **Counties:** Glenn, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mendocino, Santa Barbara, San Joaquin, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yuba
 - **Cities:** Brookside Township-Mendocino County, City of Willits-Mendocino County, City of St. Helena-Napa County, City of Calistoga-Napa County, City of American Canyon-Napa County
 - **Tribes:** Hoopa Valley Tribe in Humboldt County, Yurok Tribe in Del Norte County, Tule River Indian Tribe in Tulare County
 - **Special Districts:** Lake Don Pedro Community Services District, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), Twain Harte Community Services District
- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** [Local water agencies across the state](#) are implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water use and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** Several counties have established drought taskforces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Placer, Plumas, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Sutter,

and Tulare.

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Governor's [Proclamation of Drought Emergency](#)
State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)
California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)
California Department of Water Resources [Current Water Conditions](#)
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Department of Public Health, Drinking Water [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#)
California State Water Project, [Information](#)
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)