

# CALIFORNIA DROUGHT UPDATE

JULY 11, 2022

## Current Conditions

- California and much of the Western U.S. is immersed in a third consecutive year of extreme drought. This is also the third statewide drought declared in California during this century (2007-2009, 2012-2016, 2020 – present).
- A growing body of evidence is starting to show that our current drought situation is an extension of the 2012 – 2016 drought, interrupted by just a few wet years.
- January, February, and March 2022 were the driest on record dating back over 100 years, with just six inches of precipitation observed across the Sierra Nevada.
- California entered the dry summer months with below-average reservoir storage and with the state's largest reservoir, Shasta Lake, at critically low levels. The Sierra snowpack is essentially gone, and runoff into the state's streams and reservoirs has largely peaked for the year.
- All of California's 58 counties are under a drought emergency proclamation. 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 June 27, the state's [voluntary household dry well reporting system](#) received reports of 170 dry wells in the past 30 days. Most reports came from Fresno, Madera, and Tulare counties.

*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).*



# Recent Events and State Actions

## Water conservation data shows improvement in May and June (July 8):

Statewide urban water use in May 2022 was 3.1 percent lower than in May 2020, and preliminary data from June 2022 representing 39 percent of the state’s population shows water savings of 7.9 percent for June 2022 compared to June 2020, according to the latest information from the State Water Board. The increase in conservation reverses the trend of March and April, when water use spiked at the conclusion of what was the driest January, February and March on record dating back over 100 years.



## State and local leaders highlight key drought response actions in

### Southern California following state budget signing (July 7):

State and local leaders gathered at the Sheldon Reservoir Project in Pasadena to highlight drought response actions included in the recently signed 2022-2023 state budget, and to raise urgency around the statewide call to action for Californians to cut back on water use amidst extreme drought conditions. California is investing \$2.8 billion in near- and long-term drought response actions to build water resilience and promote water conservation, including \$75 million for turf replacement and \$100 million for other water-saving strategies. “As drought intensifies across the west, we all need to do our part to save water and stretch our water supplies,” said Wade Crowfoot, Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency. “New funding just approved in the state budget will help local communities build their drought resilience and help California residents and businesses across the state take action now to reduce water use, especially outdoors where up to 60 percent of water waste occurs.”



## State budget funds drought response (June 30):

The Governor signed a \$308 billion budget that provides an additional \$2.8 billion one-time general fund investment over multiple years to support water management. This includes \$1.5 billion that will be allocated in the summer after additional discussions with the Legislature. The investments include \$400 million for state revolving funds that help finance drinking water and wastewater projects, \$100 million for dam safety and flood management, \$50 million for the Save Our Water public education campaign, \$300 million for urban and small community drought-relief grants, \$50 million for provision of emergency drinking water supplies, \$75 million for fish and wildlife protection, \$10 million for migratory bird habitat, \$25 million for relief for small farm operators, and \$75 million for turf-removal incentives. This 2022-23 budget builds on the historic \$5.2 billion, three-year investment in California water systems enacted in 2021-22. Details are available at [drought.ca.gov](https://drought.ca.gov).



## Small community drought relief (June 29):

DWR announced it is providing critical financial support to four urgent projects in Humboldt, Los Angeles, Modoc, Shasta, and Siskiyou counties through the Small Community Drought Relief Program. In coordination with the State Water Board, DWR has awarded \$2 million in funding to support four identified projects that will improve drought resilience and address local water needs. The program has awarded more than \$175 million to 89 projects across the state and focuses on building long term drought resilience.

## Recent Events and State Actions

**Large tidal habitat restoration project underway (June 30):** DWR held a groundbreaking ceremony at the Lookout Slough Tidal Habitat Restoration and Flood Improvement Project near Dixon. Speakers included the DWR director, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of the Army, and the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation cultural resources director. The approximately 3,400-acre site will be California's largest tidal habitat restoration project. This project comes at a key time as drought and climate change have elevated the importance for available tidal floodplain habitat for Delta smelt. The planned project includes the construction of a new 25-foot-tall setback levee, excavation of over 20 miles of new tidal channels, and habitat restoration that will restore tidal hydrology.

**Curtailment adjustments (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](#) and the [Shasta River watershed](#). Curtailments were reinstated in the [Russian River watershed](#) and [Scott River watershed](#) on July 1. Curtailments were lifted for the [Mill Creek and Deer Creek watersheds](#) (sub-watersheds of the Delta) on July 1. Board staff will continue to adjust curtailment orders as conditions change. Water right holders should closely monitor the watershed webpages and their email for curtailment updates.

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**Tracking urban water use (ongoing):** The Water Board's [conservation portal](#) has new dashboards and graphics and allows people to get information about water consumption within specific water agencies.

## 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, Madera, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo.

## Upcoming Decisions / Milestones

**Workshop on business water efficiency practices:** DWR hosts a virtual public workshop on **July 19** to solicit input on water use efficiency practices for commercial, industrial, and institutional conservation programs. The input will help shape turf conversion programs and technical assistance.

**Water conservation data for June:** On **August 2**, the Water Board will discuss the water use reported by water suppliers in June 2022 compared to June 2020.

## 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/>