



Advisory

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Low Snowpack Shows Critical Need for Water Storage and Conservation

SACRAMENTO – Results of the fifth and final snow survey of the 2006-2007 snowfall season -- conducted by the California Department of Water Resources off Highway 50 near Echo Summit -- are as follow:

Location	Elevation	Snow Depth	Water Content	% of Long Term Average
Alpha	7,600 feet	9.3 inches	4.2 inches	16
Phillips Station	6,800 feet	no snow	---	---
Lyons Creek	6,700 feet	20.7 inches	7.3 inches	32
Tamarack Flat	6,500 feet	78.1 inches	10.9 inches	23

Electronic sensor readings show Northern Sierra snow water equivalents at 27 percent of normal for this date, Central Sierra at 33 percent, and Southern Sierra at 24 percent. Statewide, the percentage of normal is at 29 percent. This means the snow level is 71 percent below normal.

"There is no question that these snowpack results indicate the need for conservation and more water storage," said DWR Director Lester Snow. "Now more than ever, we need to support the Governor's Strategic Growth Plan that will allow us to address this critical need for additional surface and groundwater storage, conservation and Delta preservation to cope with California's population growth."

Director Snow noted that the Department of Water Resources is working with local and regional agencies throughout the state to encourage and implement water conservation measures as a precaution against subsequent dry years and noted that the dismal snowpack readings reinforce the importance of the Governor's plan to address water storage and other infrastructure needs.

Communities throughout the state have begun voluntary rationing. Recently the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission called on their 2.4 million customers to reduce their water use by 10 percent or they could face water rationing this summer. The East Bay Municipal Utilities District has asked their customers find and fix any plumbing that leaks, to water their lawns only three days a week and never on consecutive days and to do so at night or in the morning. Similarly, Santa Cruz residents have been told to not water their lawns between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. seven days a week.

With more precipitation falling as rain we face more flooding and less water in the snowpack to flow to our cities and fields in the summer," Snow said. "Obviously, this increases the need for having more sources to draw from, to ensure that our economy and communities have enough water.

In addition to today's manually measured sites, reporters can find real-time readings of statewide water content posted on the Internet in date order (newest at the bottom) at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/lreports/DLYSWEQ>.

Importance of Snow Surveying

Snow-water content is important in determining the coming year's water supply. The measurements help hydrologists prepare water supply forecasts as well as provide others, such as hydroelectric power companies and the recreation industry, with much needed data.

Monitoring is coordinated by the Department of Water Resources as part of the multi-agency California Cooperative Snow Surveys Program. Surveyors from more than 50 agencies and utilities visit hundreds of snow measurement courses in California's mountains each month to gauge the amount of water in the snow pack.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

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