



Weekly Drought Brief Monday, August 4, 2014

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Fire Activity: CAL FIRE has responded to 3,813 wildfires across the state since January 1, burning 44,408 acres. This year's fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 2,801 wildfires on 35,168 acres. CAL FIRE responded to over 250 new wildfires last week, including the Day Fire in Modoc County that started on Wednesday, July 30, which has burned more than 7,000 acres and is only 5% contained.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): [Reservoir Levels](#) as of July 31 remain low, including: Don Pedro 44%; Exchequer 21%; Folsom Lake 42%; Lake Oroville 35%; Millerton Lake 53%; New Melones 26%; Pine Flat 14%; San Luis 22%; Lake Shasta 35%; and Trinity Lake 35%. 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 \$8.8 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 Program](#) website.

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

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **State Board Mandatory Conservation Regulations Now in Effect:** The state's first-ever emergency regulations mandating urban water conservation became effective on Tuesday, July 29, following final approval by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL).

The [final regulations](#), adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board on July 15, prohibit certain outdoor water uses and require local water agencies to activate their water shortage contingency plans at a level that includes mandatory outdoor irrigation restrictions. The regulations will be in effect until April 25, 2015, unless they are extended or repealed. More information is available on the State Board's [Conservation Regulation Portal](#) and in a new [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document.

- **W21: Water in the 21st Century Legislation Introduced:** California Sens. Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein along with their House colleagues Reps. Grace Napolitano (D-CA-32) and Peter DeFazio (D-OR) [introduced legislation to promote water conservation and recycling](#) on Thursday, July 31. The identical House and Senate bills, entitled "W21: Water in the 21st Century," expand rebates and grants for water conservation and efficiency; support local investments in water recycling and improved groundwater management and storage; invest in research into water-saving technologies and desalination; and establish an open water data system.

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental and Utility Assistance:** The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 172,000 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 117,500 boxes of food have been picked up by 61,906 households. By this Friday, August 8, an additional 15,100 will be delivered to six counties. Local food banks continue to target 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 30, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$1,716,748 is committed; and \$1,060,932 in funds has been issued to 923 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 25, CSD has reported that a total of \$9,149 has been issued to 149 households in 4 counties.

- **Santa Clara Valley Launches New Conservation Media Campaign:** The Santa Clara Valley Water District has [launched a new summer water conservation media campaign](#) that encourages residents to reduce outdoor watering and let lawns go a little brown this summer. The ‘Brown is the New Green’ campaign highlights how a lawn can survive even with significantly reduced water.
- **SCWC, Clear Channel Launch Conservation Campaign:** Southern California Water Committee and Clear Channel Outdoor [unveiled a new partnership and advertising campaign](#) on Thursday, July 31, to encourage Californians to save water during the ongoing drought. The campaign features a water-saving character called [Lawn Dude](#) who will appear on digital billboards across Southern California and share conservation tips on social media.
- **Comments Period Closes on Draft BDCP:** The public comment period on the draft Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) came to a close on Tuesday, July 29, capping a 228-day review period that began Dec. 13, 2013. [Twelve public meetings](#) were held throughout California in January and February to provide more information on the contents of the draft BDCP and associated draft environmental impact report / environmental impact statement (EIR/EIS).
- **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