



Drought Update

Wednesday, November 25, 2015

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Brown Issues Executive Order Intensifying State's Drought Response:** On November 13, Governor Brown [issued](#) an [Executive Order](#) that calls for additional actions to build on the state's ongoing response to record dry conditions and assist recovery efforts from this year's devastating wildfires. The Executive Order also intensifies the state's drought response by extending emergency conservation regulations through October 2016, if drought persists through January, and streamlines project permitting that seek to capture stormwater from high precipitation events. The proclamation also directs \$5 million from the 2015 state budget to the State Water Board to help secure safe drinking water for small water systems. To learn more about the state's drought response, visit: Drought.CA.Gov.
- **DWR Implements New Groundwater Basin Boundary Regulations:** On November 16, DWR [implemented](#) new groundwater basin boundary regulations, a key provision of the state's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act ([SGMA](#)). This implementation will give local agencies an additional six weeks to prepare requests for any basin boundary changes. DWR will accept requests from local agencies for basin boundary modifications from January 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016.

Along with the implementation of the new rules, DWR also unveiled a new web-based [reporting system](#) that allows local agencies to submit basin boundary modification requests and provides public access to view basin boundary modification information. Also new, the [Groundwater Basin Boundary Assessment Tool](#) is an interactive map application that allows users to overlay Geographic Information Systems (GIS) layers onto a map of California.

- **Emergency Drought Barrier Removed from Delta:** On November 16, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) [announced](#) that the 750-foot emergency drought barrier that spanned West False River has been completely dismantled. The barrier was placed in May and June earlier this year to prevent saltwater intrusion into the central Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta from the San Francisco Bay. The barrier was an essential part of DWR's strategy to maintain good water quality in the Delta, which provides water to 25 million Californians, and saved about 90,000 acre-feet in upstream reservoirs for the last quarter of 2015. More information on emergency drought barriers is available [here](#).
- **ACWA Releases Infographic that Identifies Key Drought Recovery Factors:** On November 18, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) [released](#) an [infographic](#) that provides a high-level summary of key drought recovery factors which the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and DWR are monitoring for signs of improvement. With the anticipation of a strong El Niño, experts caution that heavy rain and flooding in some parts of the state will not necessarily end California's four-year drought. State and local water managers are urging the public to prepare for possible floods and extreme weather events, while still conserving as much water as possible.

- **California's Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** On November 11, Save Our Water released a new [PSA](#) reminding Californians to continue conserving water while preparing for flooding throughout the winter season. The PSA approved the PSA featuring Golden State Warrior stars Steph Curry & Klay Thompson ("Splash Brothers"), and is working with Comcast SportsNet and the Warriors on a release plan. In addition, Save Our Water continues to promote the "[Claim your Turf Replacement](#)", and "[Claim Your Toilet](#)" rebate programs. For more tips and tools to help conserve water and keep trees healthy during the drought, please visit Save Our Water's website, which is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#), or connect with the program on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought. During the November 19 meeting, the Task Force provided details and discussions of the current State actions regarding winter storm preparedness.

In addition, the Labor Workforce Development Agency announced that the federally funded Drought Temporary Jobs program has enrolled 556 participants at 110 worksite projects in 24 counties. The program is funded through the U.S. Department of Labor's National Dislocated Worker Grant program which offers 6 months of employment on drought-related public works projects for up to 1,000 workers affected by the drought.

ONGOING DROUGHT SUPPORT

- **Emergency Food Aid, Utility and Employment Assistance:** The Department of Social Services (CDSS) Drought Food Assistance Program (DFAP) provides food assistance to affected communities that suffer high levels of unemployment from the drought. To date, over 1,013,968 boxes have been provided to community food banks in drought-impacted counties, with an average of approximately 13,250 food boxes per week since June 2014. Approximately 915,013 boxes of food have been picked up by 478,110 households.

Food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. Nearly 60% of the food distributions have occurred in the Tulare Basin (Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare). There are 8,400 boxes scheduled for delivery for the week ending November 27 to Fresno, Kern, Kings, Riverside, and Tulare counties.

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) allocated an additional \$600,000, under the federally-funded Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), to continue the [Drought Water Assistance Program \(DWAP\)](#) which provides financial assistance to help low-income families pay their water bills. As of November 13, CSD has reported that a total of \$583,231 has been issued to 2,899 households.

CSD is in the process of allocating \$400,000, under CSBG, to continue the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) drought assistance program, which provides assistance in employment training and placement services to individuals impacted by the drought. This program provides employment training and placement services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers suffering job loss or reduced employment due to the drought. To date, CSD has reported that a total of \$103,112 has been issued to the Center for Employment Training, California Human Development, Central Valley Opportunity Center, Center for Employment Training and Proteus with 80 participants enrolled.

In response to California's historic drought, CSD has received \$7.5 million in General Fund to implement the Drought Emergency Assistance Program (DEAP) to provide emergency relief and support services to drought-impacted individuals and their families and households. As of November 13, CSD has reported that a total of \$3,151,972 has been issued to 2,271 households for rental, utility and food assistance.

- **Drought Response Funding:** The \$687 million in state drought funding that was appropriated last March through emergency legislation, as well as \$142 million provided in the 2014 Budget Act, continues to advance toward meeting critical needs. To date, \$468 million has been committed, and nearly \$625 million of the emergency funds appropriated in March came from sources dedicated to capital improvements to water systems. Since March, the Department of Water Resources has expedited grant approvals, getting \$21 million immediately allocated to grantees that were pre-approved for certain projects.

As planned in March, the next \$200 million of expedited capital funding was awarded in October, and the remaining \$250 million will be granted by fall 2015. The 2014 Budget Act appropriated an additional \$53.8 million to CAL FIRE over its typical budget to enhance firefighter surge capacity and retain seasonal firefighters beyond the typical fire season.

As a result of continuing drought conditions, emergency legislation was enacted in March 2015 that appropriated over \$1 billion of additional funds for drought-related projects and activities. The Administration's May Revision proposal includes an additional \$2.2 billion for programs that protect and expand local water supplies, improve water conservation, and provide immediate relief to impacted communities.

CURRENT DROUGHT CONDITIONS

- **Recent Precipitation:** In the past week, there has been wide-spread precipitation throughout the state with the Northern and Southern Sierra experiencing light amounts of rainfall ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 inches. The central coast regions observed 0.2 to 0.4 inches of rain, and the largest amounts occurred in the north coast ranging from 1 to 4 inches. A light amount of precipitation is expected to begin in the north coast Monday and throughout early Wednesday reaching 0.4 inches.

Below are precipitation totals (in inches) from November 10 through November 20, and year-to-date rainfall based on the water year cycle (October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016).

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| • Bakersfield: 0.28" (0.70") | • Monterey: 0.94" (3.78") |
| • Paso Robles: 0.35" (1.19") | • Redding: 0.76" (1.48") |
| • Fresno: 0.38" (1.89") | • Riverside: 0.00" (0.38") |
| • Yosemite: 1.35" (7.51") | • Sacramento: 0.36" (1.66") |
| • Los Angeles: 0.00" (0.45") | • San Diego: 0.13" (1.71") |
| • Stockton: 0.18" (1.87") | • Mount Shasta: 0.60" (1.56") |
| • San Francisco: 0.39" (1.19") | • South Lake Tahoe: 0.26" (3.37") |
- **Fire Activity:** Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service have responded to over 8,184 wildfires across the state, burning 825,720 acres. Fire activity across California remains high with nearly 155 combined wildfires in just the past two weeks.

- **CAL FIRE Burn Suspension Status:** Due to cooler temperatures and recent rains, CAL FIRE has lifted the burn suspension in the State Responsibility Area in Northern California and portions of Central California, allowing residential outdoor burning of landscape debris with a permit.

CAL FIRE continues to monitor weather conditions closely and has the ability to increase staffing should the weather conditions change or if there is a need to support wildfire activity and any other emergencies in the State. For additional information on preparing for and preventing wildfires, please visit <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/>.

- **Dry Well Reports:** With California at the end of its fourth year of a severe, hot drought, the Governor's Drought Task Force continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. Over the summer, a cross-agency team, led by DWR, developed a new system that improves and streamlines data collection and reporting for [household water shortages](#) for California water systems with fewer than 15 household connections.

As of November 18, approximately 2,455 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 12,275 residents. Cal OES has reported that 2,308 of the 2,455 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley. If you are experiencing a water supply shortage, please [submit a report](#) on DWR's website.

- **Vulnerable Water Systems:** The State Water Board continues to provide technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state. Since January 2014, 102 out of the 142 projects approved to receive emergency funding for interim replacement drinking water have been executed.

On May 19, the State Water Board adopted Guidelines for administering the latest emergency drought appropriations of \$19 million announced this past March. To date, the State Water Board has received requests for \$6.5 million of those funds.

Projected Reservoir Management: Since the last report on November 13, Central Valley reservoirs from Shasta and Trinity in the North to Isabella in the South had a net gain in storage of 140,186 acre-feet (AF), with a total gain of 190,729 AF and a total loss of 50,543 AF. Shasta Reservoir decreased by 18,013 AF, while San Luis Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, increased its storage by 21,914 AF.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of November 23 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 32% of capacity (43% of year to date average); Don Pedro 32% of capacity (49% of average); Exchequer 7% of capacity (15% of average); Folsom Lake 14% of capacity (29% of average); Lake Oroville 27% of capacity (44% of average); Lake Perris 35% (45% of average); Millerton Lake 32% of capacity (77% of average); New Melones 11% of capacity (20% of average); Pine Flat 13% of capacity (35% of average); San Luis 18% of capacity (33% of average); Lake Shasta 30% of capacity (50% of average); and Trinity Lake 20% of capacity (34% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

- **Weather Outlook:** A cold Pacific storm will bring widespread light to moderate precipitation in the northern and central coastal areas. Heavy snow in the mountains with snow extending down into the upper foothills is expected through Wednesday. Dry weather conditions return on Thanksgiving Day, but cool conditions will persist through the upcoming weekend. A low pressure system from the north will bring cooler weather in Southwestern California with occasional periods of mostly light showers into the weekend.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 63 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **29 Counties:** Butte, Colusa, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Plumas, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
 - **13 Cities:** City of Live Oak (Sutter County), City of Lodi (San Joaquin County), City of Manteca (San Joaquin County), City of Montague (Siskiyou County), City of Porterville (Tulare County), City of Portola (Plumas County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), City of San Juan Bautista (San Benito County), City of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara County), City of Rancho Cucamonga (San Bernardino County), City of West Sacramento (Yolo County), City of Willits (Mendocino County) and the City of Fort Bragg (Mendocino County).
 - **9 Tribes:** Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County), Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria (Sonoma County), Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (Madera County) Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe (Mendocino County), Tule River Indian Tribe (Tulare County), Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (Yolo County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt County).
 - **12 Special Districts:** Carpinteria Valley Water District (Santa Barbara County), Goleta Water District (Santa Barbara County), Groveland Community Services District (Tuolumne County), Lake Don Pedro Community Services District (Mariposa Stanislaus County), Mariposa Public Utility District (Mariposa County), Meiners Oaks Water District (Ventura County), Montecito Water District (Santa Barbara County), Mountain House Community Service District (San Joaquin County), Nevada Irrigation District (Nevada County), Placer County Water Agency (Placer County), Tuolumne Utilities District (Tuolumne County), and Twain Harte Community Services District (Tuolumne County).
- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies (AWCA) [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.

ACWA released a Drought Response Toolkit to assist water agencies as they take action to meet state-mandated water conservation target and communicate information about water use restrictions, enforcement and other issues with their customers, media and other audiences.

- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 33 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** A total of 7 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Hopland Tribe (Mendocino County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou County), La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians (San Diego County), Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino County), Trinidad Tribe (Humboldt County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt and Del Norte County).

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save Our Water](#)
Local Government, [Drought Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)

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](#)
State Water Resources Control Board, Drinking Water, [SWRCB Drinking Water Program](#)
California State Water Project, [Information](#)

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Current Conditions throughout the Region
[U.S. Drought Portal](#), National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)
National Weather Service [Climate Predictor Center](#)
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)
U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance Office