



Drought Update

Tuesday, July 21, 2015

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Water Commission Adopts Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance:** On July 15, the Department of Water Resources [announced](#) that a model landscape ordinance was adopted by the California Water Commission. Under the ordinance, California yards and commercial landscaping installed after December 1, 2015 will be limited to specific functional uses. As a result, new lawns will use up to a third less water. The revised ordinance will not apply to existing lawns and landscapes unless they are modified significantly after December 1.
- **State Water Board Reissues Water Supply Notices Following Court Ruling:** On July 15, the State Water Board [reissued](#) water supply availability notices to more than 4,600 holders of junior and senior water rights. The new notices clarify that while previous notices were only advisory, diverting water where none is legally available could result in significant penalties. The reissuance was in response to the court ruling on July 10 indicating that several State Water Board notices were in violation of due process.
- **Conservation Experts at Interactive California State Fair Exhibits:** Beginning July 10, the Department of Water Resources will be at the California State Fair thru July 26 offering hands-on demonstrations of simple ways to save water at home. Additionally, an outdoor garden exhibit is available featuring tips on how to increase landscape irrigation efficiency. For more information, click [here](#).
- **California's Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** This past week, actress Amelia Rose Blair helped kick off the Save Our Water's viral campaign effort "Saving Together." The campaign aims to get Californians to share pictures and stories about how they are saving water. Radio station partners will be holding events across the state encouraging listeners to join the effort. Additionally, Comcast SportsNet started airing the Sergio Romo Public Service Announcement.

In partnerships with Save Our Water, Toyota plans to save 20 million gallons of water by halting car washes at their California dealerships. In addition, Starbucks will post Save Our Water posters in approximately 2,000 corporate-owned stores in California for 60 days.

For easy-to-use water saving tips, visit saveourwater.com, and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). For the new Spanish-language Save Our Water campaign website, visit ahorrenuestraaqua.com.

- **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 July 16, Cal OES reported that 10 new emergency water supply tanks have been installed in Tulare County, and plans to install 20-30 tanks a week throughout the Central Valley.

In addition, the Department of Water Resources is developing eligibility criteria for toilet and appliance rebate programs, which needs to meet both state and federal funding conditions.

ONGOING DROUGHT SUPPORT

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental and Utility 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 765,150 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 682,300 boxes of food have been picked up by 358,493 households.

Food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. Over 70% of the food distributions have occurred in the Tulare Basin (Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare). There are 14,400 boxes scheduled for delivery for the week ending July 24, to Fresno, Kern, Riverside, San Joaquin and Tulare County.

The non-profit group La Cooperativa has completed the distribution of the \$10 million state-funded emergency rental assistance to families and individuals across counties most impacted by the drought. As of June 18, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that all assistance funds have been disbursed.

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 July 10, CSD has reported that a total of \$219,750 has been issued to 1,139 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 continues to ramp up program activities by developing marketing and outreach plans, pre-screening potential enrollees, and executing MSFW service contracts. CSD will receive the first report of expenditures on July 20.

- **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:** Fire activity across California remains high with nearly 250 wildfires in just the past week. Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE has responded to over 3,625 wildfires across the state, burning 18,874 acres. The number of new fire starts is well above the five-year average for the same time period of 2,386 fires and 32,935 acres burned.
- **CAL FIRE Suspends Outdoor Residential Burning:** California's increased fire activity this year, coupled with record-setting drought conditions, require CAL FIRE to take every step possible to prevent new wildfires from starting. To date, CAL FIRE has suspended burn permits in all counties in the State Responsibility Area.

This suspension bans all residential outdoor burning of landscape debris including branches and leaves. The department may issue restricted temporary burning permits if there is an essential reason due to public health and safety. For additional information on preparing for and preventing wildfires, please visit www.ReadyForWildfire.Org.

- **Dry Well Reports:** As California enters the fourth consecutive summer of drought, Cal OES continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. Approximately 2,033 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 10,165 residents. As of July 15, Cal OES has reported that 1,925 of the 2,033 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley.
- **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, 84 out of the 109 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 \$4.2 million of those funds.
- **Projected Reservoir Management:** Shasta Reservoir recorded 2,090,000 AF on July 15th with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 7,000 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 1,280,000 AF on July 15 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 8,000 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 362,000 AF on July 15 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 4,700 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 July 19 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 38% of capacity (45% of year to date average); Don Pedro 35% of capacity (45% of average); Exchequer 11% of capacity (17% of average); Folsom Lake 35% of capacity (46% of average); Lake Oroville 37% of capacity (47% of average); Lake Perris 36% (45% of average); Millerton Lake 35% of capacity (50% of average); New Melones 15% of capacity (25% of average); Pine Flat 19% of capacity (33% of average); San Luis 30% of capacity (55% of average); Lake Shasta 45% of capacity (61% of average); and Trinity Lake 36% of capacity (43% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

- **Weather Outlook:** Low tropical moisture remains over central and southern California which means a continued chance of showers and thunderstorms through the night. Dry weather will return on Tuesday along with cooler conditions near the coast. Dry and mild weather is then forecast for the remainder of the week and into the weekend.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 58 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **25 Counties:** 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, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne and Yuba.
 - **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).
 - **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 5 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Hopland Tribe (Mendocino County), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians (Sonoma County), Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino 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