

California Weather-Hydro Conditions during April 2008

As of May 1, Water Year 2008 statewide hydrologic conditions were as follows: precipitation, 85 percent of average to date; runoff, 55 percent of average to date; and reservoir storage, 85 percent of average for the date. Reservoir storage for May 1 was the lowest since 1994. Snowpack water content on May 1 was about 65% of average for the date and about 50 percent of the April 1 average (April 1 is the normal date of maximum accumulation). Last year on May 1, the snowpack was only about 25 percent of average. Sacramento River unimpaired runoff observed through April 30, 2008 was about 7.2 million acre-feet (MAF), which is about 53% of average. (On April 30, 2007, the observed Sacramento River unimpaired runoff through that date was about 7.8 MAF or about 57% of average.) Statewide water year runoff is forecasted to be about 60 percent of average.

On May 1, 2008, the Northern Sierra 8-Station Precipitation Index had a seasonal total of 33.7", which is about 74% of the seasonal average to date and about 67% of average for an entire Water Year (50.0"). Spring of 2008 is turning out to be extremely dry. The 8-Station Index seasonal total of 33.7 inches is now less than last year's seasonal total of 34.4 inches at this time. The Water Year 2008, 8-Station Index, October through April total of 33.7 inches is the 22nd driest year out of 88 years of record. March 2008, with a precipitation total of 1.6 inches (23% of average) was the sixth driest March of 88 years of record. (Statewide, March precipitation was about 20% of average.) April 2008 was also the sixth driest April on record. For the 8-Stations, the Water Year 2008 combined March and April total precipitation is only 2.3 inches, the driest on record (since 1921).

January and early February brought significant amounts of precipitation to California, including heavy snowfall in the mountains. California's large water supply reservoirs received some inflow from these storms; however, the amounts were muted because much of the precipitation fell as snow. Because precipitation was significantly below average last year, dry hydrologic conditions still prevail. Storage in most of the major water supply reservoirs is still well below average. The Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley Water Year Type indexes are both forecasted to be "Critical."

Selected Cities Precipitation Accumulation as of 05/01/2008 (National Weather Service Water Year: July through June)					
City	Jul 1 to Date 2007 - 2008 (in inches)	% Avg	Jul 1 to Date 2006 - 2007 (in inches)	% Avg	% Avg Jul 1 to Jun 30 2007 - 2008
Eureka	33.91	95	34.16	95	89
Redding	23.65	76	21.22	68	70
Sacramento	13.67	79	10.47	61	76
San Francisco	15.85	81	11.54	59	78
Fresno	8.10	76	5.98	56	72
Bakersfield	2.31	38	3.06	50	35
Los Angeles	13.42	91	3.21	22	88
San Diego	7.00	67	3.85	37	64

Key Reservoir Storage (1,000 AF) as of 05/01/2008								
Reservoir	River	Storage	Avg Storage	% Average	Capacity	% Capacity	Flood Control Encroachment	Total Space Available
Trinity Lake	Trinity	1,670	2,049	81	2,448	68	---	778
Shasta Lake	Sacramento	2,954	3,974	74	4,552	65	-1,598	1,598
Lake Oroville	Feather	1,707	2,939	58	3,538	48	-1,752	1,831
New Bullards Bar Res	Yuba	696	760	92	966	72	-200	270
Folsom Lake	American	537	730	74	977	55	-266	440
New Melones Res	Stanislaus	1,410	1,482	95	2,420	58	-816	1,010
Don Pedro Res	Tuolumne	1,385	1,470	94	2,030	68	-332	645
Lake McClure	Merced	361	607	59	1,025	35	-489	664
Millerton Lake	San Joaquin	257	365	71	520	50	-263	263
Pine Flat Res	Kings	415	610	68	1,000	42	-529	585
Isabella	Kern	191	224	85	568	34	-284	377
San Luis Res	(Offstream)	1,464	1,861	79	2,039	72	---	575

The latest National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center (CPC) long-range weather outlook for May 2008, issued April 30, 2008, is forecasting below average precipitation for Northern and Southern California. Average precipitation is forecasted for Central California.