

We've finished the March 17, 2015 Bulletin 120 (B120) forecast update. The forecast includes observed conditions through the morning of March 17, 2015. The forecast is posted at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/iodir?s=b120up>.

Forecast Summary:

The projected median April-July runoff in the major Sierra river basins ranges from 9 percent on the Tule River to 54 percent for the Shasta Lake Total Inflow and the Sacramento above Bend Bridge forecast points. Statewide, the forecasts dropped an average of 3 percent from the March 10, 2015 B120 forecast update. The forecasts for the Yuba and the Tuolumne rivers dropped 4 percent of average. Most other rivers dropped 3 percent. The 90 percent exceedance forecast for many rivers is near 15 percent of average.

Runoff:

No forecasted river is flowing over 31 percent of average for the first 18 days of March. The highest percent of average March flows are for the Trinity River which is flowing at a rate of about 35 percent of average. The rivers from the Feather through the Cosumnes, Stanislaus through the San Joaquin, and the Tule and Kern are flowing at a rate less than 25 percent of average for the month.

Precipitation:

Precipitation for the 2015 water year accumulated at the following rates of average:

Region/Index	WY accumulated Precipitation through March 17, 2015 units= percent of average
Northern Sierra 8-Station Index	81 (31.1 inches)
San Joaquin 5-Station Index	44 (13.5 inches)
Tulare Lake 6-Station Index	47 (10.3 inches)

For the first 17 days of March, the percent of average precipitation measured for the three indexes are 6, 3, and 4 percent of average.

Snowpack:

The snowpack as of the morning of March 17, 2015 stands at the following (based on snow sensors):

Region	Snow Water Equivalent (inches)	% of Average (Apr. 1)	% of Average (Mar. 17)
Northern	2.8	10	10
Central	3.9	13	13
Southern	4.0	15	16
Statewide	3.6	12	12

All regions have lost snow since the last update.

Weather and Climate Outlooks:

The six-day weather forecast indicates up to 1 inch and 0.5 inch of precipitation is expected for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins over the last three days of the period. The North Coast is also expected to receive up to 3 inches for the last three days. Freezing levels will remain high over the six-day forecast period with levels above 11,000 feet today, dropping to 6,500 feet by Tuesday.

The NWS Climate Prediction Center (CPC) one-month outlook for April, issued March 19, indicates increased chances of below normal precipitation for the far North-West corner of California, otherwise equal chances of below or above normal precipitation throughout the State. There is an increased chance of above normal temperatures Statewide as last week.

The CPC three-month (April-May-June) outlook, issued March 19, indicates the same forecast for California as the one-month outlook for April.

El Niño conditions are present. Positive equatorial sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies continue across the western and central Pacific, while near average SSTs are evident in the eastern Pacific. There is an approximately 50-60 percent chance that El Niño conditions will continue through Northern Hemisphere summer 2015. The CPC issued this statement on March 16, and is the same statement as last week.

Next Update:

A Bulletin 120 update for conditions as of March 24 will be available Thursday, March 26. 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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