



5/13/2026

# California County Café

– Specializing in Drought Resilience



# Welcome and Setting Intention

*Charles Delgado - CA State Association of Counties*  
*Julia Ekstrom - CA Department of Water Resources*



# On the Menu

## Welcome and Setting Intention

- The C3 Process
- Statewide SB 552 Status

## Standing updates on...

- Hydro-climate conditions update - featuring **Jeanine Jones** from DWR
- Funding & assistance, State & partner updates, Policy updates

## Closing



# The C3 Process

**Desired outcome** – Network and exchange ideas and resources among counties.

- Increase understanding of SB 552 intent and requirements.
- Share implementation approaches, practices, and experience.
- Compare resource needs and share funding opportunities.
- Improve coordination with other agencies, partner organizations, and interested parties.

**Our format** – Bimonthly virtual gatherings on (*usually*) the last Wednesday of the month from 9-10am. Meetings are not recorded; presentation and summary shared with attendees. Format includes recurring updates plus feature presentations as appropriate.

**Intended audience** – County staff responsible for SB 552 and Drought Resilience Plan implementation.  
*Appreciate others listening in but primary focus is for County staff.*

California County Café Series: Living Summary of Sessions & Resources Updated: April 2026

### Risk Assessment

**Discussed: July 2024 Gathering, June 2025 Office Hours**

- In July, **Madera County** and **Tuolumne County** shared their experience completing the water shortage risk assessment portion of the DRP. They demonstrated the use of tools such as DWR's [Water Shortage Vulnerability Test to assess and communicate the vulnerability to](#)

### California County Café Series: Living Summary of Sessions & Resources

Starting in May 2024, the Department of Water Resources (DWR), in partnership with the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), began hosting the California County Café (C3) series: monthly gatherings to support counties in planning and implementing [Senate Bill \(SB\) 552 of 2021 \(Hertzberg\)](#). The series is in response to feedback from counties during the development of the [County Drought Resilience Planning Guidebook](#). During that process, counties emphasized the benefits and values of sharing information and best practices to support learning from each other.

The C3 series is meant to strengthen the county network to promote and make progress in drought resilience throughout the state, including economically and socially disadvantaged communities. During the gatherings, counties share experiences, best practices, and insights to advance the implementation of SB 552 and improve countywide drought resilience beginning with the immediate needs for developing County Drought Resilience Plan (DRP). The meetings are not recorded, but summaries covering the content shared and any relevant resources are provided following each gathering.

This Living Summary of Sessions & Resources compiles the topics discussed and resources shared and is updated as gatherings occur. Each section includes a summary of the key content shared, references the presenting counties, and links to any materials or presentations provided.

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#### Task Force Formation

**Discussed: May 2024 Gathering**

- Presentations from **Santa Cruz County**, **El Dorado Water Agency**, **San Luis Obispo County**, and **Butte County** shared different approaches to forming a Task Force to support the development and implementation of Drought Resilience Plans (DRPs). Speakers highlighted the value of interdepartmental coordination, agency collaboration, and building community trust.
- Presentation available at: <https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Water-Use-And-Efficiency/Urban-Water-Use-Efficiency/SB-552/California-County-Cafe-C3-052924.pdf>

The California County Café Series is cohosted by DWR and CSAC



Summary of past sessions & shared resources. Available [here](#).



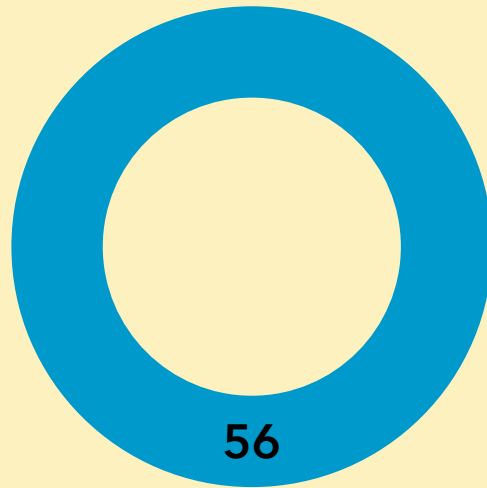
# Essentials of the C3 Gathering

- ✓ Join the conversation – share your experience and learn from other perspectives and experiences.
- ✓ Make a connection – use the chat to connect with other participants.
- ✓ County focused – While all are invited to join, this gathering will focus on supporting county staff.

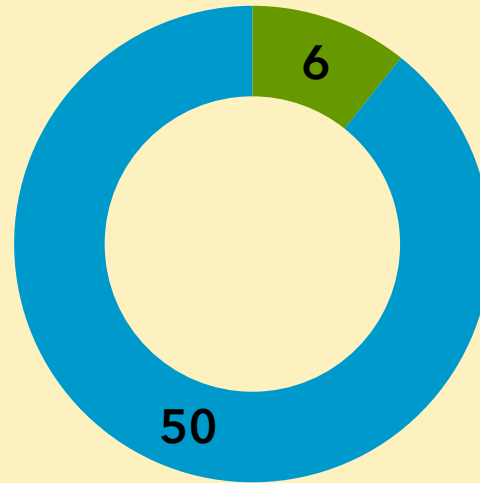


# Statewide SB 552 Status

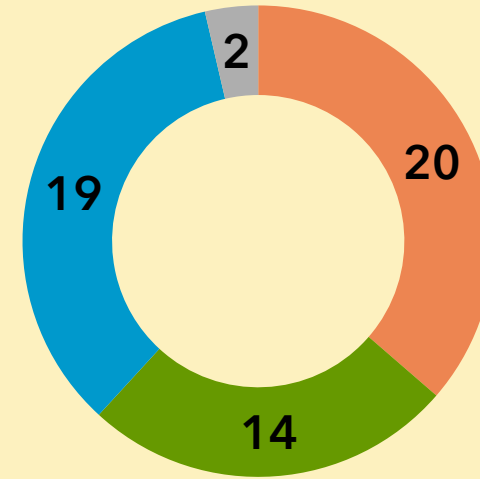
Task Force Formation



County Drought Resilience Plan Development



County Drought Resilience Plan Adoption\*



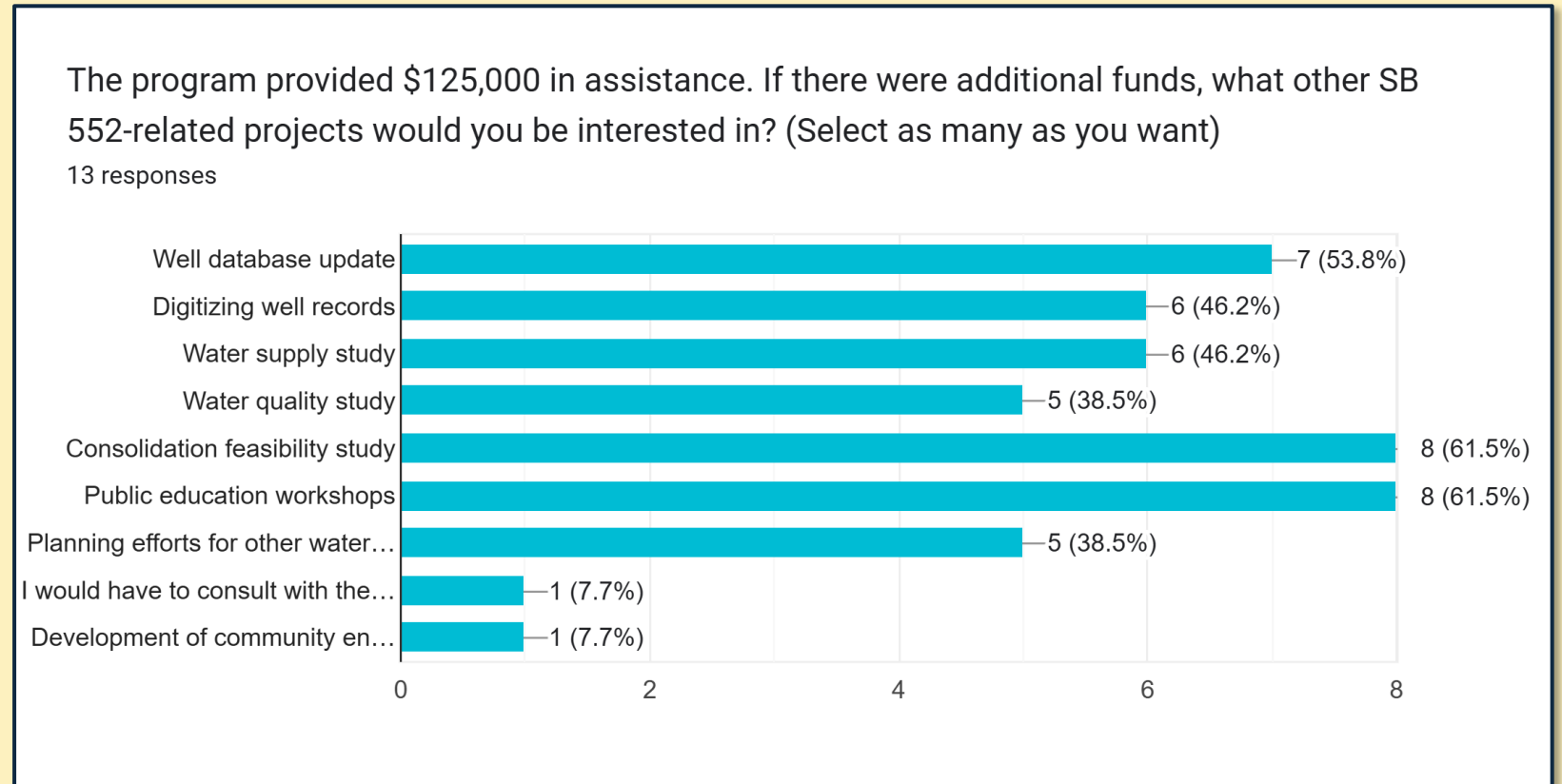
■ Unknown ■ Planned ■ Completed ■ Not Applicable

Source: 5/5/2026 data based on input from 56 counties enrolled in DWR's assistance program. Exclusions: The City and County of San Francisco are covered by other requirements, and one County has not enrolled in DWR's assistance program.

**\* - Plan adoption is not required by SB 552 legislation**

# Looking Towards Implementation

DWR conducting exit interviews for those enrolled in DTA and grants to better understand implementation needs throughout the State.

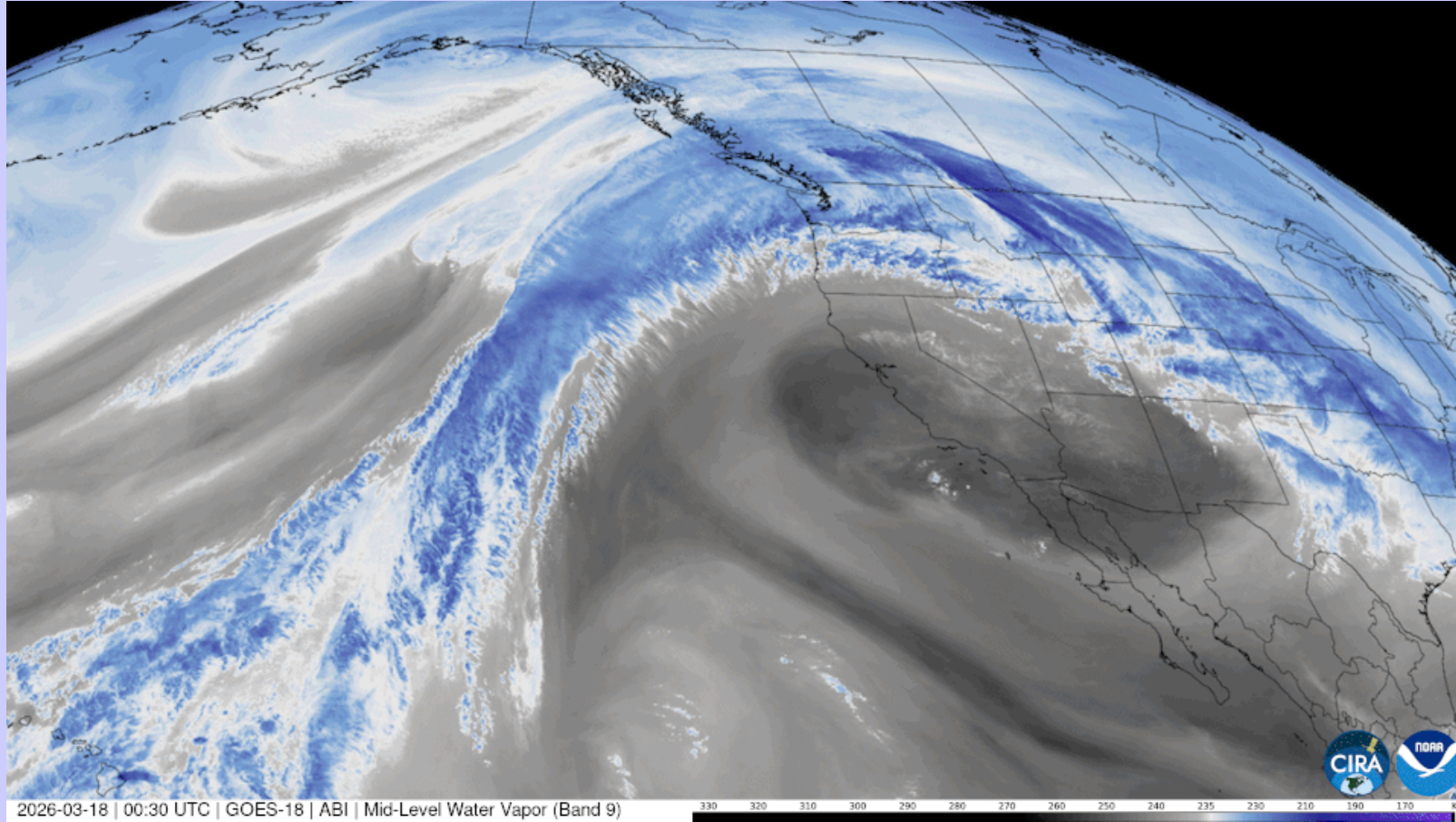




# Hydro-Climate Update

*Jeanine Jones – Interstate Resources Manager, CA Dept of Water Resources*





## Hydrologic Conditions & Water Supply Outlook

Jeanine Jones, California Department of Water Resources

## Precipitation Statistics (period of record: 1981-current)

### Statewide as of 05/11/2026

Water Year to Date: **21.55"**

% of Average: **99%**

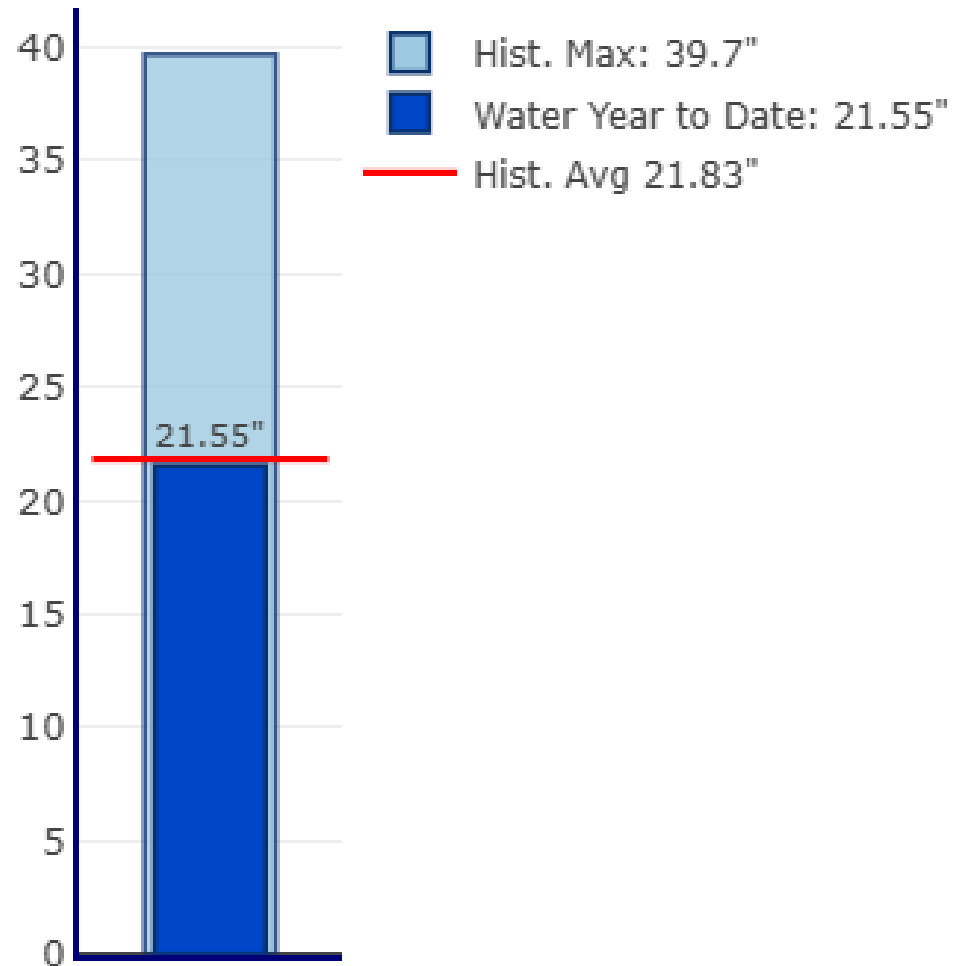
Precipitation % of average for full  
water year through September  
30th: **91%**

#### Historical Record to Date:

Max: **39.7"**

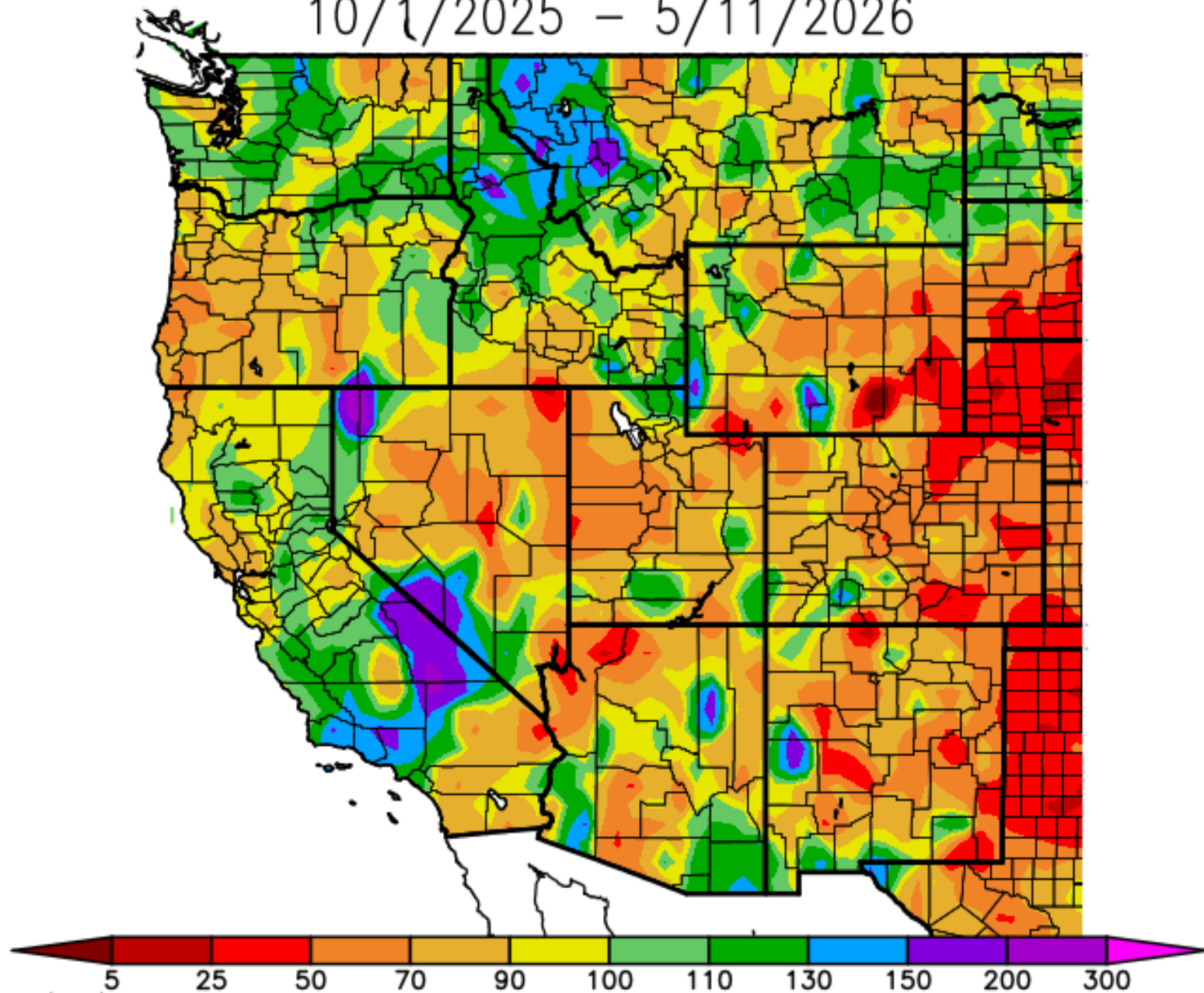
Mean: **21.83"**

Min: **10.93"**



Precipitation for water year to date is  
99% of historical average

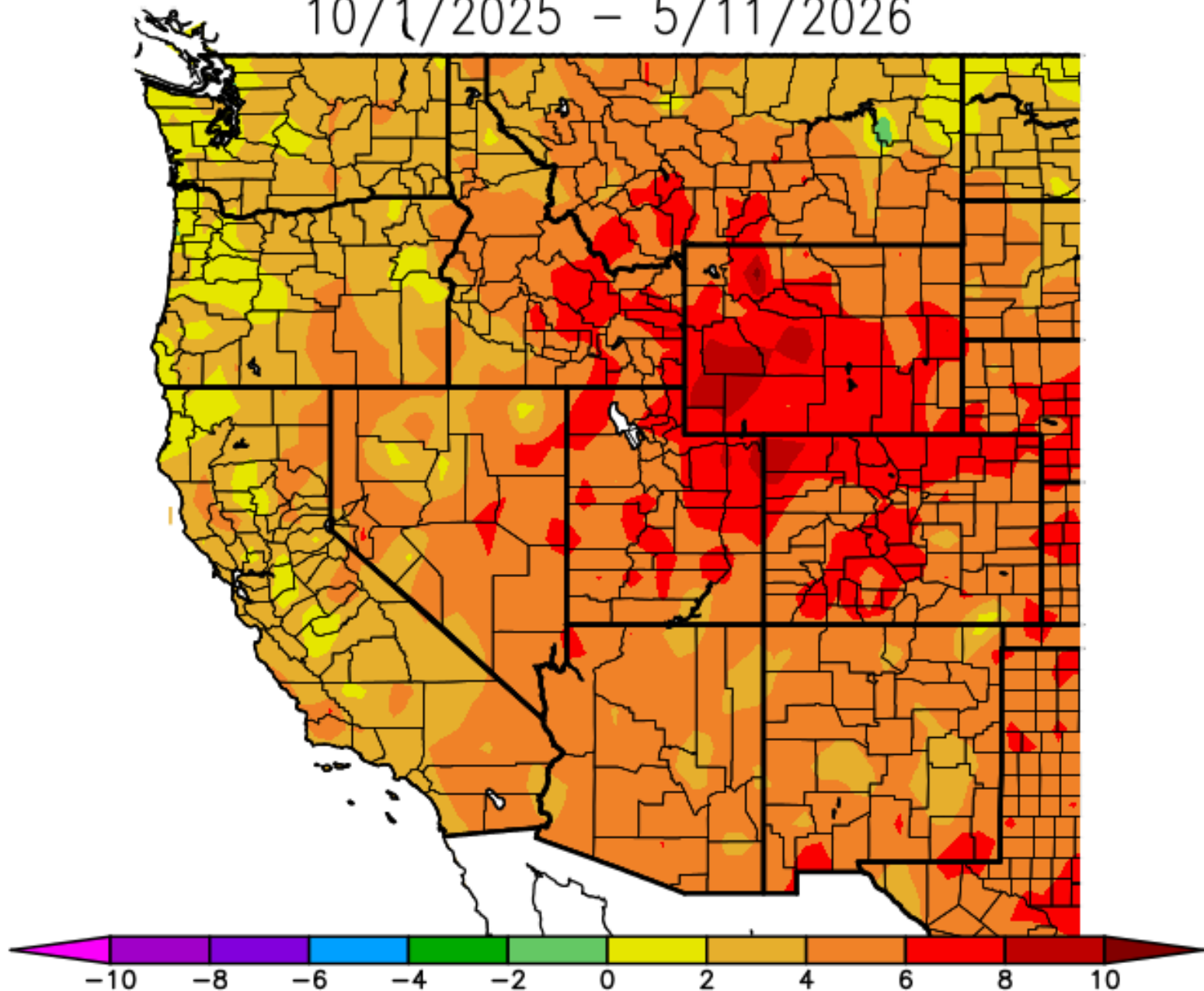
# Percent of Average Precipitation (%) 10/1/2025 – 5/11/2026



Generated 5/12/2026 at WRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

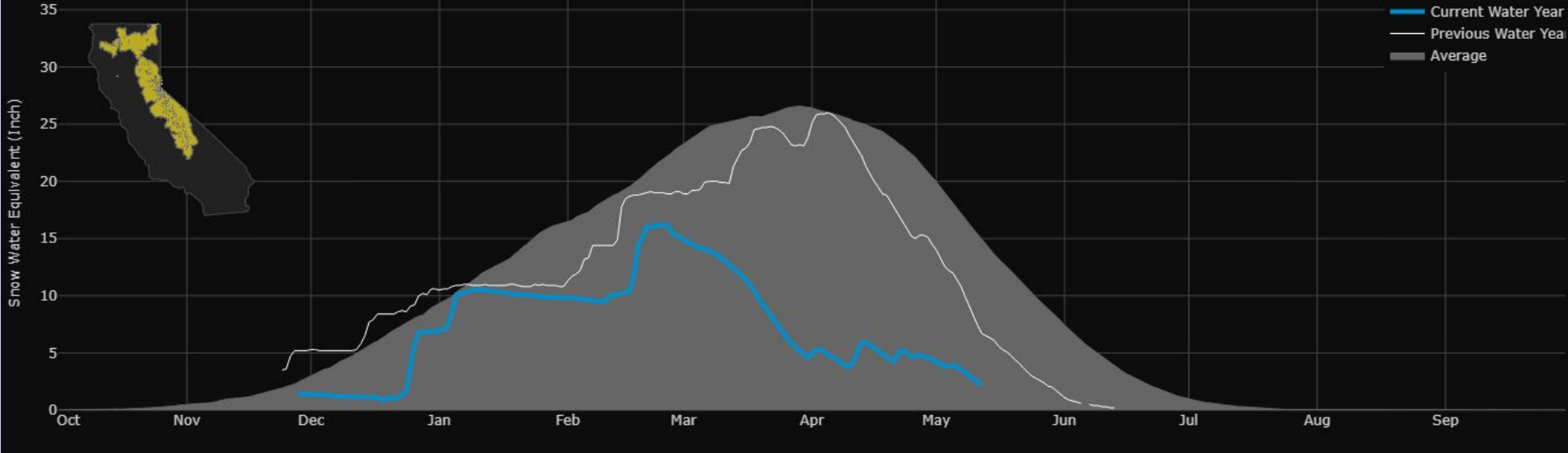
Ave. Temperature dep from Ave (deg F)  
10/1/2025 - 5/11/2026



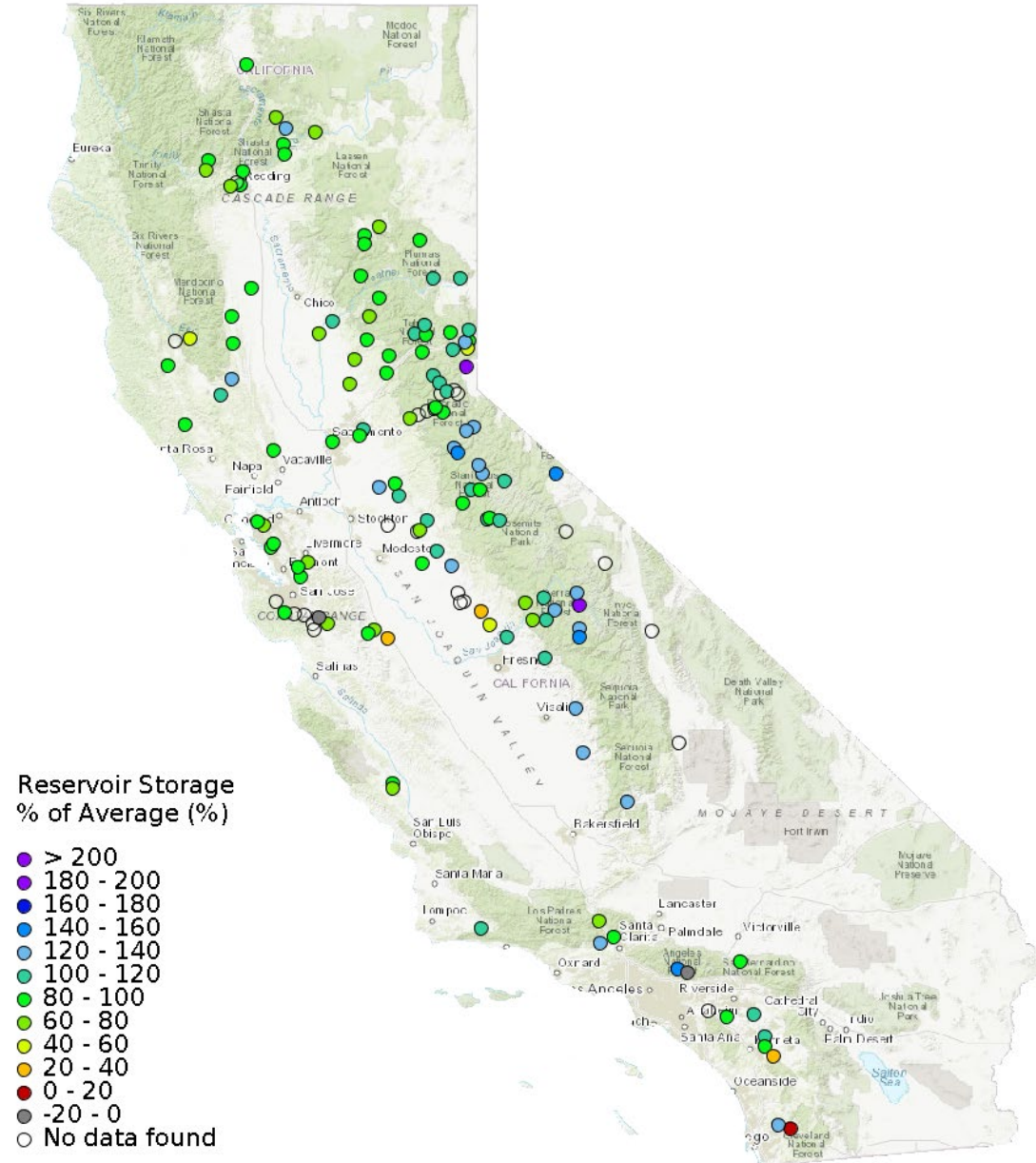
Generated 5/12/2026 at WRCC using provisional data.  
NOAA Regional Climate Centers

### Statewide Snowpack as of 5/12/2026

Percent of Normal: 14.0, Percent of April 1st Avg: 8.0



# Reservoir Storage % of Average - 05/11/2026

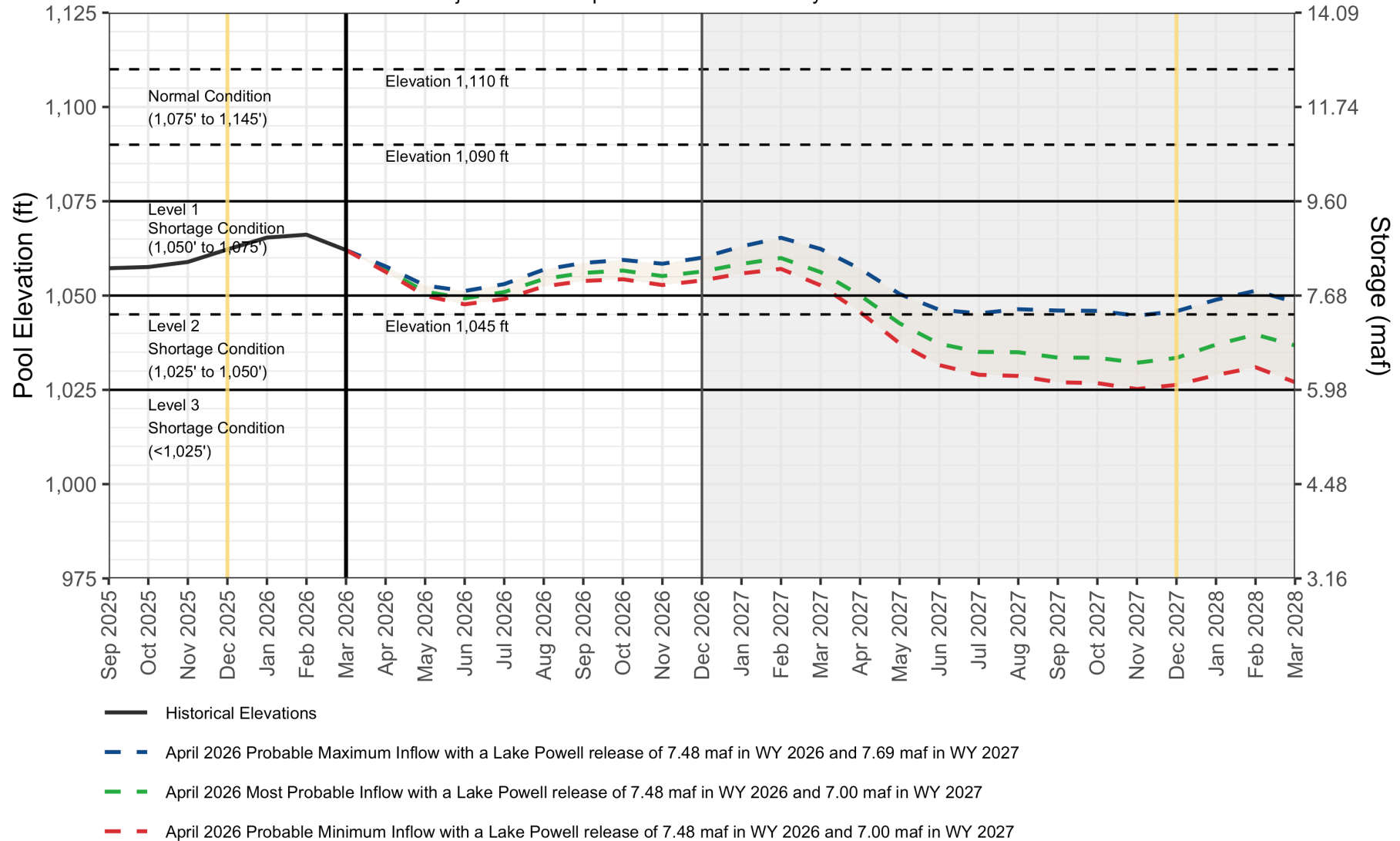


# Water Project Allocations

- SWP: 30%
- CVP
  - North of Delta: 100% Ag & M&I
  - South of Delta: 20% Ag, 70% M&I
  - Eastside: 0%
  - Friant Class 1: 100%

# Lake Mead End-of-Month Elevations<sup>1</sup>

## Projections from April 2026 24-Month Study Inflow Scenarios

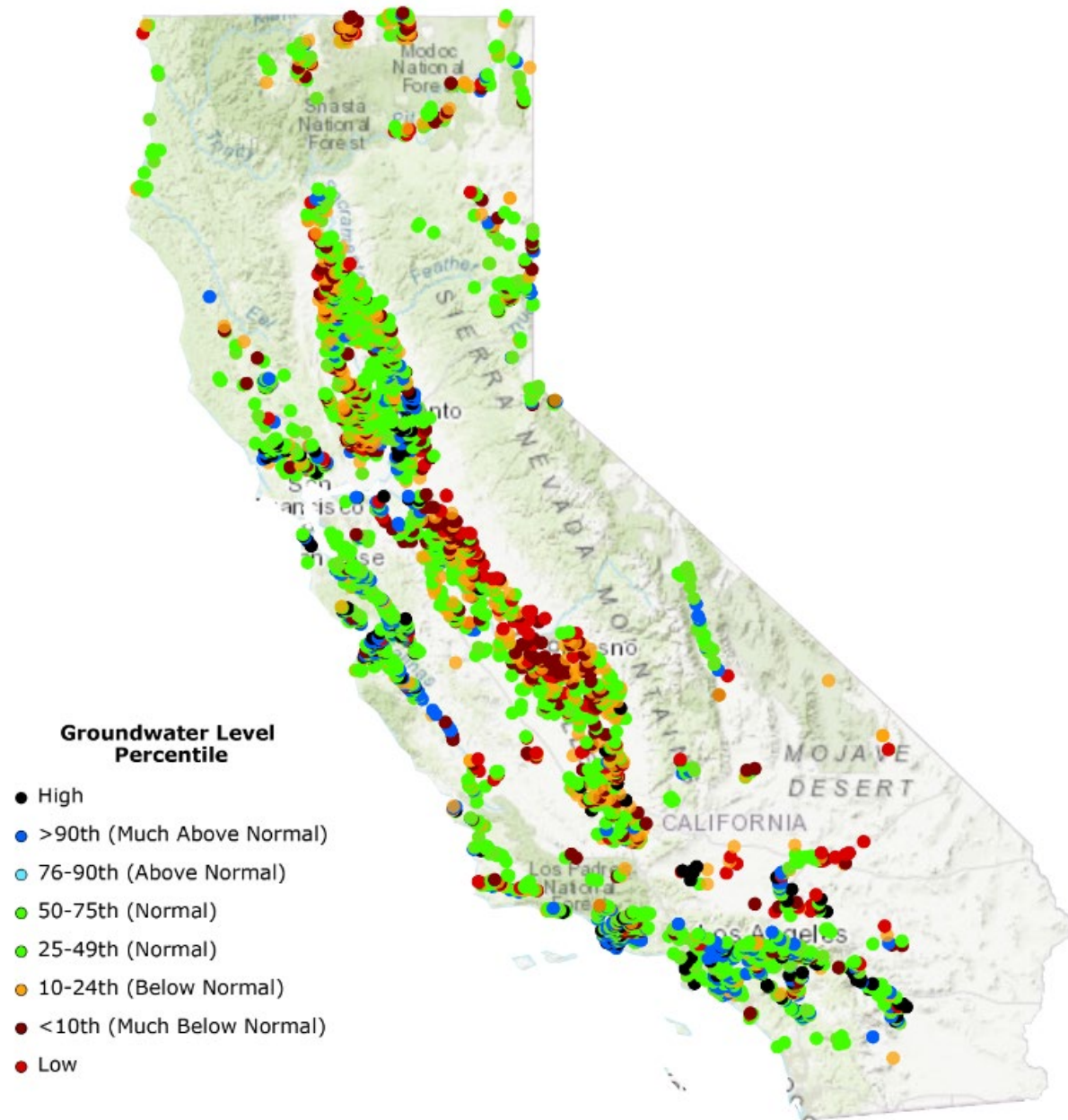


The Drought Response Operations Agreement (DROA) is available online at <https://www.usbr.gov/dcp/finaldocs.html>.

<sup>1</sup>For modeling purposes, simulated years beyond 2026 assume a continuation of the 2007 Interim Guidelines including the 2024 Supplement to the 2007 Interim Guidelines (no additional SEIS conservation is assumed to occur after 2026), the 2019 Colorado River Basin Drought Contingency Plans, and Minute 323 including the Binational Water Scarcity Contingency Plan. With the exception of certain provisions related to ICS recovery and Upper Basin Demand management, operations under these agreements are in effect through 2026.

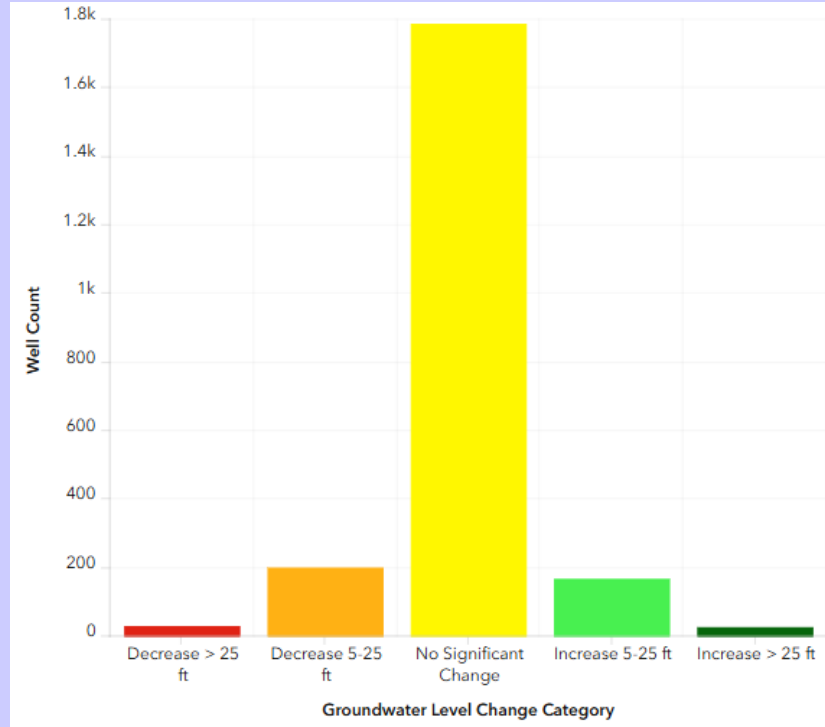


# Groundwater Level Percentile - 05/10/2026

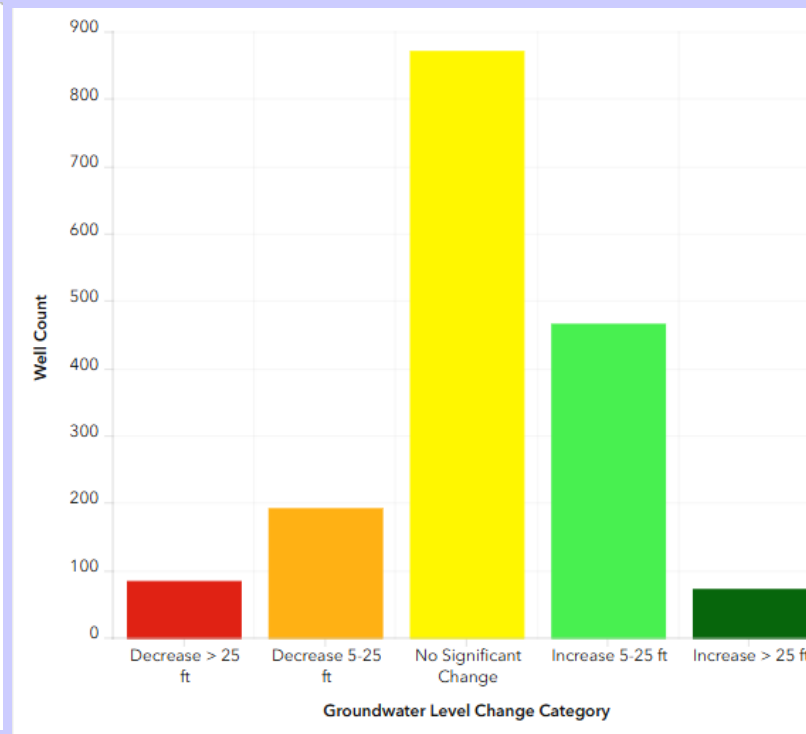


# Groundwater Level Change

## 1-Year Change (2.2k wells)




## 10-Year Change (1.7k wells)



WEATHER • 5 MIN READ

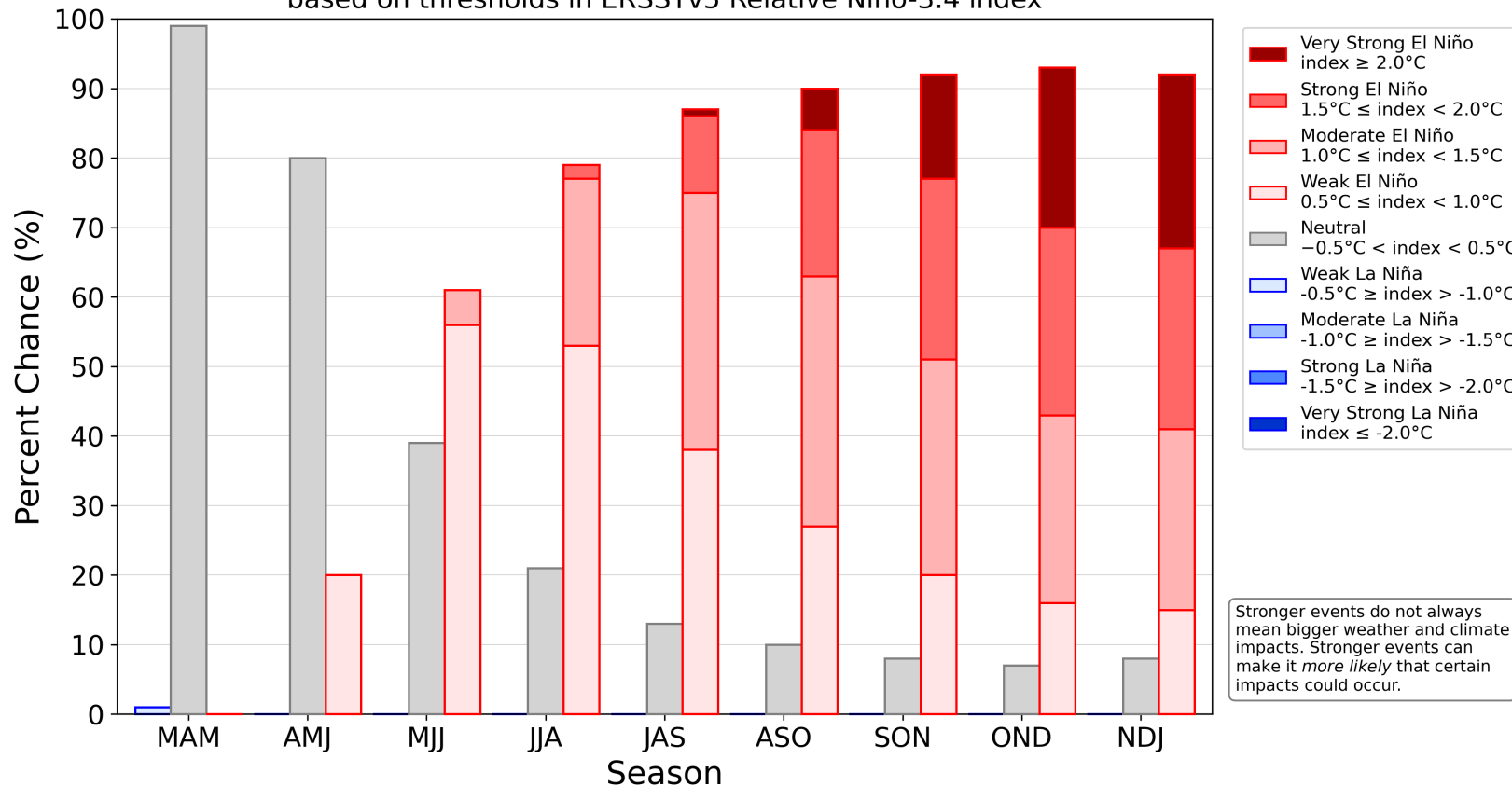
# A Super El Niño is coming. Here's how a hotter ocean could change the weather near you

APR 7, 2026

By  Andrew Freedman

## NOAA CPC ENSO Strength Probabilities (issued April 2026)

based on thresholds in ERSSTv5 Relative Niño-3.4 index

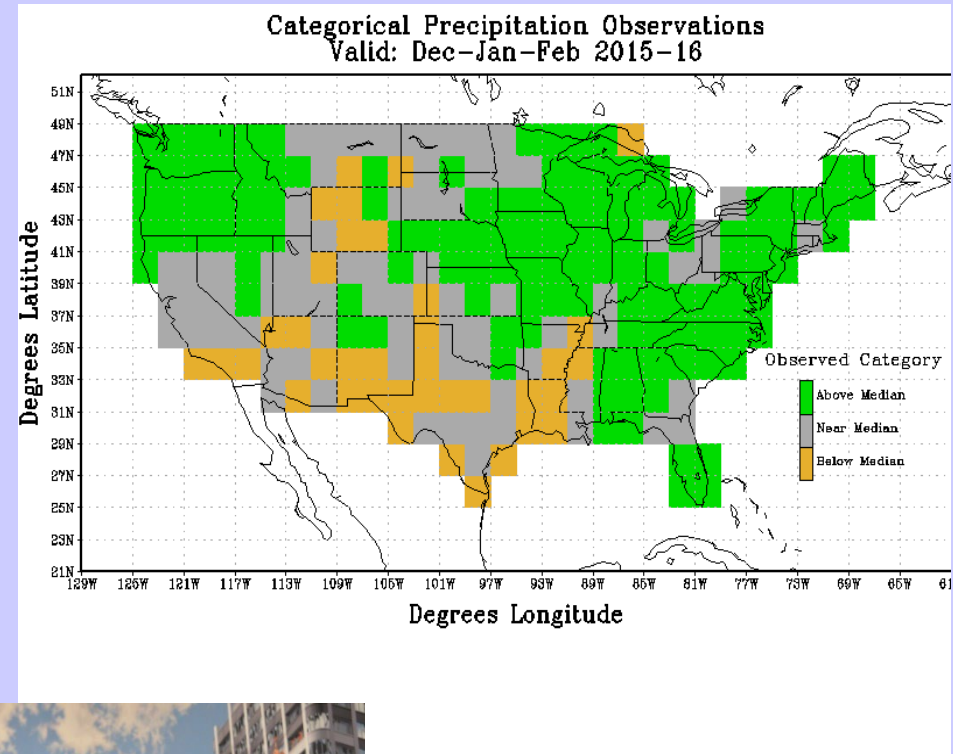
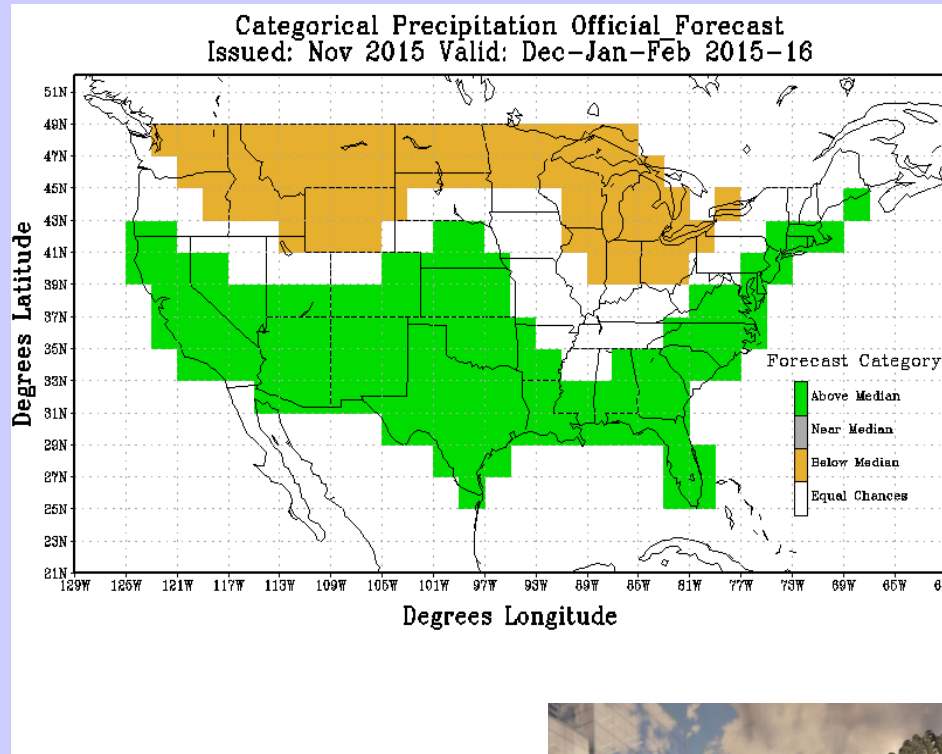


Stronger events do not always mean bigger weather and climate impacts. Stronger events can make it *more likely* that certain impacts could occur.



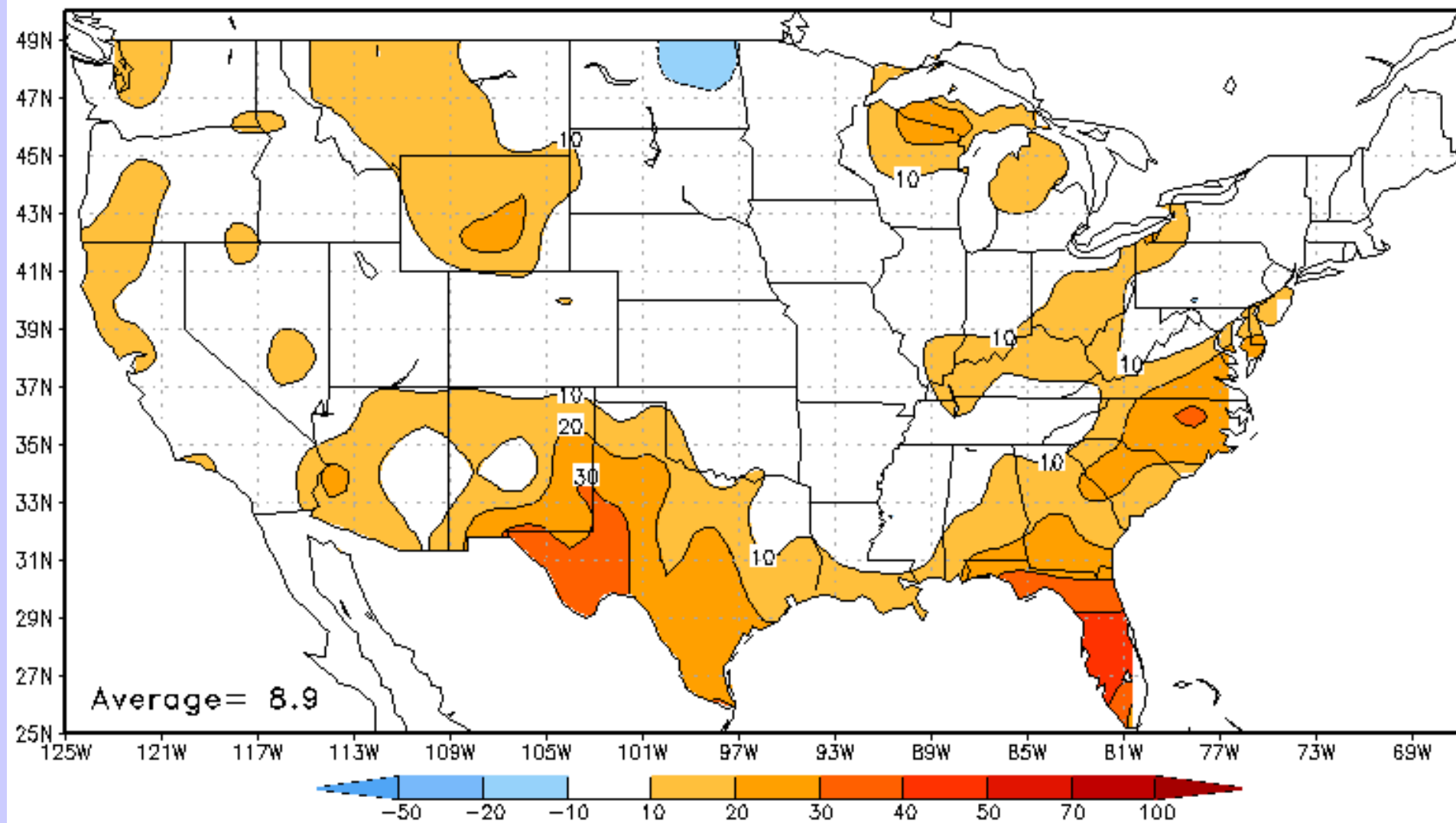
**ENSO**

# Water Year 2016, Year 5 of California's Prior Drought



**Remember the  
Godzilla El Niño?**

# Seasonal (Lead 0.5 Months) Precipitation Heidke Skill Score DJF Manual Forecasts From 1995 to 2024





**S2S Forecasting**

Improving Subseasonal to Seasonal Precipitation  
Forecasting For Water Management

**[S2Sforecasting.org](https://s2sforecasting.org)**

# Looking Ahead

- Summer: heat risk, wildfire risk
- Fall/Winter: stronger El Niño winters associated with coastal erosion risk and marine mammal impacts (results of warmer ocean conditions). Forecasts of ENSO strength will be more reliable later in the year; early forecasts are more speculative.



# Funding & Assistance



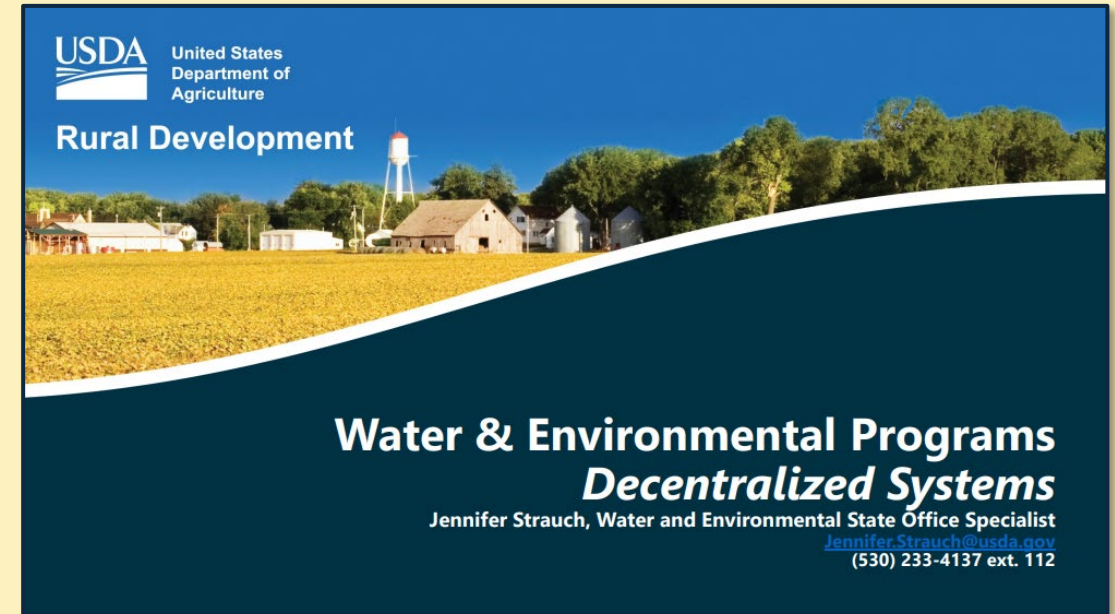
# USDA Water & Environmental Programs

## Rural Decentralized Water Systems Grant Program

- Program for qualified nonprofits and tribes
- Loan fund for to construct, refurbish or service individually-owned household water well and septic systems.
- Eligible Areas: Rural areas and towns with populations of 50,000 or less, Tribal lands in rural areas, Colonias
- [Fact Sheet](#)

## Other Rural Development Programs to consider:

- [Community Facilities](#)
- [Other Water and Environmental Programs](#)



*February 2025 presentation from Jennifer Strauch (USDA)*

# Rural Community Assistance Corp

## Water & Wastewater Technical Assistance

- Small utility consulting and support for community water systems
- Regionalization & community outreach
- Technical assistance for SSWS and disadvantaged communities







## Loan Fund

- Household Water Well & Septic System Program
- Clean Drinking Water Well Replacement Grant
- Environmental Infrastructure Loans

## Training & Capacity Building

- Classroom and online training programs
- Income surveys
- Advocacy support for rural and Indigenous communities

### RCAC Programs

-  Affordable housing
-  Community facilities
-  Water and wastewater infrastructure financing (Loan Fund)
-  Classroom and online training
-  Technical assistance
-  Income surveys

*January 2025 presentation from Cyril Barmore (RCAC)*

RCAC webpage: <https://www.rcac.org/>

# Self-Help Enterprises

## Emergency Services

- Bottled Water Distribution
- Tank & Hauled Water Program

## Interim Solutions - Field Team


- Well assessments
- Tank inspections, weatherization, and repairs
- Post-installation inspections
- Emergency response support

## Long-Term Solutions

- Domestic Water Well Repair, Replacement & Connection Program
- Water Quality Program

## Education

- Domestic Well Stewardship Program



**Self-Help Enterprises**  
8445 W. ELOWIN COURT, VISALIA CA 93291 (559) 651-1000  
WWW.SELFHELPENTERPRISES.ORG  
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY • SE HABLA ESPAÑOL  
ENGLISH TTY (800) 735-2929 • SPANISH TTY: (800) 855-3000

*January 2025 presentation from Tami McVay (Self Help)*

SHE webpage:

<https://www.selfhelpenterprises.org/>

# State Water Board: Funding and TA

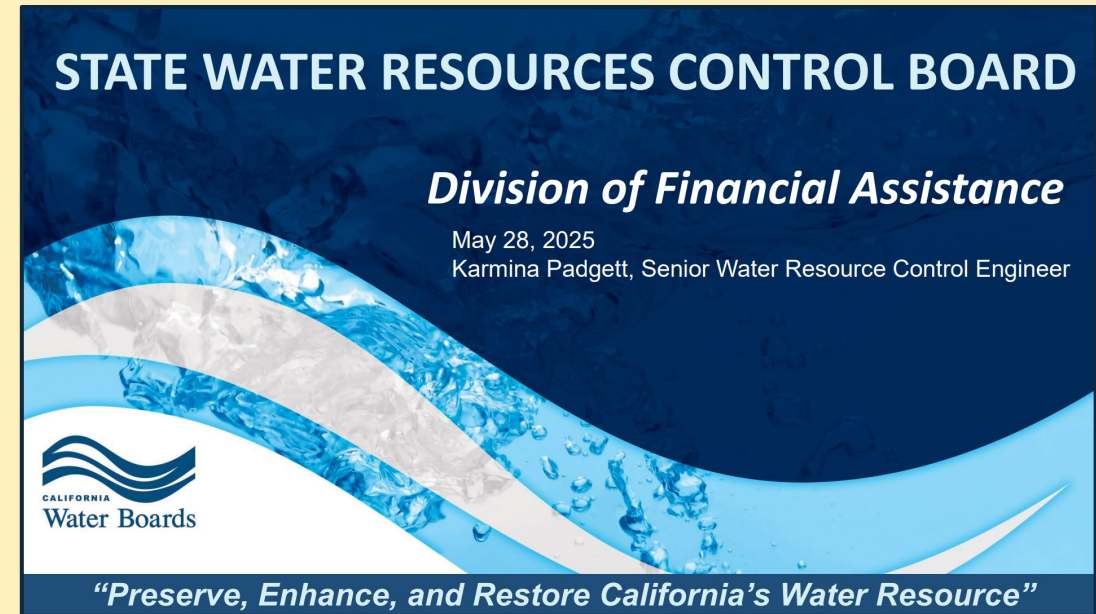
## Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) Program

Primary funding vehicle for drinking water needs in disadvantaged communities, covering:

**Long-Term Infrastructure:** Grants and low-interest loans for drinking water infrastructure projects; priority given to consolidation and failing systems

**Interim/Emergency Solutions:** Funds urgent needs including bottled/hailed water, well repair and replacement, emergency interties, and treatment systems

**Technical Assistance:** Covers funding applications, project planning & administration, engineering, environmental, and legal services, rate studies, income surveys, capacity-building, and emergency response



*May 2025 presentation from Karmina Padgett (SWB)*

Division of Financial Assistance webpage:  
[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/grants\\_loans/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/)

# State Water Board: Funding and TA

**Support for Schools:** Installation of treatment systems, fixture replacement, and drinking water fountains; interim bottled water supply

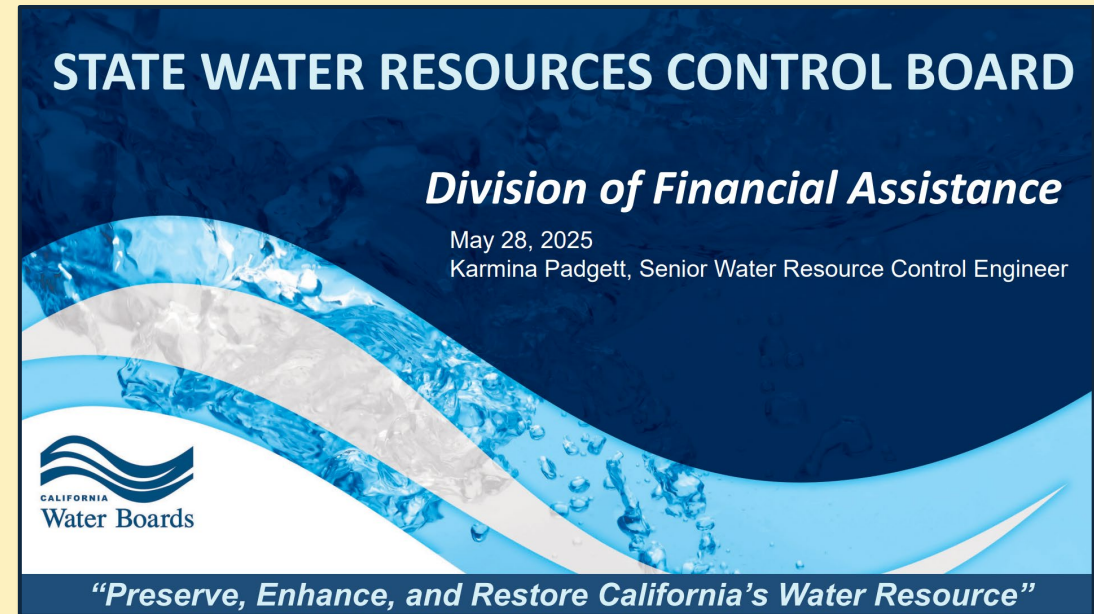
- Bottled Water for Schools
- Drinking Water for Schools

**Emerging Contaminants:** Two complementary programs targeting PFAS and other contaminants:

- DWSRF Emerging Contaminant Fund
- Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Fund

**Wastewater:** Grants and low-interest loans for wastewater compliance and water recycling projects; priority for septic-to-sewer projects

- Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- Water Recycling Funding Program



*May 2025 presentation from Karmina Padgett (SWB)*

Division of Financial Assistance webpage:  
[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/grants\\_loans/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/)

# DWR Prop 4 Workshop

- On April 30, DWR held a public workshop on two Proposition 4 grant programs:
  - Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program
  - Watershed Resilience Grant Program
- Topics included funding structures, eligibility, application processes, and key timelines.



*Screenshot from the April 30<sup>th</sup> DWR Prop 4 workshop.  
Slide deck available [here](#).*

A recording of the workshop will be posted to the program webpages:

- [Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program](#)
- [Watershed Resilience Grant Program](#)

# DWR Prop 4 Funding Opportunities

**Proposition 4 Requirements:** No cost share, 25% advanced payment option, indirect costs eligible, and 40% of funds must directly benefit disadvantaged communities and vulnerable populations.

**DWR Program Design:** Both programs will use a two-step application process (concept proposal, then full application). Draft guidelines are targeted for Fall 2026 with awards in late 2027-2028.

## Sustainable GW Management Grant Program (\$320M)

- Focused on advancing GSP implementation
- Priority project types: recharge/conjunctive use, subsidence BMPs, corrective actions, ag land adaptation, and conveyance
- \$25M tribal set-aside

Program webpage: <https://water.ca.gov/work-with-us/grants-and-loans/sustainable-groundwater>

## Watershed Resilience Grant Program (\$152M)

- Early Action Implementation (collaborative groups with vetted projects)
- Planning+ (covering plan development plus immediate implementation of a top priority project)

Program webpage: <https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/watershed-resilience-program>

# DWR Prop 4 Technical Assistance

These technical assistance programs (not competitive grants) are aimed at supporting communities that may face barriers to accessing funding.

## Underrepresented Communities Technical Assistance Program (\$20M)

Direct assistance to GSAs on request. Activities include:

- Well mitigation planning
- Small farm support
- Tribal engagement
- Local financing plan support

Note: Legislature already appropriated \$6.5M for URCTA and \$3.5M for small GSAs (under 10,000 acre-feet/year)

Program webpage: <https://water.ca.gov/urctaprogram>

## Flood Diversion and Recharge Enhancement (\$20.5M)

Helps streamline permitting for recharge projects; must benefit disadvantaged/vulnerable communities. Activities include:

- Flood diversion threshold guidance
- Temporary permit support
- Permitting coordination

Program webpage:

<https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Groundwater-Recharge>



# Engagement Opportunities for DWR Prop 4 Programs

DWR will release draft guidelines for all four programs in Fall 2026, with at least two additional public workshops planned before then. Watch for opportunities to comment through the program webpages:

- [Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program](#)
- [Watershed Resilience Grant Program](#)
- [Flood Diversion and Recharge Enhancement Program](#)
- [Underrepresented Communities Technical Assistance Program](#)

## Stay Connected

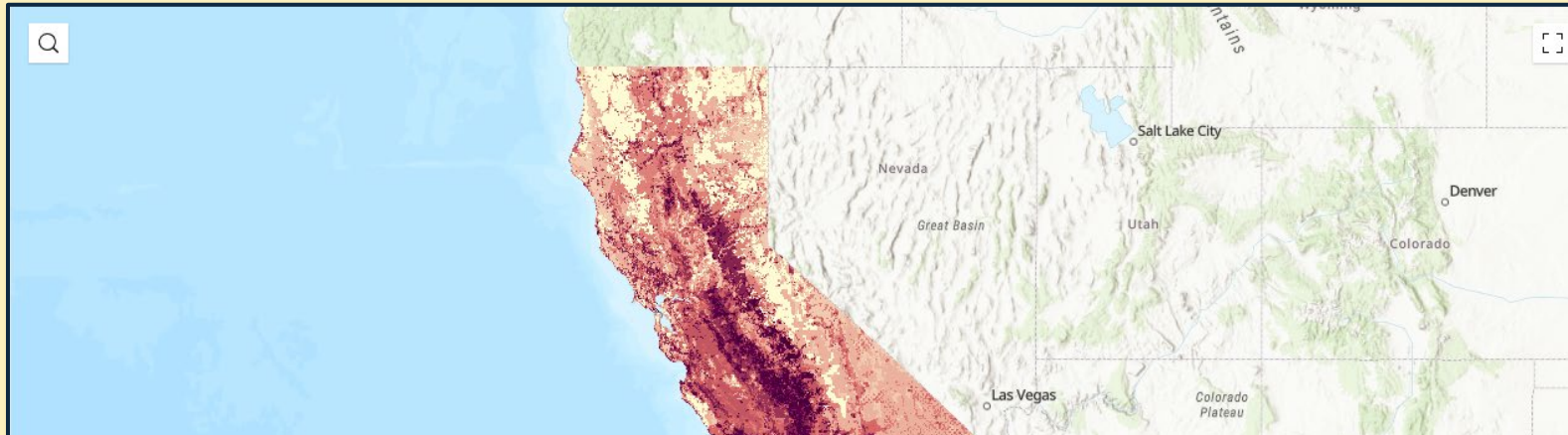
- Sign up for DWR program email updates: <https://tinyurl.com/2ru24r7b>
- Questions: [financialassistance@water.ca.gov](mailto:financialassistance@water.ca.gov)



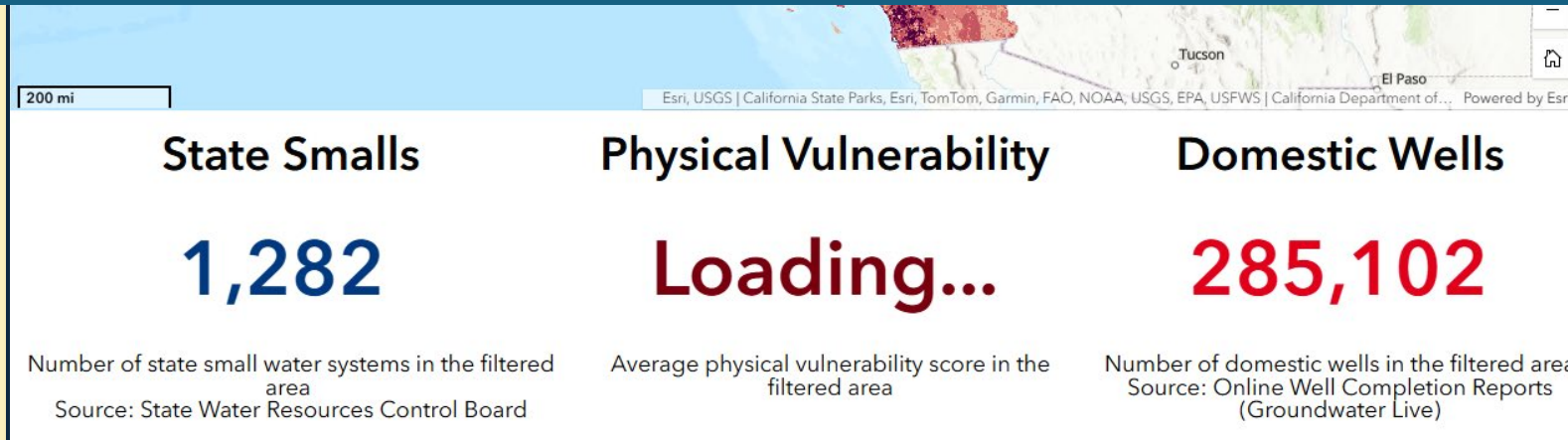


# State & Partner Updates

# Water Shortage Vulnerability Explorer Tool 2026 Update



**UPDATES COMING SOON!**



# Drought Resilience Interagency & Partners (DRIP) Collaborative: 2026 topics

## Roles & Responsibilities for Domestic Wells & State Small Water Systems

*Clarifying and strengthening roles across state, local, and regional entities to support domestic well owners and SSWS during drought.*

- Support exists across the well lifecycle but is fragmented and responsibility is shared across many entities.
- **Draft primer and inventory** of relevant laws, programs, and resources developed
- Key coordination gaps are emerging: significant regional variability in services and support, and limited public awareness of existing support and resources

## Drought Indicators & Metrics

*Improving the usability and coordination of drought indicators so the right information reaches the right audiences in time to act.*

- Many complementary drought indicator efforts are underway across research and state agencies – including sector-specific approaches, vulnerability assessments, and predictive tools
- Focus is on user needs: what information is needed, by whom, and early enough to inform decisions and mobilize resources

# Drought Resilience Interagency & Partners (DRIP) Collaborative: Upcoming events

## Roles & Responsibilities for Domestic Wells & State Small Water Systems

**May 28<sup>th</sup>**, 10am-12pm: Roles & Responsibilities for Domestic Wells and SSWS Workshop

- ✓ Review progress to date
- ✓ Discuss and provide input on approach to identify response efforts documented in related regional and local plans (e.g., GSPs, CDRPs, HMPs).

→ [Zoom registration link](#)

## Drought Indicators & Metrics

**June 5<sup>th</sup>**, 10am-12pm: Drought Indicators and Metrics Workshop

- ✓ Review primer on that summarizes current efforts and presents an extended list of current indicators
- ✓ Co-create the ideal user-centric needs assessment process
- ✓ Identify gaps and opportunities to prioritize

→ [Zoom registration link](#)

## DRIP Collaborative Summer Meeting - Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup> 10am-5pm

Held in-person in Sacramento (715 P St); Virtual participation via Zoom + YouTube stream

- ✓ [Zoom registration link](#)
- ✓ [YouTube stream](#)



# Governor's Office Initiatives

## GO Land Use & Climate Innovation - General Plan Guidelines Update



- LCI's General Plan Guidelines update is underway, covering required and optional elements and new legislation. Final guidelines expected fall 2027.
- Counties can weigh in now through workshops and surveys to help shape guidance that supports local planning.
- The optional water element may offer a direct hook for integrating drought resilience into county general plans.
- [GPG Update webpage](#)
- [Contact the team](#)

## Strategic Growth Council - Catalyst Convenings



CALIFORNIA  
STRATEGIC  
GROWTH  
COUNCIL

- SGC is hosting regional convenings to align community-driven climate and land use priorities.
- Convenings connect county leaders directly with state agencies and resources to help shape regional climate and land use policy actions
- Opportunity to elevate drought resilience needs in your region.
- [Catalyst Convenings webpage](#)
- [Sign up to receive updates](#)

Save the  
Date!

# SB 552 Five Year Review Symposium

Thursday, September 24, 2026  
California Natural Resources Agency  
Headquarters in downtown Sacramento

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Join us to celebrate key milestones related to SB 552 and think ahead as we move forward with implementation.





# Policy Updates

*Charles Delgado, CA State Association of Counties*



# 2026 Legislation

## **AB 2016 (Gonzalez) - State Water Resources Control Board: drinking water: hexavalent chromium removal**

Would appropriate funds for the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) to use for grants to specific cities and water districts to “undertake construction or planning and design of facilities to remove hexavalent chromium from drinking water.”

## **AB 2739 (Soria) - Water affordability and system stabilization**

Would establish the Water Affordability and System Stabilization Fund and the Community Water Affordability Program, important steps in ensuring that local jurisdictions have the necessary resources to ensure access to clean, affordable drinking water for all residents.

# 2026 Legislation

## **SB 1001 (Archuleta) - Personal Identity Verification-Interoperable**

Would require the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) to develop identity verification cards for local water utility workers, to allow them to access areas affected by floods, storms, fires, earthquakes, or other disasters and restore affected water infrastructure.

Would establish authorities and guidance for law enforcement officers to allow water utility workers carrying these identification cards to access disaster-stricken areas and perform their duties.

## **SB 1085 (Durazo) - Water Supply Planning: housing developments**

Would require new large housing developments to undergo a water supply assessment.



# 2026 Legislation

## **SB 1125 (Menjivar) - Water Rate Assistance Program**

Would establish a water rate assistance program, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to provide rate assistance to low-income residents.

## **SB 1153 (Caballero) - Disaster preparedness: urban retail water suppliers and public water systems: wildfire**

Beginning January 1, 2028, would require all urban retail water suppliers serving high or very high fire hazard severity zones (FHSZs) to include incident-specific response procedures for wildfires as part of their disaster preparedness plans, as specified.



# Photo Sharing Opportunity

DWR invites members of counties, water managers, state small water systems, or domestic wells to share a photograph to be featured in [the cover of DWR's Accomplishment Report on County Assistance Program for SB 552 Implementation](#). This summary report is scheduled for publication in summer 2026.

The title of the photograph and the name of photographer will be noted for credit attribution.

## To submit a photograph, please consider:

- ✓ Digital photos that are not AI-altered/generated.
- ✓ Format: jpg with a minimum resolution of 2400x3000 pixels with vibrant colors suitable for a cover
- ✓ Orientation: portrait
- ✓ Desired Image: The [rural landscape with communities and domestic well systems](#) that are vulnerable to drought and water shortages.
  - Visible buildings that depend on the water supply
  - Groundwater wells and supporting infrastructure for alternative sources
  - On-site remedies for water shortage vulnerabilities

Submit to: [CountyDRP@water.ca.gov](mailto:CountyDRP@water.ca.gov)



# Next California County Café Gathering

**Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup> 9-10am**

Standing updates:

- ✓ Hydro-climate update
- ✓ Funding & assistance
- ✓ State & partner updates
- ✓ Policy updates

→ [Registration link](#)

Follow-up questions?  
Feedback to share?  
Please fill out this survey!



<https://forms.office.com/g/mifq4w8UCA>



# Closing - Thank you!

Next steps - we will follow up with an email to counties for future gatherings, ppt, invitation to share in upcoming gathering.