



Weekly Drought Brief Tuesday, September 2, 2014

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Fire Activity: CAL FIRE has responded to 4,429 wildfires across the state since January 1, burning 84,833 acres. This year's fire activity is above the year-to-date average of 3,471 wildfires on 73,061 acres. CAL FIRE responded to over 130 new wildfires last week, including the Oregon Fire in Trinity County, which has burned 580 acres with full containment.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): [Reservoir Levels](#) as of August 28 remain low, including: Don Pedro 41%; Exchequer 16%; Folsom Lake 39%; Lake Oroville 31%; Millerton Lake 45%; New Melones 23%; Pine Flat 11%; San Luis 19%; Lake Shasta 30%; and Trinity Lake 29%. 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. As of this week, a total to date of over \$10.8 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 on 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

- **Senate Approves Groundwater Legislation:** On Wednesday, August 27, legislation aimed at advancing [sustainable management of the state's groundwater basins](#) passed on the Senate floor, which would enact the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and provide a framework for improved management of groundwater supplies by local authorities. The bills also would provide a mechanism for limited state intervention when necessary to protect groundwater resources.
- **State Water Board Lifts Curtailments in the Van Duzen River:** On Friday, August 29, the State Water Board has notified post-1914 water right holders on the Van Duzen River, down to the confluence with the Eel River, that curtailment notices issued on June 30, would be lifted due to the end of the irrigation season and drop in demand. The State Water Board Division of Water Rights will continue to actively monitor the conditions for the remainder of the Main Stem and North Fork Eel River and will notify the affected parties if conditions change.
- **State Water Board Evaluates Urban Water Use Reports:** As of Thursday, August 28, approximately 360 urban water suppliers have submitted water production reports for both June and July. The State Water Board is currently evaluating the water production reports and will be providing the amount of water conservation achieved by region and water supplier. This information will continue to help the Water Board decide whether additional actions are necessary to expand water conservation efforts during the drought.

- **Emergency Regulations to Close Merced River Angling Now In Effect:** On Monday, August 25, the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) approved the proposal adopted by the California Fish and Game Commission on August 6, to implement [early restrictions on angling in the Merced River](#), effective immediately. This action increases the survival of juvenile and adult wild rainbow trout and steelhead by reducing fish mortality associated with hook-and-line fishing. This early closure affects only the Merced River from Crocker-Huffman Dam downstream to the Snelling Road Bridge.
- **State Water Board Approves School Stormwater Program:** In response to the Governor's Emergency Drought Proclamation, the State Water Board approved guidelines for the [Drought Response Outreach Program for Schools \(DROPS\)](#) on Tuesday, August 19. DROPS will provide approximately \$25.5 million to local educational agencies to complete projects at K-12 schools that reduce stormwater runoff and pollution by capturing stormwater for groundwater recharge or for use to offset other water sources
- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental and Utility Assistance:** The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 219,300 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 170,600 boxes of food have been picked up by 88,504 households. By this Friday, September 5, an additional 10,800 will be delivered to five 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 Thursday, August 21, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$3,727,201 is committed; and \$2,329,530 in funds has been issued to 1,881 applicants in 19 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 through 10 agencies that are experiencing "exceptional" drought. As of Friday, August 22, CSD has reported that a total of \$28,648 has been issued to 312 households.

CSD has also implemented a \$400,000 Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) drought assistance program, in coordination with the California Human Development (CHD), Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC), Center for Employment Training (CET) and Proteus, which provides assistance in employment training and placement services to individuals impacted by the drought. As of Friday, August 22, 56 clients are enrolled in employment training programs, 11 clients have obtained employment, and 41 clients are receiving employment support services. CSD has also reported that a total of \$92,527 has been spent to assist participants in completing training employment programs.

- **California Major League Baseball Teams Join The Effort To Save Water:** With the second half of the Major League Baseball (MLB) season starting off strong in California, the San Francisco Giants, San Diego Padres, Oakland Athletics and Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim have joined forces with Save Our Water to encourage [baseball fans to join the water conservation effort](#) during California's extraordinary drought.

- **Save Our Water Launches Spanish Website:** The Save Our Water campaign has [launched](#) a Spanish-language website - AhorreNuestraAqua.com - to help even more Californians learn about water conservation during this extraordinary drought. The website features Spanish videos and public service announcements, daily water-saving tips and news clips, a spotlight featuring Save Our Water partner agencies, email newsletter registration options for daily tips and news, social media updates and more.
- **Landscaper Workshops Scheduled in Truckee, ‘Get Ahead or Get Parched - 6 Ways to Survive the Drought’:** On Friday, September 5, a [workshop for professional landscapers](#) has been scheduled in Truckee, CA to help them efficiently manage water during the ongoing drought. Landscape watering is a prime conservation opportunity, since improperly managed outdoor watering can be exceptionally wasteful.
- **September is National Preparedness Month:** The California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services will be hosting the [California Day of Preparedness Fair](#) with a focus on water conservation efforts on Saturday, September 6, to inform and educate the public about emergency response in California and to encourage Californians to take steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and communities.
- **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 Task Force 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 58 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **25 Counties:** Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Napa, Plumas, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
 - **13 Cities:** 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 Portola (Plumas County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), City of Rio Dell (Humboldt County), and City of West Sacramento (Yolo County).
 - **8 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), Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County) and Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria (Sonoma County).
 - **12 Special Districts:** Brooktrails Township (Mendocino County), 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 30 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, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** A total of 2 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt Counties).

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