



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ADVISORY

April 25, 2017

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Last 2017 Snow Survey at Phillips Set for May 1

SACRAMENTO – The Department of Water Resources (DWR) conducts five manual snow surveys at Phillips Station in the Sierra Nevada from around the first of January through May each calendar year. The snowpack's water content usually peaks around April 1, after which the sun's higher position in the sky contributes to rapid melting and a diminished snowpack.

DWR's May 1 survey will be the last one of 2017. Frank Gehrke, chief of the California Cooperative Snow Surveys Program, will conduct the survey beginning at 11 a.m. just off Highway 50 near Sierra-at-Tahoe Road, about 90 miles east of Sacramento.

California has experienced exceptionally high rain and snow precipitation this water year. Since early April, the snow water equivalent (SWE) of the statewide snowpack has been growing compared to the average SWE on each day's date going back decades. The statewide snowpack's SWE water content today is 45.8 inches, which is 192 percent of this date's historical average – the highest percentage for an April 25th this century

The Phillips snow course has been [measured each winter](#) since 1941 and is one of hundreds that will be traversed during a 10-day period around May 1 to determine the water content of the snowpack, which normally contributes about 30 percent of California's water. Manual readings supplement DWR's electronic data.

Resources:

Electronic snowpack readings from approximately 100 "snow pillows" in the Sierra Nevada are available at the [California Data Exchange Center \(CDEC\)](#). For earlier readings, click the calendar icon below the map, select a date, then Refresh Data.

Water Year 2017 rainfall can be found at CDEC [Precipitation](#); 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. The San Joaquin 5-station and Tulare Basin 6-station links are also on this page.

For current electronic storage readings, go to CDEC [Reservoirs](#).

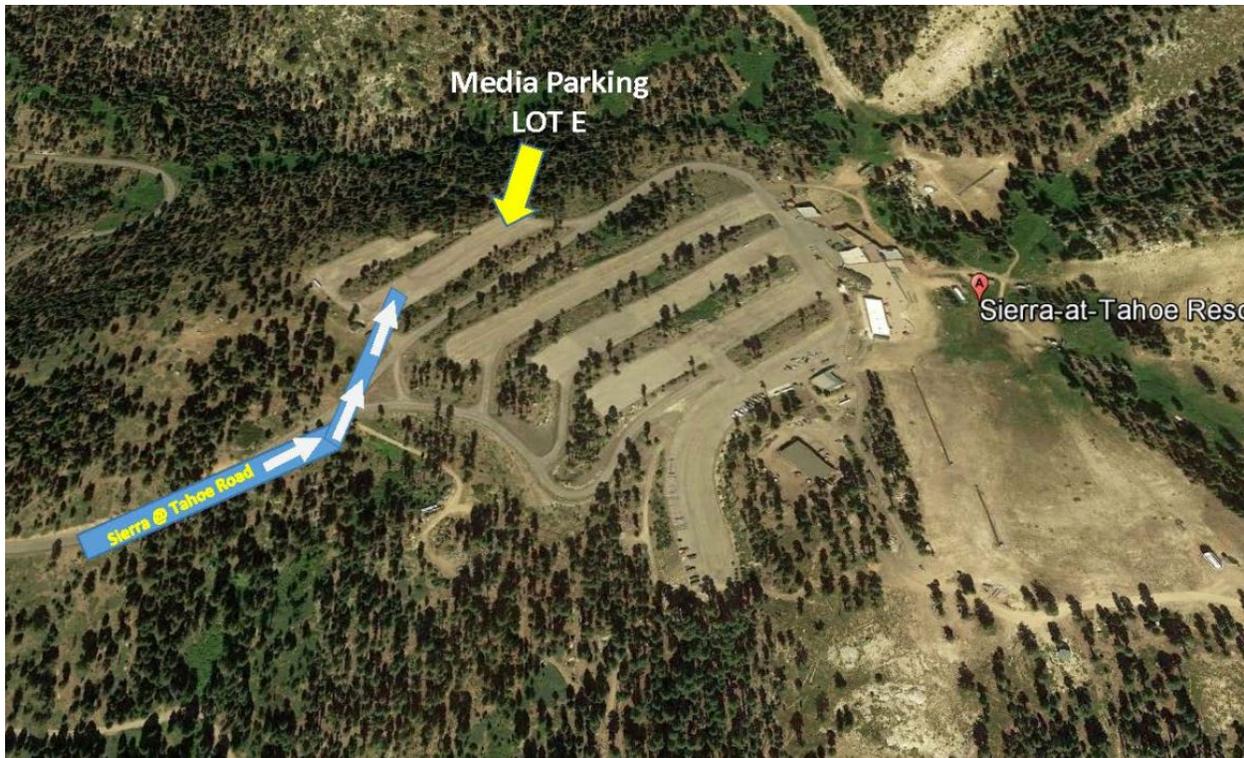
Media seeing video of the survey should allow time for processing and then visit DWR's [File Transfer System](#). Still photography will be found at DWR's photo library, [Pixel](#).

Media Driving and Parking:

Media should stay aware of road conditions, including washouts and landslides, and be prepared to equip vehicles with chains. Arrival at Phillips by 10:30 a.m. at the latest will allow time for parking in designated locations on Highway 50 or, if all parking spaces are filled, for shuttle service from Lot E at Sierra-at-Tahoe Resort. Media should not arrive before 10 a.m. due to the landowner's concerns; early arrivals may be towed. Avoid blocking the driveway at the landowner's home. Parking zones are indicated in the graphic below. Note that no parking is allowed along Sierra-at-Tahoe Road. The survey will begin at 11 a.m., with results distributed in a press release by early afternoon. Snowshoes are recommended for walking in deep snow.



See map below for location of Lot E at Sierra-at-Tahoe Resort, where spillover parking will be sent if space along Highway 50 is not available:



For water conservation information, visit [Save Our Water](#).

