



April 11, 2022

*The California Drought Update is a weekly roundup of conditions, state actions and upcoming developments. It is produced by an interagency team that includes the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Public Health. For the latest on drought, please visit [www.drought.ca.gov](http://www.drought.ca.gov). For tips and resources for conserving water, please visit [www.saveourwater.com](http://www.saveourwater.com).*

## Current Conditions

- The water year that ended Sept. 30 was the second driest on record. All of California's 58 counties are under a drought emergency proclamation.
- January, February and March 2022 were the driest on record dating back over 100 years, logging just six inches of precipitation across the Sierra Nevada. That is less than half the precipitation accumulated in the first three months of 2013, which had been the driest in the observed record.
- Statewide precipitation for the water year to date is 69 percent of average. Sierra-Cascades snowpack for the water year to date is 21 percent of average, down from 26 percent last week. Statewide reservoir storage is 70 percent of average for this time of year.
- Californians are being asked to reduce their water use by 15 percent over 2020 levels to protect water reserves and help maintain critical flows for fish and wildlife wherever possible.
- As of April 10, the state's [voluntary household dry well reporting system](#) received reports of 24 dry wells in the past 30 days. Four dry wells were reported in Butte and Fresno counties, and three were reported in Madera County.

## Recent Events and State Actions

**DWR issues runoff forecast (April 8):** As it does four times each spring, DWR published [Bulletin 120](#), which contains forecasts of the volume of seasonal runoff from the state's major watersheds and summaries of precipitation, snowpack, reservoir storage, and runoff in various regions of the state.



Forecasts in the bulletin underpin water project operational decisions by DWR and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and are used by the Water Board in making curtailment decisions. Following on the heels of intensely dry conditions in 2020 and 2021, the latest Bulletin 120 data shows the current water year has been marked by climate-driven extremes far outside the historical norm in California. Snowmelt this year began sooner and peaked earlier than seen before. DWR's forecasting and data collection teams are coordinating with hundreds of

scientists, researchers and partner agencies across the state to present the best picture of runoff conditions possible in the face of unprecedented drought conditions and climate whiplash.

**State Water Board receives draft plan for Sacramento River operations (April 7):** The State Water Board received a draft [Sacramento River Temperature Management Plan \(TMP\)](#) for Water Year 2022 from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The TMP describes how Reclamation plans to operate Shasta Reservoir through this third consecutive year of drought for the benefit of fish species in the Sacramento River. Board staff is assessing the plan in coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and DWR. The Board expects to receive the final plan on May 1.

**Allocations for Feather River contractors reduced by 50 percent (April 8):** Based on the runoff forecast in the latest Bulletin 120, DWR informed six water districts with senior water rights along the Feather River below Lake Oroville that their water supply allocation will be reduced by 50 percent this year. The reduction is triggered by low runoff into Lake Oroville forecast for this spring and summer.

**Funds released to repair major canal (April 7):** DWR announced an agreement to award \$3.3 million in funding to the San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority to repair segments of the Delta-Mendota Canal in the San Joaquin Valley that have been damaged by land subsidence tied to over-pumping of groundwater. The canal is one of four projects that will receive funds as part of a \$100 million initiative in the 2021-22 state budget to improve San Joaquin Valley water conveyance systems. Last month, DWR released \$29.8 million in funding to the Friant Water Authority to repair segments of the Friant-Kern Canal.



**Water conservation data for February reported (April 5):** The Water Board shared monthly water use data showing a statewide decrease in water consumption of .5 percent in February 2022 compared to February 2020. The South Coast, which includes 55 percent of the state's population, reduced demand by .2 percent. Water use rose in some regions, including a 6.7 percent increase in the Sacramento River region.

**State Water Board's Executive Director approves temporary urgency change petition (April 4):** The State Water Board [conditionally approved](#) a temporary urgency change petition (TUCP) [filed on March 18](#) by DWR and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (the state and federal water project operators). Effective from April 4 through June 30, the petition is expected to conserve water in upstream reservoirs for salinity control in the Delta, human health and safety supplies, hydropower operations and some level of fish protection. DWR and Reclamation started operating pursuant to the TUCP on April 4.

**New videos show easy ways to conserve water (ongoing):** The Save Our Water campaign is reaching Californians with helpful videos and tips for fixing leaks and reducing outdoor watering. Visit [www.saveourwater.com](http://www.saveourwater.com) for more.

**Curtailments adjusted (ongoing):** As drought conditions persist, the State Water Board continues to monitor six critical watersheds where worsening conditions may threaten water supplies. Curtailments

remain in effect in the [Delta watershed](#), two [sub-watersheds of the Delta](#) and in the [Shasta River watershed](#). Based on current conditions and available forecasts, curtailments in the [Russian River watershed](#) are temporarily suspended through the end of April and curtailments in the [Scott River watershed](#) are temporarily suspended through April 15. Water Board staff will continue to adjust curtailment orders as conditions change.

**DWR begins rebuilding rock salinity barrier in Delta (April 1):** The emergency drought salinity barrier across West False River in the Delta was notched in January to allow fish and boat passage. DWR began refilling the notch with large rocks to help prevent salinity intrusion in the Delta, which can help preserve supplies in upstream reservoirs. The refilling is expected to be completed by April 15.

## Tribal / Local Actions

- **Tribal governments:** Tribal emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians, Karuk Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Tule River Indian Tribe, Yurok Tribe, Wiyot Tribe.
- **Local government:** Local emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo.

## Upcoming Decisions / Milestones

**Save Our Water local events:** The Save Our Water program will have a presence at events next week in Los Angeles (**April 15**) to reach Californians with information on how to reduce water use now and make permanent changes as part of the California lifestyle.

**Workshop for small suppliers:** DWR and the Water Board are planning the first of three workshops for small water suppliers on **April 20**. The workshop is tied to the new requirements of SB 552, a 2021 law that requires drought contingency planning. The agencies will be seeking input on the water shortage contingency plan template for suppliers with fewer than 3,000 connections and for schools.

## Key Data Points and Resources

- Daily Hydrological & Climate Information summary: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=DLYHYDRO>
- Statewide water conditions: [http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water\\_cond.html](http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water_cond.html)
- Daily Reservoir Storage Summary: <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reservoir.html>
- Water Year Forecast and Monthly Distribution: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=B120DIST>
- Monthly water supplier reports on water production and conservation: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/conservation\\_portal/conservation\\_reporting.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/conservation_reporting.html)
- Latest groundwater conditions and information: <https://sgmatest.water.ca.gov/CalGWLive/>
- Information on state drought actions and assistance: <https://www.drought.ca.gov>
- Conservation tips and resources for consumers: <https://saveourwater.com/>