

We've finished the February 12, 2013 Bulletin 120 (B120) forecasts update. The forecasts include observed conditions through the morning of February 12, 2013 and is posted at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/ioidir?s=b120up>.

Forecast Summary:

Considering the rivers forecasted in the B120 update, the projected median April-July runoff in the major Sierra river basins ranges from 49 percent on the Tule River to 83 percent on the Tuolumne River. On average, the forecasts have dropped 7 percent since the February 1 B120 forecast due to the extreme dry conditions.

Runoff:

For the month of February, no river forecasted in this update is flowing at over 50 percent of its monthly average to date. In fact, the monthly flows range from 31 percent for the Tule River at Lake Success to 48 percent for the San Joaquin River at Millerton.

Precipitation:

So far, February is continuing the extreme dry trend that has been dominating the Sierra Nevada since the first of the year. Through the morning of February 14, 2013, the Northern Sierra 8-Station index had recorded 0.3 inches of precipitation since February 1. The 0.3 inches represents 4 percent of the expected February total. The seasonal total-to-date is 34.6 inches representing 113 percent of average to date and 69 percent of the expected Water Year total of 50 inches.

Dry winter conditions continue to characterize the San Joaquin region as well. As of the morning of February 14, 2013, the San Joaquin 5-Station Index showed a gain of 0.2 inches of precipitation since February 1. This represents 3 percent of the expected February total. The seasonal total-to-date is 20.6 inches representing 87 percent of average to date and 50 percent of the expected Water Year total of 40.8 inches.

Snowpack:

As indicated in the precipitation data, February has been uncharacteristically dry. Since February 1, the automated snow sensors show no gain in snow water equivalent (SWE) for any of the three regions nor on a statewide level. Regionally, the snow sensor data is indicating that the Northern Sierra, Central Sierra, and Southern Sierra snowpack are 78, 75, and 71 percent of their respective February 14 averages. The statewide snowpack average as of February 14 shows 16 inches of SWE which is 75 percent of the February 14 average and 56 percent of the April 1 average.

Weather and Climate Outlook:

We may see an end to the predominantly dry conditions over the next 6-10 days. The immediate forecast calls for unseasonably warm and dry conditions through the President's Day Weekend. Beyond that, the current outlook is for light to moderate precipitation in Northern and Central California with snow elevations dropping to around 4000 feet by the middle of next week. Let's hope that the weather models come into agreement and this storm materializes.

The NWS Climate Prediction Center's (CPC) 30-day outlook for February, last updated on January 31, 2013, suggests increased chances of below normal temperatures for Northern California with equal chances of above or below normal temperatures elsewhere. The same outlook calls for increased chances of below normal precipitation for most of Northern California,

increased chances of above normal precipitation for portions of the Colorado River region, and equal chances of above or below normal precipitation elsewhere.

The CPC's three month outlook (February thru April) was last updated on January 17, 2013. This outlook suggests increased chances of above normal temperatures for portions of the Southern Sierra Nevada, the Owens River basin, and the Mojave Desert. For all other areas, this outlook calls for equal chances of above or below normal temperatures. For precipitation, this same outlook calls for increased chances of below normal precipitation for all of California except along the Oregon border.

Next Update:

The next Bulletin 120 forecast update for conditions on February 19, 2013 will be available on February 21, 2013.

If you have any questions regarding this forecast, please contact a member of the Snow Surveys staff. We are happy to help.

****NEW Listserv****

This forecast is being sent out using a new state-mandated Listserv product. You are already subscribed so you do not need to do anything at this time. There may be some bugs and quirks, so bear with us and also DO let us know if anything unusual occurs.

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