



MEDIA ADVISORY

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March 30 Snow Survey Will Help Reveal State's Water Health *DWR's Monthly Survey Has New Parking Requirement for Media Attendees*

SACRAMENTO – California's snowpack usually reaches its peak in the early spring each year near the first of April. Melting of the snowpack increases as the sun's path across the sky moves a little northward each day and solar radiation intensifies on the ground.

Snowpack surveys by the Department of Water Resource (DWR) in late March and early April are indicators of how much water California will reap from the melting snowpack, which in normal years provides about 30 percent of the state's water. DWR today announced that its next media-oriented snow survey will begin at 11 a.m. on March 30 at Phillips Station, 90 miles east of Sacramento off Highway 50 near Sierra-at-Tahoe Road.

IMPORTANT NEW PARKING REQUIREMENT INCREASING MEDIA ATTENDANCE AT THE PHILLIPS SNOW SURVEY NOW NECESSITATES OFF-SITE PARKING. SEE DETAILS BELOW.

On April 1, 2015, visitors to Phillips Station didn't see a single snowflake, much less a snowpack. Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. stood on dirt that day as he issued his mandate to cut urban water use in California by 25 percent. The 2014-15 statewide snowpack's water content was only 5 percent of the historical April 1 average, the lowest amount ever recorded.

Frank Gehrke, chief of the California Cooperative Snow Surveys Program, likely will find several feet of snow at Phillips on March 30. The snowpack there was 58.3 inches deep when he conducted the March 1 survey, and mountain conditions are vastly improved compared to 2015.

However, Gehrke cautions that the snowpack at any given location such as Phillips is not representative of the statewide snowpack. Electronic readings taken remotely at approximately 100 stations in the Sierra Nevada record the statewide snowpack's water content each day throughout the winter; manual surveys at snow courses like Phillips supplement and validate the electronic readings.

The water content of the statewide snowpack today is 88 percent of the April 1 average: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cdecapp/snowapp/sweq.action> (For earlier readings, click the calendar icon below the map on the page, select a date and then Refresh Data.)

Rainfall so far this year also is much improved over last year in Northern California. Precipitation since October 1 in the critical northern California watershed is 29 percent above average for

today's date: http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/products/PLOT_ESI.pdf. Conditions in the Central Valley and Southern California are less favorable but still above average for today's date.

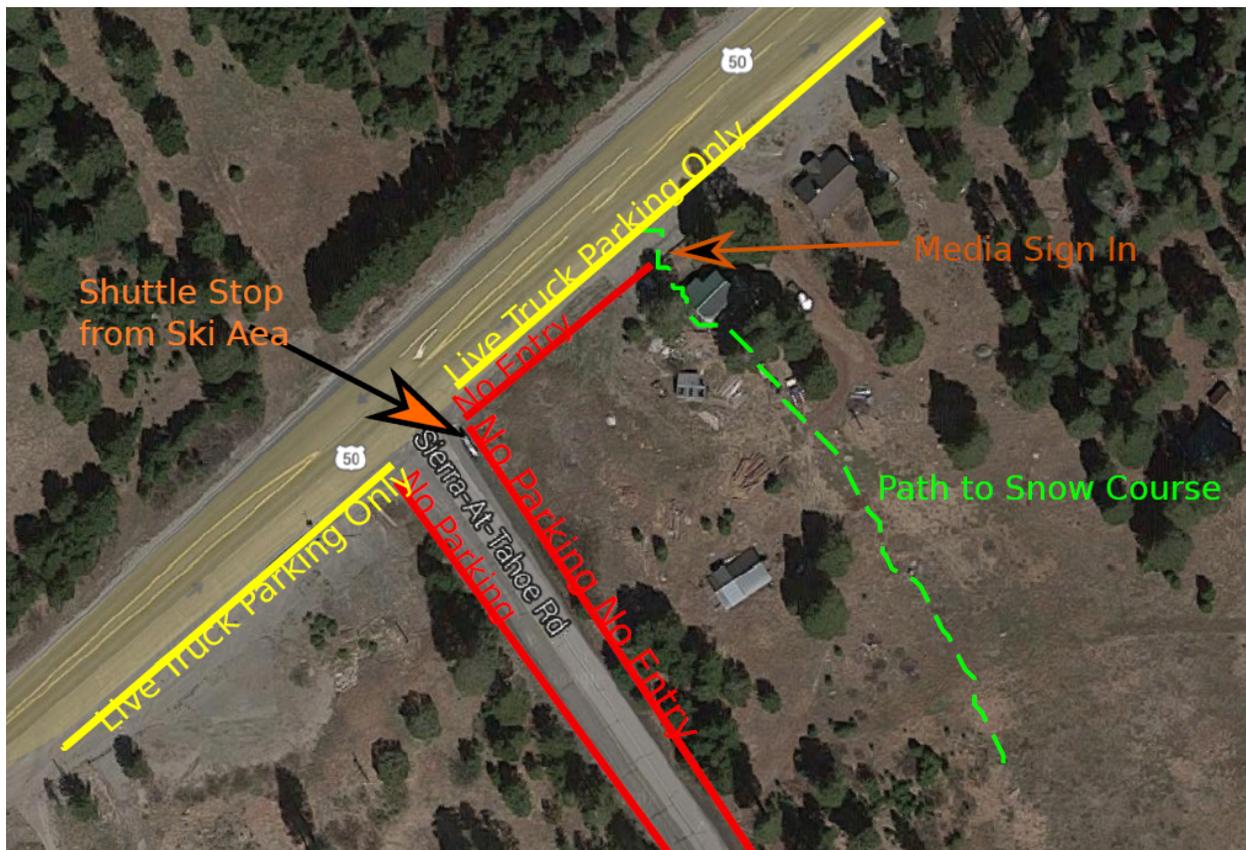
Rainfall in the north has benefited the large reservoirs there. Shasta, Oroville and Folsom reservoirs all now store more water than their March 25 historical average, but the lack of rain in the south has resulted in below-average storage in almost all reservoirs there: <http://bit.ly/1gIMQMG>,

Residents should continue to conserve water due to drought conditions and impacts that are still felt in many parts of the state.

The Phillips snow course is one of more than 220 courses that will be measured manually during a 10-day window around April 1 to determine the snowpack's water content.

NEW PARKING REQUIREMENT

Parking on Highway 50 is now restricted to "satellite" trucks. Media vehicles should turn onto Sierra-At-Tahoe Road and drive to the resort's Parking Lot E, which is marked by a Blizzard Mountain sign on the left side of the road. Two shuttle buses will operate from 10:20 a.m. to 1 p.m. between the lot and the Shuttle Stop shown on the map below. Once back at Highway 50, media representatives must sign in at the location shown on the map, which is near the cabin next to Highway 50. It will be the only access point to the private property where the survey is conducted. Thank you for your cooperation.



Media should monitor road conditions and be prepared to equip vehicles with chains. Wear appropriate footwear; the snow at Phillips is deep. The survey will begin at 11 a.m. Park only in Parking Lot E (the first such opportunity on the left side of Sierra-at-Tahoe Road as described above. No parking will be allowed on Sierra-at-Tahoe Road. Unauthorized vehicles parked in the map's red zones may be towed. Media will be shuttled to and from Lot E; the shuttles will be on 10-minute loops beginning at 10:20 a.m. **Media must sign in with on-site Information Officer Elizabeth Scott (see orange arrow on graphic; her mobile number is shown at the top of this release).**

“Live” Periscope coverage of the Phillips Station survey will be carried on DWR’s [Twitter page](#). DWR will post reminders on Twitter before the survey. DWR will distribute a press release with survey results by early afternoon. Video of this and earlier surveys will be posted here: <http://bit.ly/23NXgqe>. Still photography will be posted here: <http://bit.ly/1RkyYea>.

Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. declared a state of drought emergency on January 17, 2014. His April 1, 2015 proclamation mandated a 25-percent statewide reduction in water use. Visit <http://drought.ca.gov> to learn how California is dealing with the effects of the drought.

Water Year 2016 precipitation can be found at the following link: http://cdec.water.ca.gov/snow_rain.html. Look in the right-hand column for the Northern Sierra 8-station index for updated rainfall readings in the critical northern portion of the state, as well as the San Joaquin 5-station and Tulare Basin 6-station links.

Electronic reservoir readings are at:
<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cdecapp/resapp/getResGraphsMain.action>

For a broader snapshot of current and historical weather conditions, see DWR’s Drought and Water Conditions pages:

California’s Most Significant Droughts--Comparing Historical and Recent Conditions:
http://water.ca.gov/waterconditions/docs/California_Significant_Droughts_2015_small.pdf

Drought Breaking News Page:
<http://www.water.ca.gov/waterconditions/>

Water Conditions Page:
<http://water.ca.gov/waterconditions/waterconditions.cfm>

For water conservation tips, visit Save Our Water:
<http://saveourwater.com>

