

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

About Record Storms (So Far) This Winter

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After three consecutive years with below-average hydrologic conditions in California, this winter has made a considerable dent in California's drought. Lake Oroville is at 115% of normal and is currently increasing by about 9,000 acre-feet (AF) per day. San Luis Reservoir is 93% of normal and is rising by 4,500 AF per day. If these significant daily increases at San Luis continue, the reservoir could be full by early March. It is still very early, but The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) trends predict with a new 30% Table A

allocation and a projected 900 thousand acre-feet (TAF) of supply on the Colorado River, demands would only surpass supplies in calendar year (CY) 2023 by about 200 TAF. If the Table A were to increase to 40% or above, it is most likely that Metropolitan would be storing water by the end of CY 2023. One wet winter typically cannot erase multiple years of drought.

Here's a look at the supply situation as February begins:

1

THE DROUGHT MONITOR ALREADY LOOKS BETTER.

Both Northern California and Southern California have seen months with well above-average precipitation and snowfall. Currently, 89% of California is still experiencing some form of drought, but the severity of the drought has declined due to a lot of storm activity in January 2023.

2

SNOWPACK IS THE STATE'S BIGGEST RESERVOIR.

Snowpack throughout California is promising, and the 8 Station Index is 118% of normal. NorCal snowpack is at 143%. Southern Sierra Nevada snowpack is historically high with Mammoth Mountain reporting, 180% of normal. This means higher flows on the San Joaquin River, resulting in fewer pumping restrictions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

3

LAKE POWELL WATER LEVELS HIT HISTORIC LOW.

Unfortunately, the situation at Lake Mead is also dire, and shortages on the Colorado River are projected out for the next five years. Metropolitan forecasts that Colorado River water supplies will be around 900 TAF for CY 2023.

4

MORE STATE WATER PROJECT WATER IS COMING SOUTH.

The good news is that as of late January, the State Water Project (SWP) Table A allocation has increased to 30%. This percentage is the highest since the spring of 2019. The increase will significantly improve SWP deliveries, which have been struggling for the last few years.

5

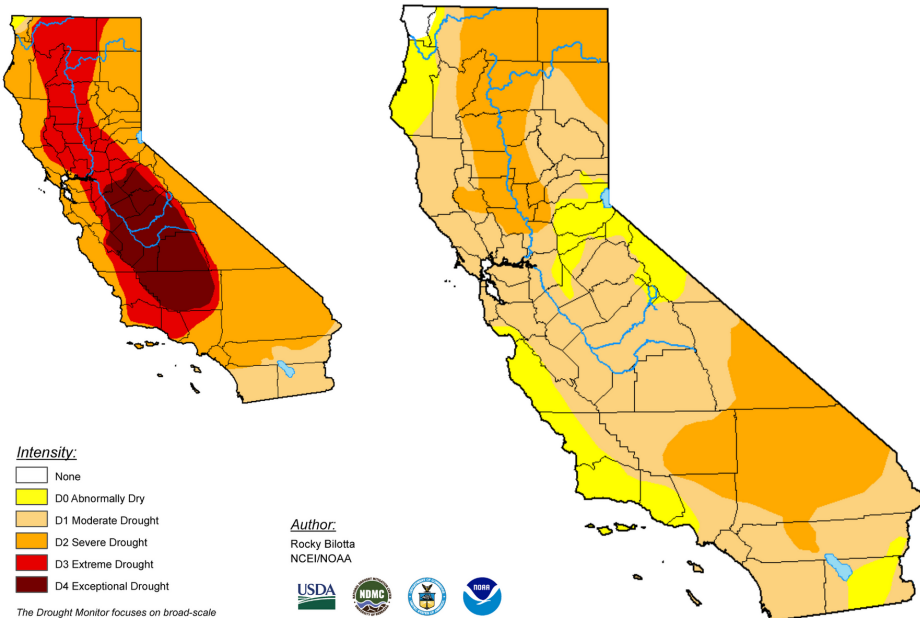
WE NEED MORE HELP IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH.

Additional storms would improve conditions dramatically. More importantly, if more precipitation does not come, we at least need temperatures to hold to keep the snow in the mountains over the next few months instead of melting and flowing quickly out to the ocean.

U.S. Drought Monitor California

October 25, 2022

February 21, 2023



Intensity:
 None
 D0 Abnormally Dry
 D1 Moderate Drought
 D2 Severe Drought
 D3 Extreme Drought
 D4 Exceptional Drought

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The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>