

We've finished the March 22, 2016 Bulletin 120 (B120) forecast update. The forecasts include observed conditions through the morning of March 22, 2016.

The forecasts are 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 65 percent on the Kern River to 105 percent on the Mokelumne River. Only the Total Inflow into Shasta Lake, Feather, and Yuba rivers saw increases in the forecast compared to last week. The Sacramento River above Bend Bridge, American, Mokelumne, and Stanislaus rivers saw no change in the forecast as compared to last week. All major Sierra basins south of the Stanislaus saw a decrease in the forecast as compared to last week. Regionally, the forecasts for the Sacramento River Region, San Joaquin Region, and Tulare Lake Region are 101, 94, and 77 percent of average, respectively.

**Runoff:**

Through the first 20 days of March, rivers in the Sierra are flowing from 59 percent of average on the Kern to 251 percent of average on the Yuba. All rivers north of the San Joaquin are flowing at a rate greater than or equal to 180 percent of average. The San Joaquin and Kings rivers are flowing above average at 125 and 118 percent, respectively, whereas the Kaweah, Tule, and Kern are flowing below average.

**Precipitation:**

Precipitation for the 2015-2016 water year accumulated at the following rates of average:

Region/Index	WY accumulated precipitation (%) through March 24, 2016
Northern Sierra 8-Station Index	130 (51.8 inches)
San Joaquin 5-Station Index	111 (35.7 inches)
Tulare Basin 6-Station Index	102 (23.6 inches)

**Snowpack:**

The snowpack as of the morning of March 24, 2016 stands at the following (based on snow sensors):

Region	Snow Water Equivalent (inches)	% of Average (Apr 1)	% of Average (March 24)
Northern	28.8	101	101
Central	26.5	91	92
Southern	19.4	72	73
Statewide	25.1	89	89

**Weather and Climate Outlooks:**

The 6-day weather forecast predicts precipitation on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. On Sunday, precipitation is expected over the Sacramento, Feather, Yuba, and American basins with totals up to 0.1 inches. On Monday, precipitation is predicted over the Sierras with totals up to 0.25 inches over the Yuba, American, Mokelumne, Stanislaus, and the Tuolumne watersheds. Basins south of Tuolumne through the Tule can expect less than 0.1 inch of precipitation on Monday. On Tuesday, the forecast predicts up to 0.1 inches over the Sierras. Freezing elevations are at their highest today near 9,500 feet. Over the six-day period, freezing elevations will decrease down to 5,500 feet over the Northern Sierras and 6,500 feet over the Southern Sierras by Tuesday.

The NWS Climate Prediction Center (CPC) one-month outlook for April, issued March 17, indicates slightly increased chances of above normal precipitation over the northern two-thirds of the state. For the rest of the state, equal chances of above and below normal precipitation are expected. Temperatures are expected to be above normal over the entire state.

The CPC three-month (April-May-June) outlook, issued March 17, indicates increased chances of above normal precipitation for the entire state except for the far northwestern corner and the southern quarter where equal chances of above or below normal precipitation are expected. The three-month forecast also predicts increased chances of above normal temperatures statewide.

A strong El Niño is present and weakening. Positive equatorial sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies continue across most of the Pacific Ocean. A transition to ENSO-neutral is likely during late Northern Hemisphere spring or early summer 2016, with close to a 50 percent chance for La Niña conditions to develop by the fall.

**Next Update:**

Bulletin 120 and Water Supply Index forecasts for conditions as of April 1 will be available Friday, April 8. If you have any questions regarding this forecast, please contact a member of the Snow Surveys staff.