

We've finished the April 14, 2015 Bulletin 120 (B120) forecast update. The forecast includes observed conditions through the morning of April 14, 2015. The forecast is 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 6 percent of normal on the Tule River to 47 percent of normal for the Total Inflow to Shasta Lake and the Sacramento River above Bend Bridge forecast points. Statewide, the forecasts dropped an average of 1 percent of normal from the April 1, 2015 B120 forecast. The forecast for the Yuba River had the greatest percent of normal drop of 3 percent. The 90 percent exceedance forecast for all rivers is less than 15 percent of normal with the exception of Total Inflow to Shasta Lake, Sacramento River above Bend Bridge, Feather River, and Tuolumne River.

Runoff:

Through the first 12 to 14 days of April, all rivers in the Sierra are flowing at or below 26 percent of normal with the exception of Total Inflow to Shasta Lake and Sacramento River above Bend Bridge. The lowest percent of average April flow is for the Cosumnes and Tule Rivers which are flowing at a rate of about 6 percent of average.

Precipitation:

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

Region/Index	WY accumulated Precipitation through April 15, 2015 units= percent of average
Northern Sierra 8-Station Index	75 (32.9 inches)
San Joaquin 5-Station Index	41 (14.5 inches)
Tulare Lake 6-Station Index	42 (10.8 inches)

For the first 15 days of April, the percent of average precipitation measured for the three indexes are 49, 47, and 46 percent of average. The March percent of average, for these indexes, was 14, 7, and 4. Even though the runoff forecasts and snow conditions are near record lows, the water year precipitation values will not rival record lows due to the average or above average precipitation in December, especially in the northern Sierra where December was 181 percent of average.

Snowpack:

The snowpack as of the morning of **April 15, 2015** stands at the following (based on snow sensors):

Region	Snow Water Equivalent (inches)	% of April 1 Average	% of April 15 Average
Northern	1.1	4	4
Central	1.5	5	5
Southern	1.1	4	4
Statewide	1.3	4	4

Comparing the current snow water content to 1977, the current snow water content is less than half of what it was on April 15, 1977 in all three regions. Another comparison highlights the variability of the snowpack from year-to-year. In mid-April of 1983, the statewide snow water content was about 225 percent of the April 1 average. Now, it is 4 percent.

Weather and Climate Outlooks:

The six-day weather forecast indicates no precipitation over the first two days of the forecast. A total of less than 0.25 inches of precipitation is expected over the central and southern Sierra Saturday through Monday. Less than 0.1 inches of precipitation is expected on Tuesday over the upper Sacramento River basin. Freezing levels will remain over 10,000

feet during the six-day forecast with the exception of Tuesday (Day 6) for the northern portion of the State where levels will drop to 8,000 feet.

The NWS Climate Prediction Center (CPC) one-month outlook for April, issued April 16, indicates equal chances of above or below normal precipitation Statewide. The same outlook predicts increased chances of above normal temperature Statewide.

The CPC three-month (May-June-July) outlook, issued April 16, indicates equal chances of above or below normal precipitation Statewide. The same outlook predicts increased chances of above normal temperature Statewide.

El Niño conditions are present. Positive equatorial sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies continue across most of the Pacific Ocean. There is an approximately 70 percent chance that El Niño conditions will continue through Northern Hemisphere summer 2015, and a greater than 60 percent chance it will last through autumn.

Next Update:

A Bulletin 120 update for conditions as of April 21 will be available Thursday, April 23. If you have any questions regarding this forecast, please contact a member of the Snow Surveys staff.