

March 20, 2012 Bulletin 120 Update

The March 20, 2012 Bulletin 120 Update has been completed and it is posted at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/iodir?s=b120up>. The forecast includes observed conditions through the morning of March 20, 2012.

Forecast Summary:

Considering the rivers forecasted in the B120 update, the projected median April-July runoff in the major Sierra river basins ranges from 42 percent on the Merced River to 69 percent on the Inflow to Lake Shasta. Compared to the March 1 and March 13 forecasts, all forecasts increased due to the precipitation received over the past week. Statewide, the median forecast increased about 10 percent since the March 13 forecast. The largest increases occurred on the Yuba (23 percent), Feather (17 percent), and American (15 percent) rivers – the primary focus of last week's storms. Because of the substantial increases in the forecast, the 90 percent exceedance forecast values were reevaluated as many were bordering on record low forecasts. As a result, the range between the 90 percent exceedance forecast and the median forecast was widened on the Feather, Yuba, American, and Mokelumne rivers and was kept stationary on the Tuolumne and Merced rivers. Consequently, the increases to the 90 percent exceedance forecast over the previous week's forecast might be less than expected.

Runoff:

March unimpaired flows continue to be well below average for all major Central Valley Rivers, except for the Feather, Yuba, and American rivers. Most rivers spiked following the storms. This month's unimpaired flows range from 35 percent on the Merced River to 126 percent on the Yuba River. The American is flowing at 110 percent and the Feather is flowing at 99 percent. All rivers from the Tuolumne south are flowing below 50 percent of average for the month.

Precipitation:

During the first 22 days of March, the Northern Sierra 8-Station Index gained 11.2 inches of precipitation which is 162 percent of the March average. The seasonal total through March 22 is 28.7 inches which is 72 percent of average-to-date and 57 percent of an average water year.

Through the first 22 days of March, the San Joaquin 5-Station Index gained 5.1 inches which is 84 percent of the March average. The seasonal total is 17.6 inches, which is 56 percent of average-to-date and 43 percent of an average water year.

Snowpack:

According to snow sensor data for the morning of March 20, statewide snowpack is 13 inches which is 46 percent of the average to date and 45 percent of the April 1 average. Regionally, the Northern Sierra, Central Sierra, and Southern Sierra snowpack are 53, 45, and 37 percent of their respective April 1 averages.

Weather and Climate Outlook:

The CNRFC 6-day QPF and Freezing Level Forecast, issued this morning, indicates that precipitation is expected through the period. Total amounts over the northern Sierra are expected to be less than 2.5

inches. Lighter precipitation is expected in the central California, southern Sierra, and southern coastal California regions on Saturday, Sunday, and Tuesday.

Currently, the freezing levels over the northern Sierra Nevada range from 5,000 to 7,500 feet while the freezing levels over the southern Sierra vary from 8,000 to 11,000 feet. These levels are expected to decrease daily to between 3,500 and 6,000 feet over the next several days.

The NWS Climate Prediction Center's (CPC) one-month and three-month outlooks remain unchanged from last week (both were issued on March 15).

Next Update:

The next Bulletin 120 forecast update for conditions on March 27, 2012 will be available March 29, 2012. As always, you may contact us anytime if you need assistance.

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Bulletin 120 Email Subscription Information

To subscribe and un-subscribe to the B120 notification email
<http://listhost2.water.ca.gov/mailman/listinfo/b120>.

Water Supply Index (WSI) Email Subscription Information

To subscribe and un-subscribe to the WSI notification email
<http://listhost2.water.ca.gov/mailman/listinfo/WSI>

Full Natural Flow Data:

Daily FNF

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snowsurvey_ro/FNF

Monthly FNF

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snowsurvey_ro/FNFSUM

Seasonal FNF

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snowsurvey_ro/FLOWOUT

Precipitation Data:

Latest Northern Sierra 8-Station Precipitation Index

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/queryDaily?s=8SI&d=today>

Northern Sierra 8-Station Precipitation Tabulation

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/products/8-Stations_Tab.pdf

Latest San Joaquin 5-Station Precipitation Index

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/queryDaily?s=5SI&d=today>

San Joaquin 5-Station Precipitation Tabulation

http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/products/5-Stations_Tab.pdf

WY Precipitation Summary

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/precip/PRECIPSUM>

Snow Data:

Latest Snow Sensor Report

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snow/PAGE6>

Latest Statewide Summary of Snow Water Equivalents

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

Monthly Snow Course Report

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

Extended Regional Forecasts:

California Nevada River Forecast Center 6 Day QPF and Snow Level Forecast

<http://www.cnrfc.noaa.gov/awipsProducts/RNOHD6RSA.php>

Climate Prediction Center One-Month Outlook Forecasts

<http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/predictions/30day/>

Climate Prediction Center Three-Month Outlook Forecasts

<http://www.cpc.noaa.gov/products/predictions/90day/>

Drought Information:

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/seasonal_drought.html