



Drought Update

Wednesday, September 2, 2015

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Californians Reduce Water Use by Over 31 Percent in July:** On August 27, the State Water Board [announced](#) that Californians surpassed June's conservation rate of 27 percent and reduced water use by 31.3 percent during July. This water use reduction exceeds Governor Brown's 25 percent conservation mandate for a second consecutive month since the emergency conservation mandate took effect on June 1. Cumulative statewide water savings since June 1 is 29.5 percent compared to the same months in 2013, saving 134 billion gallons of potable water.

Saving water in the hot summer months is critical to meeting the State's overall 25 percent savings goal through February 2016, as the summer is when the greatest amount of water is traditionally used, particularly on outdoor landscapes. For more details, view the State Water Board's full press release [here](#).
- **Reclamation to Release Additional Water from Trinity Reservoir to Supplement Flows in the Lower Klamath River:** On August 20, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will release additional water from Trinity Reservoir for the lower Klamath River to help protect returning adult fall run Chinook salmon from a disease outbreak and mortality. For more details, please visit Reclamation's webpage [here](#).
- **State Water Board Begins to Issue Informational Order to Four Russian River Tributaries:** On August 26, the State Water Board started issuing [Informational Orders](#) to the four Russian River tributaries to collect information on water diversion and use, and to inform potential future action. It is anticipated that all Informational Orders will be issued by September 8. For more details, please visit the State Water Board's Informational Order webpage [here](#).
- **Change Petition Submitted to State Water Board Related to California WaterFix Implementation:** On August 27, the Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation [submitted a change petition](#) to the State Water Board seeking approval to add three new points of diversion on the Sacramento River. This change petition would enable the proposed [California WaterFix, which would greatly improve water conveyance through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta](#). For more information, a fact sheet on the California WaterFix water right petition process is available [here](#).
- **Drought, Conservation to Be Discussed at Upcoming Meeting of the State Board of Food and Agriculture:** On September 1, California State Board of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) will host a [meeting](#) to discuss drought impacts to the Russian River and the role of agriculture in conservation efforts. The meeting will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the California Department of Food and Agriculture main auditorium.

- **Joint Agency Workshop on California's Drought Response:** On August 28, the California Energy Commission led a [joint agency workshop](#) with the California Public Utilities Commission to discuss the impacts of the drought on California and its energy system, and to gather information on partner state agencies' efforts in reducing these impacts.
- **48th Annual Native American Day:** On September 25, the California State Tribal Liaison, in partnership with the California Tribal Chairmen's Association, will hold the [48th annual Native American Day](#) on the West Steps of the State Capitol, focusing on the theme of water. This event is free to the public.
- **California's Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** This past week, a video featuring the [SF Giants AT&T Park Garden](#) and its gardener was released. Additionally, [Clear Channel Outdoor's](#) donation of billboards went live in Sacramento and the Bay Area. The billboards will feature Save Our Water art with water conservation messages urging Californians to let their lawn fade to gold during the state's ongoing historic drought.

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 most recent Task Force meeting on August 27, DWR updated that it continues to manage delta salinity, cold water supplies, and will begin advance planning for a dry 2016-2017 year. In addition, DWR is actively coordinating with U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and other agencies to begin the removal of the emergency salinity barrier starting September 1. The next regional Drought Task Force meeting is scheduled for September 2, near the Los Angeles area.

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 847,875 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 757,137 boxes of food have been picked up by 397,862 households.

Food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. Nearly 70% of the food distributions have occurred in the Tulare Basin (Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare). There are 10,800 boxes scheduled for delivery for the week ending September 4 to Fresno, Kern, 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 August 21, CSD has reported that a total of \$378,294 has been issued to 1,916 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 \$10,843 has been issued to the Center for Employment Training, California Human Development, and Central Valley Opportunity Center with 14 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 August 21, CSD has reported that a total of \$166,303 has been issued to 208 households.

- **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

- **Fire Activity:** Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE have responded to over 4,743 wildfires across the state, burning 146,279 acres. Fire activity across California remains high with nearly 272 wildfires in just the past week.
- **CAL FIRE Suspends Outdoor Residential Burning:** California's increased fire activity this year, coupled with record-setting drought conditions, has caused CAL FIRE to [suspend burn permits](#) in all counties in the State Responsibility Area.
- **Dry Well Reports:** With California in 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. Recently, 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 August 26, approximately 2,257 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 11,285 residents. Cal OES has reported that 2,160 of the 2,257 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, 92 out of the 126 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 \$3.4 million of those funds.
- **Projected Reservoir Management:** Shasta Reservoir recorded 1,812,389 acre-feet (AF) on August 27 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 6,313 AF/day. Releases are being held lower than normal to keep cold water in the reservoir for Winter Run Chinook Salmon later in the fall. Shasta Reservoir is projected to reach 1,460,000 AF by the end of September. This is higher than the 1976-77 record low storage of 700,000 AF.

Oroville Reservoir recorded 1,080,474 AF on August 27 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 1,311 AF/day. Releases are higher than normal to help make up for reduced flows out of Shasta. These higher flows are to keep salt water from coming too far into the Delta and to meet other joint federal-state obligations. Oroville Reservoir is projected to reach 900,000 AF by the end of September. This storage is about the same as the record low 1976-77 storage level.

Folsom Reservoir recorded 201,600 AF on August 27 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 2,545 AF/day. Releases are higher than normal to help make up for reduced flows out of Shasta. Folsom Reservoir is projected to reach 120,000 AF by the end of September. This is lower than the 1976-77 record low storage of 150,000 AF.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of August 30 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 37% of capacity (45% of year to date average); Don Pedro 32% of capacity (45% of average); Exchequer 9% of capacity (17% of average); Folsom Lake 20% of capacity (32% of average); Lake Oroville 30% of capacity (46% of average); Lake Perris 36% (47% of average); Millerton Lake 30% of capacity (65% of average); New Melones 12% of capacity (21% of average); Pine Flat 13% of capacity (33% of average); San Luis 20% of capacity (47% of average); Lake Shasta 39% of capacity (62% of average); and Trinity Lake 28% of capacity (38% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

- **Weather Outlook:** Warmer temperatures are expected for the Central Valley through Tuesday. Cooler temperatures and stronger onshore flow are expected to return by mid-week. Inland and Southern California areas will be expecting slightly below seasonal averages. Slow warming may return next weekend.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 60 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - o **27 Counties:** Butte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, 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.
 - o **12 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) and City of West Sacramento (Yolo County) and City of Willits (Mendocino County).
 - o **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).
 - o **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 (ACWA) [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: www.sba.gov/disaster