

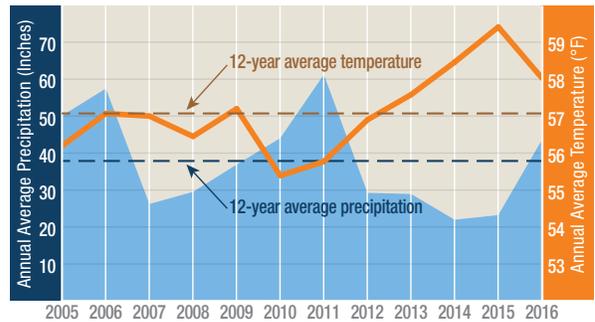
# California's Emergency Drought Declaration Is Lifted

State advances measures to make conservation a way of life

## California Under Drought

Climate change means increasingly extreme and unpredictable weather. We have seen record-high temperatures and record-low precipitation during this historic five-year drought.

Frequent, large storms this fall and winter eased drought conditions across California. Most major reservoirs have recovered, and an above-average snowpack will feed lakes well into summer. For the most part, the severely dry conditions that afflicted much of the state since 2012 are gone.



California has experienced near-record temperatures in recent years. Source: California Department of Water Resources

## Learning from the Drought

California faces challenges from climate change and a growing population. We have learned from the drought and incorporated these lessons into the state's Water Action Plan, a five-year roadmap for sustainable water management.

A few components of the Plan:



**Conservation as a way of life:** Reducing statewide water usage is necessary to ensure the resilience of our water supplies for increasingly severe and frequent droughts. That's why the state bolstered the Save Our Water campaign, offered rebates to retrofit tens of thousands of inefficient toilets, replaced 50 million square feet of turf with drought-tolerant landscapes, required agricultural water management plans and more.



**Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA):** During times of drought, many communities depend on groundwater supplies. But over reliance has led to a rapid depletion of this critical water source. Groundwater aquifers need to be replenished. SGMA provides a regulatory framework for sustainable, local groundwater management for the first time in California history.



**Improve Drinking Water:** Millions of Californians, especially those in disadvantaged communities, rely in part on unsafe drinking water. California has improved the organization of our water quality programs and created new tools to ensure every Californian has access to clean, safe, and affordable water.



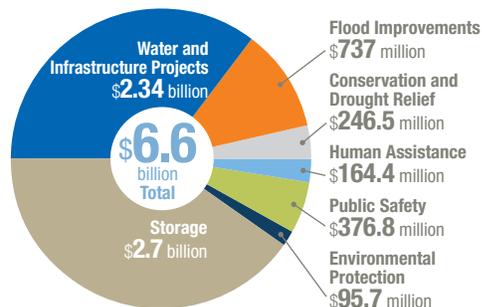
**Restoring Important Ecosystems:** Prolonged drought also affects the state's fish and wildlife, exposing and exacerbating population vulnerabilities. The state invested tens of millions of dollars in habitat restoration projects designed to address immediate drought concerns and increase resiliency to climate change.



**Real-time Management of Water Project Operations:** Especially in drought conditions, real-time management can have substantial fishery, water quality, and water supply benefits. To improve water supply reliability and consequently improve drought preparedness, the state increased the flexibility of its water infrastructure to ensure adequate levels in reservoirs, manage water temperatures for fish upstream, develop salinity barriers to protect fresh water and more.

## Investing in Drought Solutions

The state has deployed numerous resources—fiscal, logistical, and personnel—in responding to the impacts of the drought. This includes Proposition 1, which was passed by a 67% majority of California voters in 2014. It authorized \$7.5 billion in general obligation bonds to fund ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration, and water supply infrastructure projects, including surface and groundwater storage and drinking water protection.



Since 2014, the state has appropriated \$6.6 billion for drought response.

**While the emergency drought declaration has been lifted, the state should maintain directives that promote a sustainable water future and prohibit wasteful practices.**

# Milestones of the Drought

## 2014

### January

- Governor declares State of Emergency due to drought.
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) temporarily modifies flow and water quality requirements for state and federal water project operations in the Delta.



### April

- Governor issues Executive Order to extend State of Emergency, expedite drought response activities and implement water conservation requirements.
- SWRCB and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services begins allocation of more than \$32 million for drought-related emergency projects including drinking water.

### May

- Through 2016, SWRCB adopts and renews emergency regulations to help protect threatened and endangered fish species in high priority watersheds.

### June

- SWRCB adopts general order expanding authorized uses of recycled water.

### July

- SWRCB institutes new temporary restrictions on outdoor water use and new water use reporting requirements for urban water suppliers.



### September

- Legislature passes package of bills implementing the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.
- Governor issues Executive Order to address drinking water shortages.

### November

- California voters pass \$7.5 billion water bond, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1).



## 2015

### April

- DWR conducts annual snow survey, confirms statewide snowpack contains less water content than any comparable survey measurement since 1950.
- Governor issues Executive Order imposing 25 percent statewide urban water reduction and initiating state-funded turf removal and water-efficient appliance programs.

### May

- DWR installs temporary rock barrier at West False River to keep tidal salt water from flowing too far into the Delta.



### July

- New Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance permanently increases water efficiency standards for new and retrofitted landscapes.



### October

- Governor declares State of Emergency for epidemic of drought-related tree die-off.

## 2016

### January

- SWRCB adopts emergency regulations for measuring and reporting water diversions.

### February

- SWRCB expands low financing program for recycled water projects.

### April

- Since 2013, Californians save 1.19 million acre-feet of water, enough to supply nearly 6 million people for a year.

### May

- Statewide average water conservation rate grows to 28 percent.

### June

- DWR and SWRCB connect East Porterville to the City of Porterville's water system, bringing a reliable water supply to nearly 1,800 homes that lacked safe water.

### August

- Shasta, the state's largest reservoir, reaches 110% of historical average.

## 2017

### January

- Statewide water savings surpass 20 percent.

### February

- Statewide snow water equivalent is 30.5 inches, 174% of average for that date.
- SWRCB extends existing water conservation regulations.

### April

- Governor Brown lifts drought emergency declaration, retains prohibition on wasteful practices, and advances measures to make conservation a way of life.

Governor Brown has signed...

**7** Gubernatorial Actions

— and —

**24** drought bills

*These actions address immediate health, safety and ecosystem needs while also accelerating improvements to water infrastructure and habitat that will have a permanent effect on our ability to withstand drought.*