



NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First Snow Survey of 2013 Shows Wet Conditions

SACRAMENTO -- Snow surveyors today reported that water content in California's mountain snowpack is well above average for the date.

Manual and electronic readings today record the snowpack's statewide water content at 134 percent of average for this time of year. That is 49 percent of the average April 1 measurement, when the snowpack is normally at its peak before the spring melt.

The snowpack normally provides about a third of the water for California's homes, farms and industries as it slowly melts into streams, reservoirs and aquifers in the spring and early summer.

"We are off to a good water supply start for the new year, but we have to remember that we have seen wet conditions suddenly turn dry more than once," said DWR spokesman Ted Thomas. "We know from experience that California is a drought-prone state, and that we must always practice conservation."

Results of today's manual readings by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) off Highway 50 near Echo Summit are as follows:

Location	Elevation	Snow Depth	Water Content	% of Long Term Average
Alpha	7,600 feet	56 inches	16 inches	122
Phillips Station	6,800 feet	48.6 inches	12.1 inches	101
Lyons Creek	6,700 feet	55.7 inches	12.9 inches	109
Tamarack Flat	6,500 feet	inches	inches	Missing

Electronic readings indicate that the water content in the northern mountains is 133 percent of normal for the date and 50 percent of the April 1 seasonal average. Electronic readings for the central Sierra also show 133 percent of normal for the date and half the April 1 average. The numbers for the southern Sierra are 131 percent of average for the date and 44 percent of the April 1 average.

DWR and cooperating agencies conduct manual snow surveys around the first of the month from January to May. The manual measurements supplement and check the accuracy of real-time electronic readings from sensors up and down the state.

DWR currently estimates that it will be able to deliver 40 percent of the slightly more than 4 million acre-feet of State Water Project water requested for this calendar year by the 29 public agencies that supply more than 25 million Californians and nearly a million acres of irrigated farmland. The delivery estimate is expected to increase as more winter storms develop. The final allocation of State Water Project water in calendar year 2012 was 65 percent of requested deliveries. The allocation was 80 percent in 2011, 50 percent in 2010, 40 percent in 2009, 35 percent in 2008, and 60 percent in 2007. The last 100 percent allocation – difficult to achieve even in wet years because of restrictions on Delta export pumping to protect sensitive fish species – was in 2006.

In addition to above average water content in the snowpack, early storms this season have replenished California's reservoirs.

Lake Oroville in Butte County, the State Water Project's principal reservoir with a capacity of 3.5 million acre-feet, is at 71 percent of capacity, 113 percent of average for the date. Shasta Lake north of Redding, the federal Central Valley Project's principal storage reservoir with a capacity of 4.5 million acre-feet, today is at 73 percent of capacity, 115 percent of normal for the date.

(An acre-foot is 325,851 gallons, enough to cover one acre to a depth of one foot).

Electronic reservoir level readings are available on the Internet at:

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/products/rescond.pdf>

Electronic snowpack readings may be found at:

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/DLYSWEQ>

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.