



Drought Update Tuesday, April 28, 2015

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Recent Precipitation: Last week, California received limited rainfall across several areas of the state, with parts of the Sierra Nevada range receiving 2.5 inches of precipitation. Unfortunately, spring temperatures were too warm for snowfall accumulation from these storms.

Below are estimates of precipitation totals (in inches) from April 20 through April 27, and year-to-date rainfall based on the water year cycle (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015).

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| • Bakersfield: 0.02" (4.61") | • Pacific House: 1.32" (27.40") |
| • Folsom Dam: 5.62" (29.53") | • Redding: 0.08" (31.00") |
| • Fresno: 0.69" (5.85") | • Riverside: 0.32" (4.23") |
| • Hetch Hetchy: 0.48" (16.47") | • Sacramento: 0.95" (13.58") |
| • Los Angeles: 0.00" (7.46") | • San Diego: 0.00" (6.53") |
| • Modesto: 0.21" (9.98") | • Shasta Dam: 0.00" (48.76") |
| • Oroville: 1.20" (25.84") | • Willits: 0.56" (37.92") |

Precipitation Forecast: This week, warmer and drier weather is expected with little to no rainfall.

Snow Survey: As of April 24, [automated snow sensors](#) captured the statewide average snowpack conditions at just 2 percent of the average to date. Regionally, the Northern Sierra Nevada is at 4 percent of average, the Central Sierra Nevada is at 3 percent of average, and the Southern Sierra Nevada is at 1 percent of average. Temperatures are expected to rise by early next week which will further melt snowpack.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): Since the last report on April 17, the majority of all Reservoirs experienced storage loss, totaling 97,815 acre-feet, with the exception of Black Butte (gain of 1,367 acre-feet), Exchequer (gain of 1,036 acre-feet), Pine Flat (gain of 5,032 acre-feet), and Terminus (gain of 1,232 acre-feet). This brings the overall Reservoir storage loss to 89,111 acre-feet.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of April 26 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 30% of capacity (33% of year to date average); Don Pedro 41% of capacity (57% of average); Exchequer 10% of capacity (17% of average); Folsom Lake 59% of capacity (80% of average); Lake Oroville 51% of capacity (63% of average); Lake Perris 39% (46% of average); Millerton Lake 37% of capacity (53% of average); New Melones 21% of capacity (33% of average); Pine Flat 20% of capacity (34% of average); San Luis 63% of capacity (70% of average); Lake Shasta 59% of capacity (69% of average); and Trinity Lake 49% of capacity (59% of average). An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

Fire Activity: Since the beginning of the year, CAL FIRE has responded to over 943 wildfires across the state, burning 4,078 acres in the State Responsibility Area. This fire activity is above the five year average for the same time period with 534 fires and 1,420 acres burned. CAL FIRE has hired additional seasonal firefighters and trained in preparation for the peak fire season and continues to augment resources throughout the state as needed.

Open Burn Bans: Burn bans were lifted throughout the State during the winter, while restrictions on burning remained in place in many areas. As the state transitions to the dry season, open burn bans are once again being implemented in certain counties. Recently, burn bans were instituted in Fresno, King, Monterey, San Benito and Tulare County. Additionally, a burn ban for Marin County will go into effect on May 1.

Vulnerable Water Systems: The State Water Board [Division of Drinking Water Programs](#) continues to provide technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state to determine if new support is needed. As of this week, approximately \$15.2 million has been committed for specific emergency drinking water projects out of \$15 million appropriated in March 2014 for this purpose. The additional \$200,000 of committed funds for emergency projects has been provided by the recent emergency drought appropriations announced this past March.

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **State Board Sends Curtailment Notices to Junior Water Right Holders:** On April 23, the State Water Board [issued](#) curtailment notices to [junior water rights holders](#), mostly those who utilize the water for agricultural uses, in the San Joaquin River watershed and on the Scott River. The Water Board requires water rights holders to curtail their diversion of surface water supplies when rivers and streams reach critically low levels. These curtailments often translate to significant cuts to agricultural irrigation. More information on this process can be found on the [Water Board's website](#).
- **Emergency Salinity Barrier in Delta Moves Ahead:** On April 17, the Department of Water Resources submitted the 2015 Emergency Drought Barrier Project Water Quality Certification application to the State Water Board for review and approval. Construction of the West False River barrier is expected to begin no sooner than May 7, with full barrier installation expected to be completed approximately 30 to 60 days.

The barrier will help deter saltwater from the San Francisco Bay from moving up into the Delta where it could mix with freshwater and threaten drinking water supplies. The emergency barrier will also help mitigate a worst-case circumstance this summer in which upstream reservoirs lack sufficient water to meet the minimum outflow requirements to limit Delta salinity intrusion.

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental, and Utility Assistance:** The Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 608,350 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 555,200 boxes of food have been picked up by 291,148 households. By Friday, May 1, an additional 8,187 boxes will be delivered to five new counties. Local food banks continue to target food aid to residents most impacted by drought.

The non-profit group La Cooperativa continues to distribute the \$10 million state-funded emergency rental assistance to impacted families and individuals across counties most impacted by the drought. As of Thursday, April 16, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$8,657,367 have been issued to 5,875 applicants in 21 counties, with \$99,633 remaining in assistance funds.

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 \(DWAP\)](#) pilot project which provides financial assistance to help low-income families pay their water bills. This program targets low-income families in 10 counties identified as experiencing a high unemployment rate, high share of agricultural workers and designated to have “exceptional” drought conditions according to the U.S. Drought Monitor Classification System.

These counties are Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus and Tulare. Nine of the ten contracts have been returned to CSDs DWAP for execution. CSD is reviewing expenditure plans of our local providers to ensure maximum impact is provided for direct services. A detailed expenditure/activity report will be available on May 2.

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 has been provided in coordination with the California Human Development (CHD), Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC), and Center for Employment Training (CET) and Proteus, which provides employment training and placement services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers suffering job loss or reduced employment due to the drought. CSD is finalizing contract terms with these organizations and anticipates services to begin June 1, 2015.

- **California’s Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** The Save Our Water “Keep Saving CA” campaign reports a surge in online visits to its saveourwater.com site in mid-April. The water saving tips section proved to be the most popular destination. The recently updated statewide public education campaign gives Californians a pat on the back for their water-saving efforts to date – and asks them to do more. The state’s campaign is also being utilized by local water districts.

The Keep Saving CA campaign will run through the end of June and includes billboards, outdoor media, traditional and digital radio, digital and social media, and on-the-street efforts that will be seen and heard throughout the state. The campaign includes a robust new website loaded with easy-to-use water-saving tips at saveourwater.com. Save Our Water connects with Californians on its [Facebook](#) page, [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

- **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, \$236 million has been expended, 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. In the event drought conditions continue through next year, the proposed 2015-16 Governor's Budget includes an additional \$115 million to continue critical drought response efforts.

- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

Local Government

- **City of San Diego Public Utilities Department Wins 2015 U.S. Water Prize:** On April 17, the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department was awarded the annual U.S. Water Prize for its efforts relating to the [Water Purification Project](#). The U.S. Water Prize, awarded by the U.S. Water Alliance (USWA), was created five years ago to honor organizations whose actions further the goal of water sustainability. San Diego's Water Purification Demonstration Project established the viability of supplementing local drinking water supplies with purified recycled water.
- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 54 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **24 Counties:** El Dorado, Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Plumas, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
 - **9 Cities:** City of Live Oak (Sutter County), City of Lodi (San Joaquin County), City of Montague (Siskiyou 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), and City of West Sacramento (Yolo County), and City of Willits (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.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 31 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, 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, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** A total of 4 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Yurok Tribe (Humboldt Counties) and Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino County), and Kashia Band of Pomo Indians (Sonoma 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