



## Drought Update

### Monday, August 17, 2015

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#### **KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK**

- **Governor Brown Visits San Diego to Discuss Drought:** On August 12, Governor Brown [met with San Diego area leaders](#) to discuss drought impacts, conservation targets, and the efforts to diversify water supply. Following the meeting, Governor Brown and San Diego Mayor Faulconer held a joint news conference in which the governor applauded the San Diego region for its water supply investments and conservation efforts, and indicated his willingness to revisit mandatory conservation tiers.
- **Do Not Count on a Possible El Niño to End Drought:** On August 13, the California State Climatologist [issued](#) a statement that California cannot count on potential El Niño conditions to halt or reverse drought conditions. A historical look at past years with similar El Niño conditions as currently forecasted provide little guidance as to what California might expect this winter regarding rain and snow. A short overview with more detail and information on the unpredictable nature of the El Niño phenomenon is available [here](#).
- **\$30 Million in Rebates to Replace Old Toilets and Turf:** On August 12, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) [announced](#) two new rebate programs to encourage Californians to reduce water usage. The “turf and toilet” rebate programs will reduce water use in homes by replacing more than 10 million square-feet of lawn and upgrading more than 60,000 water-wasting toilets. The rebate programs provide a \$100 consumer rebate to replace one old toilet per household and up to \$2 per square foot for lawn replacement. Californians can visit [SaveOurWaterRebates.com](#) to apply for the rebates.
- **Energy Commission Approves New Standards to Save 38 Billion Gallons of Water:** On August 12, the California Energy Commission [approved](#) new [standards for showerheads](#) in response to the state’s historic drought. The standards are expected to save more than 2.4 billion gallons of water in the first year and 38 billion gallons after full stock turnover in 10 years. The commission also voted to change the start date for the recently adopted [standard for lavatory faucets](#), effective on July 1, 2016.
- **Drought Prompts Fish Evacuation at San Joaquin Hatchery:** On August 13, the Department of Fish and Wildlife started [moving fish](#) out of the San Joaquin Hatchery near Fresno for the first time due to extreme drought conditions, which has reduced the cold water supply in Millerton Reservoir. The water level at Millerton Lake is so low that the temperature is not cold enough for the hatchery fish to survive. Fall and winter rains, if received in sufficient amounts, will cool water temperatures enough to allow hatcheries to come back online and resume operations.

- **California to Receive Nearly \$16 Million in Grants to Help Protect Threatened and Endangered Species:** On August 13, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [announced](#) that California will receive nearly \$16 million from the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (CESCD) to assist in wildlife conservation planning and habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species. The complete the list of CESCD awards is now [available](#).
- **Department of Conservation Updates Oil and Gas Industry Water Use Information:** On August 13, the Department of Conservation [provided](#) additional information about the oil and gas industry's handling of water. The data builds upon an ongoing monthly reporting process to include further details about where water is obtained and its treatment and disposal. The data collected will be used to determine whether more treated water from oil production can be put to further productive use in oil and gas activities, as well as for beneficial uses.
- **Reclamation Selects 23 Projects Totaling \$5.2 Million to Build Drought Resiliency in Nine States:** On August 12, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) [announced](#) the selection of 23 projects to receive grants totaling \$5.2 million for proactive drought planning and other efforts to build long-term drought resiliency in nine western states. Through a competitive process, Reclamation selected 12 drought resiliency projects and 11 drought contingency planning projects in the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas and Washington.
- **Los Angeles Reservoir Covered with 96 Million "Shade Balls":** On August 11, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) [completed](#) a project which covers the Los Angeles reservoir's 175-acre surface with a total of 96 million "shade balls." According to LADWP, the project will help comply with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's drinking water quality requirements and save more than 300 million gallons of water annually. The 4-inch black plastic balls are weighted and float on the water's surface blocking sunlight to reduce evaporation and to prevent chemical reactions and algae blooms.
- **Drought Education Clinics at Orchard Supply Hardware and Lowe's:** On August 22, Lowe's and Orchard Supply Hardware (OSH) will be [hosting](#) a series of in-store drought education clinics at all California locations. Each store will have a Drought Ambassador available to answer questions alongside a Smart Water Use endcap of products on display. Store locators are available on the [Lowe's](#) and [OSH](#) websites.
- **Imagine H2O to Launch Inaugural Water Policy Challenge with \$25k Prize:** On August 12, Imagine H2O, leading non-profit accelerator for water innovation, [announced](#) its 2015 California Water Policy Challenge. The Challenge aims to identify policy approaches that help California's cities, farms and industries deploy water technologies. The winning entry will receive up to \$25,000 in support. For more information, visit [Imagine H2O's website](#).
- **California's Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** This past week, the Shock Top Brewing Co. launched their "[Shock the Drought](#)" campaign in partnership with [Indiegogo](#) and Save Our Water. The first campaign for the Shock the Drought initiative is [Drop-A-Brick 2.0](#), a product designed to displace water in toilet tanks, thus tricking toilets into using less water with each flush. In other partnerships, [TBD Fest](#) music festival launched a [Save Our Water playlist](#) of short shower songs. Additionally, Save Our Water posters have started to appear in Starbucks stores across the state.

For 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 most recent Task Force meeting on August 13, the Governor's Office announced that the next regional Drought Task Force meetings are scheduled for August 17 in the City of Salinas (Monterey County) and on September 1 in Los Angeles.

The Labor Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) has announced that the newly initiated California Drought Relief the Employment Training Program has registered 91 individuals for 23 different worksite projects. This program provides training to both workers and employers at community colleges in regions severely impacted by the drought.

## **ONGOING DROUGHT SUPPORT**

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental and Utility 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 815,750 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 730,619 boxes of food have been picked up by 384,375 households.

Food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. Over 70% of the food distributions have occurred in the Tulare Basin (Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare). There are 15,000 boxes scheduled for delivery for the week ending August 21, to Fresno, Kern, Lake, Riverside, San Joaquin, Tulare, and Yuba County.

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 7, CSD has reported that a total of \$333,074 has been issued to 1,690 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 \$10,000 has been issued to the Center for Employment Training, California Human Development, and Central Valley Opportunity Center with 13 participants enrolled.

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. To date, all contracts have been executed, the program has been implemented, and outreach activities have begun. CSD will receive the first report on August 14.

- **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 U.S. Forest Service have responded to 5,650 wildfires across the state, burning 260,000 acres. Fire activity across California remains high with nearly 250 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:** As California enters the fourth consecutive summer of drought, Cal OES continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. Approximately 2,214 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 11,070 residents. As of August 12, Cal OES has reported that 2,117 of the 2,214 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley.
- **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, 90 out of the 119 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 \$3.4 million of those funds.
- **Projected Reservoir Management:** Shasta Reservoir recorded 1,901,829 acre-feet (AF) on August 13 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 7,072 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 1,104,078 AF on August 13 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 3,797 AF/day. Releases are higher than normal to help make up for reduced flows out of Shasta. These higher flows are 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 239,894 AF on August 13 with a 10-day average reduction in storage of 3,464 AF/day. Releases are higher than normal to help make up for reduced flows out of Shasta. 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 August 16 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 38% of capacity (46% of year to date average); Don Pedro 33% of capacity (45% of average); Exchequer 10% of capacity (17% of average); Folsom Lake 24% of capacity (35% of average); Lake Oroville 31% of capacity (45% of average); Lake Perris 36% (46% of average); Millerton Lake 33% of capacity (60% of average); New Melones 13% of capacity (22% of average); Pine Flat 13% of capacity (30% of average); San Luis 22% of capacity (47% of average); Lake Shasta 41% of capacity (62% of average); and Trinity Lake 31% of capacity (41% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

- **Weather Outlook:** Dry weather with mostly clear skies can be expected over the central California interior for the next several days. The coastal areas will experience some cooling early this week while inland areas will remain very warm. The hottest weather will be early in the week and then slightly milder temperatures are expected by mid-week.

## **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](http://www.sba.gov/disaster)