

California Weather-Hydro Conditions during February 2007

February was the wettest month of Water Year 2007 (October 1, 2006 through February 28, 2007), with a series of storms that brought widespread precipitation to the northern and central portions of the State, along with significant snowfall to the Sierra. However, after near-normal precipitation in Northern California during December, January 2007 was the driest January since 1991. As a result, all hydrologic indicators, other than reservoir levels, which have carryover storage from the very wet Water Year of 2006, are well below average. As of March 1, Water Year 2007 statewide hydrologic conditions were as follows: precipitation, 70% of average to date; runoff, 55% of average to date; and reservoir storage, 105% for the date. On March 1, the statewide snow pack was about 70% of average for the date and about 60% of an April 1 average (the usual date of maximum accumulation). The snowpack increase during February was about 1.5 times of normal, but this was not enough to eliminate the deficit of January. On February 28, the Northern Sierra 8-Station Index had a seasonal total of 29.6", which is about 85% of the seasonal average to date and about 59% of average for an entire Water Year (50.0"). During February 2007, the 8-Stations had about 13.5" of precipitation or about 169% of the monthly average. Precipitation in February ranged from about 150% of normal in the Sacramento Basin to about 100% of normal in the Tulare Lake Region. In general, seasonal precipitation during this water year has been below average, especially in Central and Southern California.

Summary of Water Conditions in California, March 1, 2007 (percent of average)

Hydrologic Region	Precip	Snow	Reservoir	Runoff		
	Oct 1- date	Water Content	Storage 28-Feb	Oct 1- date	Apr thru Jul Forecast	Water Year Forecast
North Coast	90	95	105	65	70	65
San Francisco Bay	85	--	85	30	--	--
Central Coast	60	--	120	15	--	--
South Coast	35	--	90	25	--	--
Sacramento River	75	70	100	60	70	65
San Joaquin River	75	70	115	40	65	60
Tulare Lake	60	55	100	45	55	50
North Lahontan	65	65	135	70	60	65
South Lahontan	35	45	105	95	60	60
Colorado River	5	--	--	--	--	--
Statewide	70	70	105	55	65	65
		Last Year, Statewide				
March 1, 2006	120	85	120	160	100	115

The projected median April-July snowmelt runoff for the State's water supply basins now ranges from 85% (Shasta Lake inflow) to 46% (Kern River). Sacramento River unimpaired runoff observed through February 28 was 4.9 million acre-feet (MAF), which is about 59% of average. (On February 28, 2006, the observed Sacramento River unimpaired runoff was 13.6 MAF or about 162% of average.) The median Sacramento River unimpaired runoff forecast rose from about 10.6 MAF (57% of average) on February 1 to about 12.1 MAF (65% of average) on March 1. The median forecasts of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley Water Year Type indexes are "Below Normal" and "Dry," respectively.

Selected Cities Precipitation Accumulation as of 03/01/2007 (National Weather Service Water Year: July through June)

	Jul 1 to Date 2006 - 2007 (in inches)	% Avg	Jul 1 to Date 2005 - 2006 (in inches)	% Avg	% Avg Jul 1 to Jun 30 2006 - 2007
Eureka	28.95	105	41.40	150	75
Redding	18.51	78	30.75	129	55
Sacramento	9.67	65	15.77	106	48
San Jose	7.79	71	11.28	103	51
Fresno	4.52	58	6.20	80	40
Bakersfield	2.12	49	2.65	61	32
Los Angeles	2.42	22	7.32	67	15
San Diego	3.30	44	2.59	34	30

Key Reservoir Storage (1,000 AF) as of 03/01/2007 midnight

Reservoir	River	Storage	Avg Storage	% Average	Capacity	% Capacity	Flood Control Encroachment	Total Space Available
Trinity Lake	Trinity	1,902	1,854	103	2,448	78	---	546
Shasta Lake	Sacramento	3,786	3,382	112	4,552	83	-223	766
Lake Oroville	Feather	2,997	2,530	118	3,538	85	87	541
New Bullards Bar Res	Yuba	744	624	119	966	77	-52	222
Folsom Lake	American	594	556	107	977	61	48	383
New Melones Res	Stanislaus	2,002	1,442	139	2,420	83	32	418
Don Pedro Res	Tuolumne	1,646	1,437	115	2,030	81	-44	384
Lake McClure	Merced	658	535	123	1,025	64	-17	367
Millerton Lake	San Joaquin	210	346	61	520	40	-122	310
Pine Flat Res	Kings	513	534	96	1,000	51	-309	487
Isabella	Kern	222	180	123	568	39	-28	346
San Luis Res	(Offstream)	1,895	1,763	107	2,039	93	---	144

Approximately 25% of the wet season remains and several large storms could quickly bring rainfall up to normal. However, the chances of recovery to a near average water year are decreasing as the wet season passes. Fortunately, the last few water years had above average precipitation and runoff, so ground water levels are near normal values. Many of the large water supply reservoirs in the foothills of the Central Valley are near flood control levels and cannot store additional water.

The latest National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center (CPC) 90-Day long-range seasonal weather outlook (for March through May), issued February 15, suggests below average-to-average precipitation for all of California. The CPC expects a better than average chance for average to above average temperatures for most of the State. The latest CPC long-range weather for March, issued February 28, suggests below average rainfall for Southern California and above average rainfall for Northern California. Average to above average temperatures are forecast for the entire State.