



April 4, 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 70 percent of average. Sierra-Cascades snowpack for the water year to date is 33 percent of average, down from 38 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 4, the state's [voluntary household dry well reporting system](#) received reports of 22 dry wells in the past 30 days. Five dry wells were reported in Fresno County, four in Butte County, and three in Tehama County.

## Recent Events and State Actions

**Survey finds little snow as statewide snowpack drops to 38 percent of average (April 1):** DWR conducted the fourth snow survey of the season at Phillips Station, near Echo Summit. Following three straight months of record dry conditions, the manual survey recorded just 2.5 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of one inch, which is four percent of average for this location for April 1. Statewide, the snowpack is just 38 percent of average for this date. The snowpack at Phillips Station has plummeted since the beginning of the year. On December 30, the snowpack stood at 202 percent of normal for that date. In a normal season, the snowpack depth would be about five feet deep at this time of year. The snow water equivalent measured at the snow survey shows the amount of water contained in the snowpack and is a key component of



DWR's water supply forecast, including anticipated runoff into the state's reservoirs. April 1 is typically when the snowpack is at its highest, however the statewide snowpack likely peaked in early March this year and the Northern Sierra snowpack peaked in mid-January. The DWR Director and Secretary for Natural Resources spoke to reporters afterward and urged Californians to conserve water.

**Reclamation revises Central Valley Project allocation (April 1):** Due to critically dry hydrologic conditions, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has notified Central Valley Project municipal and industrial (M&I) water service contractors that water deliveries will be reduced to public health and safety levels. Initial CVP water supply allocations were announced last month, which included a 25 percent allocation for M&I water service contractors with exception of north-of-Delta M&I contractors, who were already allocated public health and safety due to limited northern California water storage.

**Plan announced for temperature management on the Sacramento River (March 29):** Anticipating dire conditions this summer, federal and state agencies and Sacramento River Settlement Contractors agreed on a temperature management plan for Central Valley Project operations on the Sacramento



River from mid-April through November. The plan seeks to maintain winter-run chinook salmon habitat for the longest period possible and creates a target for an average water release schedule of 4,500 cubic feet per second from Keswick Dam below Lake Shasta and a target for Wilkins Slough on the Sacramento River of more than 3,000 cubic feet per second. Given this, Shasta – with a total capacity of 4.5 million acre-feet – would have a projected end of September storage of slightly greater than 1 million acre-feet.

**Governor issues drought Executive Order (March 28):** After a record-dry January, February, and March, Governor Newsom issued his fifth drought Executive Order since April 12, 2021. This latest Executive Order seeks to spur water conservation and mitigate the harm of new and deeper well drilling. The order directs the State Water Board to consider adopting emergency regulations that would require urban water suppliers to trigger locally developed water shortage contingency plans at a level that assumes a water supply shortfall of up to 20 percent. It also directs the Water Board to consider regulations to ban irrigation of ornamental grass in commercial, institutional, and industrial settings. The Water Board expects to act on both directives in June. In addition, the Executive Order directs local agencies that issue permits for new groundwater wells to consult with relevant groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) to get written verification that a new or deeper well would not be inconsistent with local groundwater sustainability plans.

**Save Our Water offers tips to prepare your yard for summer: (March 21):** With a hot, dry summer on the horizon, the Save Our Water campaign is offering tips to get your landscape ready for ongoing drought conditions. By putting effort into projects early in the spring, Californians can help their trees, plants and flowers survive the heat this summer. Tips and tricks to maintain a beautiful, water-wise yard all year long can be found on the [Save Our Water website](#).

**Curtailment adjustments (ongoing):** As drought conditions persist, the Water Board continues to monitor six critical watersheds where worsening conditions may threaten water supplies. On March 23, the Water Board reinstated curtailments for some water right holders in the Delta watershed. Interested parties can check the curtailment status of water rights in the Delta at the Board's [website](#). Curtailments remain in effect in 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 April 1 and curtailments in the Scott River watershed are temporarily suspended through April 4. Water Board staff will continue to adjust curtailment orders as conditions change.

## 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

**Water conservation data for February:** On **April 5** the Water Board will discuss the water use reported by water suppliers in February 2022 compared to February 2020.

**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/>