

We've finished the February 24, 2015 Bulletin 120 (B120) forecasts update. The forecasts include observed conditions through the morning of February 24, 2015. The forecasts are posted at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/iudir?s=b120up>.

Forecast Summary:

The projected median April-July runoff in the major Sierra river basins ranges from 11 percent on the Tule River to 61 percent on the Total Inflow to Shasta Lake. On average, the forecasts for the Sacramento River Region, San Joaquin Region, and Tulare Lake Region dropped by 4, 6, and 4 percent of average, respectively. The Shasta Lake Total Inflow forecast dropped 3 percent and the Merced River forecast dropped 7 percent. Most of the 90 percent exceedance forecasts remain below 20 percent of average.

Runoff:

Recedence continues. Regarding the northern Sierra rivers, the flows for the last week have been about 55 percent of the flows the prior week. The flows in the central Sierra have dropped by about 45 percent and the drop is about 10 percent in the southern Sierra rivers. Through the first 24 days of February, all rivers except the Mokelumne are flowing at less than the average monthly rate. Rivers south of the Tuolumne are flowing at rates less than 55 percent of average.

Precipitation:

Precipitation for the 2014-15 water year accumulated at the following rates of average:

| Region/Index | WY accumulated Precipitation through February 26, 2015 Units = percent of average |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Northern Sierra 8-Station Index | 89 (30.3 inches) |
| San Joaquin 5-Station Index | 49 (13.1 inches) |

Snowpack:

The snowpack as of the morning of February 26, 2015 stands at the following (based on snow sensors):

| Region | Snow Water Equivalent (inches) | % of Average (Apr. 1) | % of Average (Feb. 26) |
|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Northern | 4.2 | 15 | 17 |
| Central | 5.0 | 17 | 20 |
| Southern | 4.5 | 17 | 20 |
| Statewide | 4.6 | 16 | 19 |

In comparison to conditions as of the morning of February 19, 2015, snow water equivalent in the Northern and Central Sierras decreased 0.5 and 0.6 inches, respectively. Fortunately, the Southern Sierras gained 0.3 inches of snow water equivalent compared to last week. Statewide, snow water equivalent has decreased 0.4 inches compared to February 19.

Weather and Climate Outlooks:

The 6-day weather forecast indicates accumulated precipitation up to an inch for the North Coast, Sacramento and San Joaquin River Systems. Smaller amounts are expected in the southern Sierra. The wettest days for this period are Friday (Day 2) and Saturday (Day 3) for the North Coast, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Tulare Lake systems. Freezing levels over the Sierra are expected to range above 9,000 feet today (Day 1), and decrease to 5,000 feet by Tuesday (Day 6). Freezing levels are expected to remain near 5,500 feet for Saturday (Day 3) through Monday (Day 5).

The NWS Climate Prediction Center (CPC) one-month outlook for March, issued February 19, indicates increased chances of below normal precipitation for the northern third of California and, elsewhere, equal chances of above or below normal precipitation are expected. Temperatures are expected to be above normal for the entire state.

The CPC three-month (March-April-May) outlook, issued February 19, indicates increased chances of below normal precipitation for the very north coast of California. Elsewhere, the same forecast calls for equal chances of above or below normal precipitation. Increased chances of above normal temperatures are predicted for the entire state.

ENSO-neutral conditions continue according to the CPC ENSO Prediction Report issued February 23, 2015. There is an approximately 50-60 percent chance of El Nino within the late Northern Hemisphere winter and early spring, with ENSO-neutral slightly favored thereafter.

Next Update:

The next Bulletin 120 and Water Supply Index forecasts for conditions as of March 1, 2015 will be available Monday, March 9, 2015. If you have any questions regarding this forecast, please contact a member of the Snow Surveys staff.

Important Links:

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>

Latest San Joaquin 5-Station Precipitation Index

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

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>

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/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=1

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

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

Weather Forecast Office California Service Area-Products

<http://www.cnrfc.noaa.gov/forecasts.php>

El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Conditions and Weekly Discussion (including La Niña)

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/lanina/enso_evolution-status-fcsts-web.pdf

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