



# The Outlook

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## Drought Outlook

California and the West in general are currently in a wet cycle with intermittent storm systems forecast to impact California into next week. This rain and snow is greatly needed in the state however California remains well below average due to an exceptionally dry December and January. California is currently at 60% of average precipitation for this time of year as of February 20<sup>th</sup> and 40% of average snow pack as of February 1<sup>st</sup>. Updated snow pack measurements will be available in early March (10<sup>th</sup>) with recent storms increasing snow pack levels. State wide reservoir storage sits at 60% of average with runoff much lower at 35% of average. This is due to 3 dry years and accumulated soil moisture deficits reducing runoff. The California Department of Water Resources (DWP) states "Despite the recent storms and more rain expected this month, water conditions remain severe. This year's water allocation will remain at 15% of the State Water Project (SWP) contractor requests". DWP delivery allocations have only been lower than 15% on 2 other occasions (1991 and 1993) since the department began in 1968. Consecutive years of below average rainfall along with court ordered restrictions due to protected fish species (more on this in future updates) will drastically reduce water availability in the San Joaquin Valley this summer and fall. As we look forward this lack of water supply will likely impact future plantings of lettuces, melons, onions, tomatoes along with many other crops throughout Central and Southern California.

We will be closely watching this drought situation and keep you up to date as we gather more information.