



Drought Update Monday, May 4, 2015

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Recent Precipitation: Over the last week, California received limited rainfall in several areas of the state, including: Parts of the Sierra Nevada range (1 to 2 inches of precipitation), the Central Coast (0.5 to 0.75 inches), the Central Valley (0.5 inches) and the mountains near San Diego (1 to 2 inches). The precipitation was minimal and had no substantive impact on drought conditions.

Below are estimates of precipitation totals (in inches) from April 27 through May 4, and year-to-date rainfall based on the water year cycle (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015).

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| • Bakersfield: 0.00" (4.61") | • Pacific House: 0.04" (27.92") |
| • Folsom Dam: 0.16" (29.69") | • Redding: 0.00" (31.04") |
| • Fresno: 0.00" (5.85") | • Riverside: 0.00" (4.23") |
| • Hetch Hetchy: 0.00" (17.72") | • Sacramento: 0.00" (13.58") |
| • Los Angeles: 0.00" (7.46") | • San Diego: 0.00" (6.53") |
| • Modesto: 0.00" (9.98") | • Shasta Dam: 0.00" (48.92") |
| • Oroville: 0.00" (25.84") | • Willits: 0.00" (37.92") |

Precipitation Forecast: Overall, dry conditions are expected across the state over the next week with temperatures expected to be warmer than average. Light storms are expected over the eastern Sierra on Monday and Tuesday, but these events will not provide significant rainfall.

Snow Survey: As of May 1, [automated snow sensors](#) captured the statewide average snowpack conditions at just 2 percent of the average to date. Regionally, the Northern Sierra Nevada is at 2 percent of average, the Central Sierra is at 1 percent of average, and the Southern Sierra Nevada is at zero percent of average. DWR reports that many watersheds with snowpack are experiencing peak runoff and that snow runoff will begin to sharply decline moving forward.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): Since April 24, Central Valley reservoirs from Shasta and Trinity in the North to Isabella in the South had a net loss in storage of 101,800 acre-feet, with total gains being 24,500 acre-feet and total losses being 126,300 acre-feet. Shasta Reservoir decreased by 46,600 acre-feet, while San Luis Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, decreased its storage by 25,700 acre-feet.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of May 3 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 30% of capacity (33% of year to date average); Don Pedro 41% of capacity (56% of average); Exchequer 10% of capacity (17% of average); Folsom Lake 59% of capacity (78% of average); Lake Oroville 50% of capacity (61% of average); Lake Perris 39% (46% of average); Millerton Lake 37% of capacity (52% of average); New Melones 20% of capacity (32% of average); Pine Flat 22% of capacity (35% of average); San Luis 62% of capacity (70% of average); Lake Shasta 58% of capacity (67% of average); and Trinity Lake 48% of capacity (58% of average). An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

Fire Activity: Since the beginning of the year, CAL FIRE has responded to over 1,065 wildfires across the state, burning 4,129 acres in the State Responsibility Area. This fire activity is above the five year average for the same time period with 612 fires and 2,055 acres burned. CAL FIRE has hired additional seasonal firefighters and trained in preparation for the peak fire season and continues to augment resources throughout the state as needed.

Each year, California highlights the importance of wildfire prevention and preparedness during Wildfire Awareness Week. During the week of May 4, CAL FIRE and other state, local and federal agencies will remind residents of the dangers posed by wildfires and the simple steps that should be followed to prevent and prepare for, especially during the drought.

Open Burn Bans: Burn bans were lifted throughout the State during the winter, while restrictions on burning remained in place in many areas. As the state transitions to the dry season, open burn bans are once again being implemented in certain counties. Recently, [burn bans were instituted](#) in Fresno, King, Monterey, San Benito, Tulare County and Marin County.

Vulnerable Water Systems: The State Water Board [Division of Drinking Water Programs](#) continues to provide technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state. As of this week, approximately \$14.8 million has been committed for specific emergency drinking water projects out of \$15 million appropriated early last year for this purpose. Additional funds to continue assisting emergency projects have been appropriated by the recent emergency drought legislation announced this past March.

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Governor Brown Announces Efforts to Help Cities Bolster Water Waste Enforcement, and Streamline Water Projects:** On April 28, [Governor Brown held a meeting with mayors](#) from across the state and discussed how to help cities and water districts meet new state mandated water reductions and build new local water supply projects. Specifically, Governor Brown announced that he would propose state law changes to help local officials better enforce conservation requirements and will direct state agencies to help local governments streamline local water supply projects.
- **Governor Brown Announces New Dual Approach to Delta: California WaterFix and California EcoRestore:** On April 30, Governor Brown [announced](#) a new dual approach to improving water conveyance and ecosystem health in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. [California WaterFix](#) and [California EcoRestore](#), formally known as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDGP), which would accelerate the restoration of the Delta's ecosystem and fix the state's aging water infrastructure. The governor's proposed approach no longer seeks a 50-year permit, but would upgrade Delta conveyance and restore habitat through separate permitting tracks. The approach proposes to simultaneously advance new water conveyance and habitat restoration in the Delta.
- **State Water Board Issues Curtailment Orders:** On May 1, the State Water Board issued curtailment notices for all junior water-right holders within the [Sacramento River watershed and Delta](#) due to insufficient flows along the Sacramento River. The Water Board requires water rights holders to curtail their diversion of surface water supplies when rivers and streams reach critically low levels. Curtailments often translate to reduced water for agricultural irrigation. In pre-drought years, these water rights holders reported average diversions of five million acre-feet from June through September.

- **State Board Releases Formal Emergency Regulation for Mandatory Reductions in Urban Water Use:** On April 28, the State Water Board released the [formal emergency regulatory package](#) for implementing the state's required 25% reduction in urban water use. This package is the third iteration of the regulation, which was first released April 7, then again April 18 after modifications. The statewide 25% reduction was outlined in the April 1 emergency executive order issued by Governor Brown. The State Board is responsible for implementing the reduction and is scheduled to adopt the regulations by May 6.
- **State Water Board Approves Petition to Allow Water Transfers South of the Delta:** On April 27, the State Water Board approved a request from the state's two major water projects to allow more [efficient transfers of water south of the Delta](#) to address critical supply needs. The approval, similar to those granted in previous years, is supportive of the Governor's direction to take actions to expedite transfers. It allows easier water transfers among contractors of the State Water Project and the federal Central Valley Project.
- **Sacramento River Fishing Closure into Effect Monday:** On April 24, the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) approved the recommendation by the state Fish and Game Commission to [close more than five miles of the Sacramento River](#) to fishing and will go into effect on May 4. The emergency regulation closes all fishing on the 5.5 mile stretch of the Sacramento River from the Highway 44 Bridge where it crosses the Sacramento River upstream to Keswick Dam. The closure will protect critical spawning habitat and eliminate any incidental stress or hooking mortality of winter-run salmon by anglers.
- **Investing in Innovative Water & Energy Saving Technologies:** In response to California's drought, the California Energy Commission (CEC) is taking steps outlined in Governor Brown's Executive Order B-29-15 to save water and invest in new water energy technologies. CEC, jointly with the Department of Water Resources, and the State Water Board, will implement a [Water Energy Technology \(WET\) program](#) to provide funding for innovative technologies to accelerate the deployment of innovative water and energy saving technologies and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A [fact sheet](#) is available on the CEC website.

In addition, CEC will provide monetary incentives for the replacement of inefficient water consuming appliances and devices in homes including single- and multi-family. The [Drought Rebate Program](#) will help residents capture water savings while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A [fact sheet](#) is available on the CEC website.

- **Second Round of State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) Funding:** The California Department of Food and Agriculture has announced that a second round of State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) grant funding will be available mid-May for awards up to \$150,000. SWEEP will provide an estimated \$10 million in competitive grant funding for financial assistance to agricultural operations to implement water conservation measures that result in increased water efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. For detailed information and program requirements visit the [SWEEP](#) website.
- **California Board of Food and Agriculture to Host Drought Forum May 5:** The California Board of Food and Agriculture (Board) will host a [Drought Forum in Fresno on May 5](#) to hear updates on drought response activities and statewide water operations from the Director Mark Ghilarducci, Governor's Office of Emergency Services and Drought Coordinator Bill Croyle, Department of Water Resources.

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental, and Utility Assistance:** The Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 620,650 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 567,850 boxes of food have been picked up by 298,901 households. By May 8, an additional 11,380 boxes will be delivered to Fresno, Kern, Lake, San Joaquin, and Tulare counties.

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 April 23, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$8,687,425 have been issued to 5,902 applicants in 21 counties, with \$69,575 remaining in assistance funds.

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 \(DWAP\)](#) pilot project which provides financial assistance to help low-income families pay their water bills. This program targets low-income families in 10 counties identified as experiencing a high unemployment rate, high share of agricultural workers and designated to have “exceptional” drought conditions according to the U.S. Drought Monitor Classification System. As of April 30, CSD has reported that a total of \$28,396 has been issued to 160 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 has been provided in coordination with the California Human Development (CHD), Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC), and Center for Employment Training (CET) and Proteus, which provides employment training and placement services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers suffering job loss or reduced employment due to the drought. CSD is finalizing contract terms with these organizations and anticipates services to begin June 1, 2015.

- **California’s Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** The Save Our Water “Keep Saving CA” campaign reports a surge in online visits to its saveourwater.com site in mid-April. The water saving tips section proved to be the most popular destination. The recently updated statewide public education campaign gives Californians a pat on the back for their water-saving efforts to date – and asks them to do more. The state’s campaign is also being utilized by local water districts. On Earth Day, Save Our Water launched a revamped Landscaping 101 section on their website featuring an all-new section dedicated to local gardening websites and expanded information on invasive species.

The Keep Saving CA campaign will run through the end of June and includes billboards, outdoor media, traditional and digital radio, digital and social media, and on-the-street efforts that will be seen and heard throughout the state. The campaign includes a robust new website loaded with easy-to-use water-saving tips at saveourwater.com. Save Our Water connects with Californians on its [Facebook](#) page, [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

- **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 that appropriated over \$1 billion of additional funds for drought-related projects and activities.

- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

Local Government

- **City of San Diego Public Utilities Department Wins 2015 U.S. Water Prize:** On April 17, the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department was awarded the annual U.S. Water Prize for its efforts relating to the [Water Purification Project](#). The U.S. Water Prize, awarded by the U.S. Water Alliance (USWA), was created five years ago to honor organizations whose actions further the goal of water sustainability. San Diego's Water Purification Demonstration Project established the viability of supplementing local drinking water supplies with purified recycled water.
- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 56 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **26 Counties:** El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Plumas, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
 - **10 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 Portola (Plumas County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), City of San Juan Bautista (San Benito County), City of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara 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.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 31 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, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** A total of 4 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians (Sonoma County), Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino 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