

We've finished the February 19, 2013 Bulletin 120 (B120) forecast update. The forecast includes observed conditions through the morning of February 19, 2013 and is posted at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/iodir?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 44 percent on the Tule River to 78 percent for the Total Inflow to Shasta Lake. On average, the forecasts have dropped 5 percent since the February 12 B120 update due to the continued 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. The monthly flows range from 28 percent for the Merced and Tule Rivers to 43 percent for the Total Inflow to Shasta Lake and the San Joaquin River at Millerton.

Precipitation:

February is still following the extreme dry trend that has been dominating the Sierra Nevada since 2013 began. Through the morning of February 21, 2013, the Northern Sierra 8-Station index had recorded 0.5 inches of precipitation since February 14. The seasonal total-to-date is 35.1 inches representing 107 percent of average to date and 70 percent of the expected Water Year total of 50 inches.

As of the morning of February 20, 2013, the San Joaquin 5-Station Index showed a gain of 0.4 inches of precipitation since February 14. The seasonal total-to-date is 21.0 inches representing 82 percent of average to date and 51 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 measurable change 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 73, 71, and 65 percent of their respective February 19 averages. The statewide snowpack average as of February 19 shows 16 inches of SWE which is 70 percent of the February 19 average and 56 percent of the April 1 average.

Weather and Climate Outlook:

It appears as if we will return to predominantly dry conditions throughout the Sierra Nevada. Over the next 6 days no precipitation is forecast for the Sierra Nevada. During this time, the forecast calls for near normal temperatures with freezing elevations ranging between 4000-8000 feet for the most part. Further out to 14 days, dry conditions persist as the ridge strengthens over California. Expect normal to above normal temperatures across the mountain regions of California during this time.

The NWS Climate Prediction Center's (CPC) 30-day outlook for February, last updated on February 21, suggests increased chances of below normal temperatures for most of California. The same outlook calls for increased chances of below normal precipitation for all of California.

The CPC's three month outlook (March through May) also updated on February 21 suggests increased chances of above normal temperatures for portions of the Southern Sierra Nevada, the Owens River basin, and the Mojave Desert. The same outlook calls for increased chances of below normal temperatures along the North Coast and Oregon border. 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 the entire state.

For both the 30-day and 90-day outlook, the confidence in predicting below normal precipitation across most of California seems to be increasing.

Next Update:

The next Bulletin 120 forecast for conditions on March 1, 2013 will be available on March 8, 2013. A Water Supply Index (WSI) for conditions on March 1, 2013 will be available on March 8 as well.

If you have any questions regarding this forecast or need assistance prior to the March 1 B120, 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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