



Drought Update

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Camp Meeker Water District Releasing Water to Save Salmon:** On September 3, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife [announced](#) that the Camp Meeker Recreation and Parks District has begun releasing untreated water from its water treatment facility into Upper Dutch Bill Creek, a tributary to Russian River, for the benefit of summer-rearing Coho salmon and steelhead. Since the releases began last month, Dutch Bill Creek has improved flow and dissolved oxygen and temperature conditions are expected to keep juvenile Coho salmon alive until the winter rains arrive.
- **DWR Seeks Final Public Comment on Key Draft Groundwater Regulations:** On August 31, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) [announced](#) that three public meetings will be held to solicit final public review and comments for the draft groundwater regulations. The proposed regulations would establish a process for local agencies to follow if they seek to modify the boundaries of a groundwater basin. For more information regarding California's groundwater basins and subbasins, visit DWR's groundwater [website](#).
- **California Invests in Local Communities to Tackle Groundwater Management:** On September 4, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) [released](#) its draft guidelines for the [2015 Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant Program](#). The guidelines establish the processes that DWR will use to administer the \$10 million grant program to help counties with stressed groundwater basins develop or strengthen local ordinances and conservation plans. For more information, please visit DWR's Planning Grant Program [website](#).
- **CWC Releases Initial Draft Regulations for Distributing Proposition 1 Water Storage Funds:** On August 31, the California Water Commission (CWC) [released](#) the [initial draft regulations](#) for the [Water Storage Investment Program](#) (WSIP), which will be used to allocate \$2.7 billion in Proposition 1 funds to help fund water storage projects under Chapter 8.
- **Local Water Agencies' Innovative Conservation Campaigns Showcased at State Water Board Meeting:** On September 1, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) introduced a new interactive [Drought Response Gallery](#) during the State Water Board meeting, which showcases local outreach and innovative conservation campaigns. ACWA also highlighted some examples of how local water districts throughout California continue to develop new and creative ways to encourage customers to save water through a [video compilation](#) of conservation ads and media campaigns.
- **Reporting Resources Violations Faster, Easier Using CalTIP:** On August 28, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) [asked the public](#) to use [CalTIP](#), rather than social media, to report wildlife and pollution crimes across the state. The public can report issues directly in real time through any of the following ways: CalTIP phone number or text message, CalTIP smartphone app, or through the CDFW [website](#).

- **California’s Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** This past week, Save Our Water issued a [press release](#) in partnership with [Golden State Water Company](#) to launch their “Golden Lawn Contest” statewide. The contest encourages Golden State Water customers to share photos of their golden lawns through September 29 for a chance to win up to a \$100 credit toward their water bill. Additionally, a “Helping Hands” TV spot was finalized and started airing in six targeted markets over Labor Day weekend. For more tips and tools to help conserve water and keep trees healthy during the drought, please visit Save Our Water’s website, which is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#), or connect with the program on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).
- **Governor’s Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought. During the September 3 meeting, the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) provided an overview and live demo of the new drought web-based map journal to task force members.

ONGOING DROUGHT SUPPORT

- **Emergency Food Aid, Utility and Employment 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 859,275 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 771,446 boxes of food have been picked up by 405,749 households.

Food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. Nearly 70% of the food distributions have occurred in the Tulare Basin (Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare). There are 7,800 boxes scheduled for delivery for the week ending September 11 to Fresno, Kern, Kings, Riverside, San Joaquin, and Tulare counties.

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 August 28, CSD has reported that a total of \$397,103 has been issued to 2,008 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 has reported that a total of \$10,843 has been issued to the Center for Employment Training, California Human Development, Central Valley Opportunity Center, and Proteus with 25 participants enrolled.

In response to California’s historic drought, CSD has received \$7.5 million in General Fund to implement the Drought Emergency Assistance Program (DEAP) to provide emergency relief and support services to drought-impacted individuals and their families and households. As of August 28, CSD has reported that a total of \$360,195 has been issued to 357 households.

- **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:** Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE and the US Forest Service have responded to over 6,255 wildfires across the state, burning 525,766 acres. Fire activity across California remains high with nearly 176 combined wildfires in just the past week.
- **CAL FIRE Suspends Outdoor Residential Burning:** California's increased fire activity this year, coupled with record-setting drought conditions, has caused CAL FIRE to [suspend burn permits](#) in all counties in the State Responsibility Area.
- **Dry Well Reports:** With California in its fourth year of a severe, hot drought, the Governor's Drought Task Force continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. Recently, a cross-agency team, led by DWR, developed a new system that improves and streamlines data collection and reporting for [household water shortages](#) for California water systems with fewer than 15 household connections.

As of September 3, approximately 2,372 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 11,860 residents. Cal OES has reported that 2,225 of the 2,372 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley. If you are experiencing a water supply shortage, please [submit a report](#) on DWR's website.

- **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, 93 out of the 127 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 \$3.6 million of those funds.

- **Projected Reservoir Management:** Shasta Reservoir recorded 1,768,251 acre-feet (AF) on September 3 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 4,414 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 1,065,980 AF on September 3 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 1,449 AF/day. Releases are low for water supply conservation but are moderated 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 190,508 AF on September 3 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 1,109 AF/day. Releases are low for water supply conservation but are moderated to keep salt water from coming too far into the Delta and to meet other joint Federal-State obligations. 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 September 7 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 36% of capacity (44% of year to date average); Don Pedro 32% of capacity (46% of average); Exchequer 9% of capacity (17% of average); Folsom Lake 19% of capacity (32% of average); Lake Oroville 30% of capacity (46% of average); Lake Perris 36% (47% of average); Millerton Lake 32% of capacity (71% of average); New Melones 12% of capacity (21% of average); Pine Flat 12% of capacity (34% of average); San Luis 21% of capacity (48% of average); Lake Shasta 38% of capacity (61% of average); and Trinity Lake 26% of capacity (36% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

- **Weather Outlook:** Very warm and dry conditions will continue through the week, with afternoon highs up to 20 degrees warmer than the seasonal average. The hottest days are expected to be Tuesday through Thursday. Gradual cooling will begin near the coast by Wednesday or Thursday and then inland by Friday or Saturday.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 60 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **27 Counties:** Butte, 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, Stanislaus, 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 7 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Hopland Tribe (Mendocino County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou County), La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians (San Diego County), Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino County), Trinidad Tribe (Humboldt 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