



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES



Drought Update

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Californians Save 1.1 Million Acre-Feet of Water, Urged to Stay Focused on Conservation:** On February 25, the State Water Board [announced](#) that Californians missed Governor Brown's 25 percent water conservation mandate in January, as urban water suppliers reported a cumulative savings of 24.8 percent for the eight months since mandatory conservation began. With more than 1.1 million acre-feet of water conserved since June 2015 through January 2016, the state is 96 percent of its goal of 1.2 million acre-feet of water to be saved by the end of February.

Statewide, the conservation rate decreased from 18.4 percent in December 2015 to 17.1 percent in January, which equates to approximately 62,644 acre-feet. However, the average per capita water use declined from 67 gallons per person per day in December 2015 to 61 gallons in January 2016, the lowest per-person rate since water-use reporting began in June 2014.

- **2016 Emergency Regulation Takes Effect; Information Updated on State Water Board Website:** On February 12, the Office of Administrative Law [approved](#) the 2016 Emergency Conservation Regulation adopted by the State Water Board, which extends the original 2015 regulation through October 2016. Under the 2016 regulation, water suppliers may request an adjustment to their individual conservation standard by submitting required information through a new online tool at the [Drinking Water Information Clearing House \(DRINC\) Portal](#). The tool is now available through March 15. For more information, please visit the State Water Board's [Water Conservation Portal](#).
- **DWR Increases 2016 State Water Project Allocation Estimate to 30%:** On February 24, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) [announced](#) an increase to its estimated State Water Project (SWP) delivery allocation to 30 percent. For 2016, the 29 contractors that receive SWP water requested more than 4.1 million acre-feet of water. With the latest allocation increase, they will receive 1.27 million acre-feet of requested supplies, however, extended dry weather could force an allocation reduction. State Water Project contractors serve approximately 25 million Californians and just under a million acres of irrigated farmland.
- **California's Three Traditionally Wettest Months End with Statewide Snowpack Water Content Less than Average:** On March 1, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) [announced](#) that the statewide snowpack, which is the source for about 30 percent of California's water supply, is at 83 percent of the March 1 average. Although readings at Phillips Station are higher than the previous year in March, snowpack levels are still below what would be considered adequate for any reasonable level of recovery at this point.

DWR conducted its third media-oriented manual snowpack survey of the season at Phillips Station, 90 miles east of Sacramento just off Highway 50 in the Sierra Nevada. The snow course is one of more than 250 snow courses that will be measured manually several times this winter to determine the water content of the snowpack.

- **DWR Releases Draft Regulations on SGMA, Comment Period Opens:** On February 18, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) [released](#) draft regulations that will assist local public agencies and groundwater sustainability agencies to meet their requirements of the [2014 Sustainability Groundwater Management Act \(SGMA\)](#). The regulations were developed after conducting public information sessions and extensive outreach around the state to gather perspectives from advisory groups, statewide stakeholders, partners, local agencies, and the public. The [draft regulations](#) are available for public comment until March 25.
- **CDFW Awards \$16.7 Million to Fisheries Habitat Restoration, Forest Legacy and Drought Projects:** On February 19, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) [announced](#) 67 projects that will receive \$16.7 million in funding from its Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP). These projects will further the objectives of the state and federal recovery plans which include removing barriers to fish migration, restoring riparian habitat, and creating a more resilient and sustainably managed water resources system that can better withstand drought conditions. Visit the [FRGP](#) website for a complete list of projects approved for funding.
- **California's Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** This past week, the Save Our Water [PSA](#) featuring Golden State Warrior stars, Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson ("Splash Brothers"), will continue to air on NBC Bay Area through April. In addition, Save Our Water [promoted](#) an Associated Press article which highlighted ten days of record heat and a shortage of rain in February which continues to raise concerns for California's drought in 2016.

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 February 25 meeting, the Task Force provided an update on water conditions, water operations and environmental habitat, water conservation, and drought impacts and response. In addition, Save Our Water provided a summary of the current water conservation efforts planned for 2016, and highlighted the drought conservation efforts accomplished in 2015.

The Labor Workforce Development Agency announced that the federally funded Drought Temporary Jobs program has enrolled 949 participants at 136 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 1,171,506 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 1,056,023 boxes of food have been picked up by 547,813 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). Approximately 18,140 boxes were scheduled for delivery for the week ending February 26 to Fresno, Kern, Kings, Riverside, San Joaquin, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, 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 January 31, CSD has reported a total of \$598,259 has been issued to 2,973 households. As a result, all funds for water assistance payments have been expended.

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 \$327,335 has been expended with 109 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 February 19, \$5.8 million has been issued to 4,428 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

- **Recent Precipitation:** Last week, a series of weak storms moved through the state with the highest amounts of average rainfall in the North Coast ranging from 0.3 to 2.0 inches. Additional areas that received precipitation include 0.01 to 0.3 inches in the Bay Area, and 0.1 to 1.5 inches in the Northern Sierras.

Below are precipitation totals (in inches) from February 19 through February 26, and year-to-date rainfall based on the water year cycle (October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016).

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Bakersfield: 1.11" (3.46") | • Redding: 2.44" (23.19") |
| • Paso Robles: 0.61" (5.36") | • Riverside: 0.28" (3.90") |
| • Fresno: 1.38" (9.94") | • Sacramento: 1.04" (9.68") |
| • Yosemite: 3.94" (24.86") | • San Diego: 0.20" (6.08") |
| • Los Angeles: 1.12" (4.53") | • Mount Shasta: 3.49" (24.47") |
| • Stockton: 0.80" (9.88") | • South Lake Tahoe: 2.27" (13.43") |
| • San Francisco: 1.38" (14.53") | • Monterey: 2.18" (15.46") |

- **Weather Outlook:** At the end of the week, Northern California can expect a return to a wetter weather pattern which will continue into the weekend bringing gusty winds and periods of rain. Southern California can expect cooler weather by Friday with chances for rainfall on Sunday into at least the early part of next week.
- **Snow Survey:** The March [manual snowpack survey](#) recorded California snowpack at 83 percent of normal to date, and 73 percent of the April 1 average. Regionally, the Northern Sierra Nevada is at 89 percent of average to date, the Central Sierra is at 85 percent of average to date, and the Southern Sierra Nevada is at 73 percent of average to date.
- **Projected Reservoir Management:** Since the last report on February 19, Central Valley reservoirs from Shasta and Trinity in the North to Isabella in the South had a net gain in storage of 419,241 acre-feet (AF), with a total gain of 428,228 AF and a total loss of 8,987 AF. Shasta Reservoir increased by 113,714 AF, while San Luis Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, increased its storage by 56,817 AF.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of March 1 have increased, including: Castaic Lake 28% of capacity (32% of year to date average); Don Pedro 47% of capacity (66% of average); Exchequer 18% of capacity (35% of average); Folsom Lake 62% of capacity (111% of average); Lake Oroville 53% of capacity (76% of average); Perris Lake 34% (41% of average); Millerton Lake 52% of capacity (79% of average); New Melones 19% of capacity (31% of average); Pine Flat 27% of capacity (51% of average); San Luis 44% of capacity (51% of average); Shasta Reservoir 61% of capacity (83% of average); and Trinity Lake 35% of capacity (47% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

- **Dry Well Reports:** As California faces the fifth year of drought, the Governor's Drought Task Force continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. In 2015, a cross-agency team, led by the Department of Water Resources (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 February 24, approximately 2,591 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, affecting an estimated 12,955 residents. Cal OES reported that 2,371 of the 2,591 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, 109 out of the 150 projects approved to receive emergency funding for interim replacement drinking water have been executed. On May 19, 2015, 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 \$12.8 million of those funds.
- **Fire Activity:** Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service have responded to over 200 wildfires across the state, burning 88 acres. Fire activity across California is low resulting in 41 combined wildfires in just the past week.
- **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/>.

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 (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