



Weekly Drought Brief Monday, July 28, 2014

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Fire Activity: CAL FIRE has responded to 3,562 wildfires across the state since January 1, burning 37,840 acres. This year's fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 2,619 wildfires on 34,192 acres. CAL FIRE responded to over 200 new wildfires last week, including the Bully Fire in Shasta County that started on July 11th, which has burned a total of 11,661 acres.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): [Reservoir Levels](#) as of July 24 remain low, including: Don Pedro 45%; Exchequer 22%; Folsom Lake 43%; Lake Oroville 37%; Millerton Lake 54%; New Melones 27%; Pine Flat 18%; San Luis 24%; Lake Shasta 36%; and Trinity Lake 37%. An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

Vulnerable Water Systems: The State Water Board's Drinking Water Program is providing 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. This week, over \$8.4 million has been identified for specific emergency drinking water projects out of \$15 million appropriated in March for this purpose. Updated information can be found at the [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#) website during the three (3) month transition period. For more information regarding the transfer, please visit the [State Water Board's Drinking Water](#) website.

Recent precipitation: No significant rain fell over the last week and no rain is expected soon.

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Drought Tops Environmental Concern of Californians, PPIC Report Finds:** A [newly released survey by the Public Policy Institute of California \(PPIC\)](#) reveals that drought and wildfires are at the top of the list of public worries about the impacts of global warming. The [survey](#) also found that 75% of respondents believe public water agencies should require residents to reduce water use.
- **San Diego Water Authority Board Adopts Drought Alert Condition, Mandatory Water-Use Restrictions:** The San Diego County Water Authority's Board of Directors on Thursday, July 24, unanimously activated the next stage of the [region's drought response plan and declared a Drought Alert condition](#) that calls for mandatory water conservation measures. The action also calls for the Water Authority's 24 member agencies to set appropriate restrictions for their communities.
- **DWR Releases List of High and Medium Priority Groundwater Basins:** The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has released [a list of unmonitored high and medium priority groundwater basins](#). As outlined in California's Water Code, some counties and groundwater management agencies in unmonitored basins may be ineligible for water grants and loans administered by the state.
- **Bureau of Reclamation Releases New Hydrologic Projections for Contiguous United States:** On Tuesday, July 22, the Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) [released new hydrologic](#)

[projections](#) for the contiguous United States. These projections will assist local water managers in making projections about future climate, stream flow and water resources. This new data is derived using the updated World Climate Research Program climate projections.

- **Yurok Tribe Combats Illegal Marijuana Grows:** The California National Guard on Monday, July 21, joined more than a dozen other agencies to help the [Yurok tribe combat rampant marijuana grows](#) that have threatened the reservation's water supply, harmed its salmon and interfered with cultural ceremonies.
- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental and Utility Assistance:** The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 128,100 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 103,500 boxes of food have been picked up by 53,374 households. By this Friday, August 1, an additional 12,000 will be delivered to six counties. Local food banks are targeting this food aid to residents most impacted by the 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 Wednesday, July 23, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$1,156,421 is committed; and \$765,475 in funds has been issued to 644 applicants in 18 counties.

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) has created a \$600,000 program to help families pay their water bills. This program targets families in 10 counties that are experiencing "exceptional" drought. As of Friday, July 18, CSD has reported that a total of \$8,135 has been issued to 135 households in 4 counties.

- **Water Saving Tips Promoted Across the State:** The state's newly improved water conservation website, [SaveOurWater.com](#), is promoting the "Don't Waste Summer" campaign. This campaign provides a new conservation tip each day for the 100 days of summer. Supporters can sign up for daily email tips, and share Save Our Water's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) feeds for this public awareness campaign.
- **Open Burn Ban in Affect across the State:** Open burning continues to be prohibited on 31 million acres of land across the state due to the [burn ban that CAL FIRE](#) has directed through the coordination of its unit chiefs. This ban on open burning in state responsibility areas (outside of cities and towns) reduces wildfire danger amidst extremely dry conditions.
- **Drought Response Funding:** \$687 million in state drought funding that was appropriated in March through emergency legislation continues to advance toward meeting critical needs. Over \$61 million of this funding addresses emergency water needs, food aid and housing assistance to drought-impacted communities. Nearly \$21 million of those funds are already in communities providing assistance and additional funds are being readied as drought impacts worsen. Nearly \$625 million of the emergency funds appropriated in March came from sources dedicated to capital improvements to water systems. Since March, state agencies have expedited grant approvals, getting over \$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 will be awarded this fall, with the remaining \$250 million granted by mid next-year. State government has also appropriated tens of millions in funding to CAL FIRE over its typical budget to enable staffing-up fire crews much earlier this fire season.

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

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 51 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **21 Counties:** Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Santa Barbara, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
 - **12 Cities:** Brooktrails Township (Mendocino County), City of Willits (Mendocino County), City of St. Helena (Napa County), City of Calistoga (Napa County), City of American Canyon (Napa County), City of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara County), City of Montague (Siskiyou County), City of Live Oak (Sutter County), City of San Juan Bautista (San Benito County), City of Lodi (San Joaquin County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), and City of Rio Dell (Humboldt County).
 - **7 Tribes:** Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Yurok Tribe (Humboldt County), Tule River Indian Tribe (Tulare County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties), Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe (Mendocino County), Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (Yolo County), and Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County).
 - **11 Special Districts:** Lake Don Pedro Community Services District (Stanislaus County), Placer County Water Agency (Placer County), Twain Harte Community Services District (Tuolumne County), Carpinteria Valley Water District (Santa Barbara County), Meiners Oaks Water District (Ventura County), Mariposa Public Utility District (Mariposa County), Goleta Water District (Santa Barbara County), Montecito Water District (Santa Barbara County), Tuolumne Utilities District (Tuolumne County), Mountain House Community Service District (San Joaquin County), Nevada Irrigation District (Nevada 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 26 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Napa.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** One tribe has established a drought task force to coordinate tribal drought response. This tribe includes: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt 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