



The San Luis Reservoir (see page 3)

California Water and Infrastructure Report For October 26, 2023

(With expanded coverage of all the Western States)

by Patrick Ruckert

Published weekly since July, 2014

An archive of all these weekly reports can be found at both links below:

<http://www.californiadroughtupdate.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaDroughtUpdate>

For a free subscription to the weekly report: Send me an email-- patruckert@gmail.com

www.californiadroughtupdate.org/20230803-California-Water-and-Infrastructure-Report.pdf

A Note to Readers

A smorgasbord of topics grace this week's report.

Following the U.S. Drought Monitor map for California, which does show virtually no area of the state presently in drought, we have an example of how even the most incompetent, corrupt and evil administration, if allowed to throw away hundreds of billions of dollars, at least a few land on a project that should have been built decades ago: *"Feds OK plans for major expansion of San Luis Reservoir,"*

"That is nice," as the lady would say, but the rest of the report demonstrates the theme I have stressed for years in these reports. Virtually no one wants to actually solve a crisis, but just to manage them, perhaps waiting for a miracle that will never come.

While, yes, there is much to complain about, but even policy in the hands of those who bow to Wall Street and the globalists, spending hundreds of billions on attempting to bribe an angry population and

to, whether they know it or not, wreck what is left of what used to be the greatest industrial power in the world, somehow, once in awhile, they do something that should have been done decades ago.

The Biden administration last Friday announced that “the Department of the Interior and San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority improved(sic) plans to implement the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project. The project will create an additional 130,000 acre-feet of storage space in the San Luis Reservoir.”

More rationing is always the first option to solve virtually any problem in California in recent years, with two articles this week providing examples. First is this one: “*California Weighs Plan to Cut Daily Water Use.*” The second is this: “*Amid a growing number of threats, can the San Joaquin Valley adapt to climate change?*”

On the Colorado River, the Bureau of Reclamation, because of the abundant precipitation this past winter in California, and a generous snowpack in the Rockies, has been given at least a recess from the tough decisions on how to ration the waters of the Colorado River. Bragging about how California, Arizona and Nevada have agreed to cut back their withdraws from the river by three million acre feet, does not provide a long-term solution, and though the water behind Hoover Dam and Glenn Canyon Dam has risen a few feet this year, both reservoirs still remain at about one-third full.

Several articles describe the current state of the river and, once again, demonstrate that a generation of political leaders, water managers and others have no intention of abandoning their business as usual “crisis management” methods for a determination to actually solve the crisis.

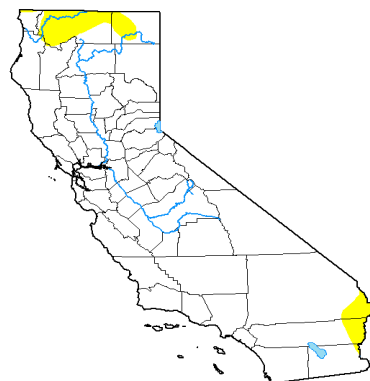
The final new item is another example of, “*Blame Everything on Climate Change, Not the Incompetent Policies of the Past Decades.*” The article itself is, accompanied with the usual climate change hysteria, and titled, “*Fire, other ravages jeopardize California’s prized forests.*”

The **Feature** this week is by colleague Michael Carr, and the title should give you an indication of the content: “*Washington Swamp Gnaws Away at Divine Space Mandate; FAA/Fish & Wildlife Hold Moon Mission Hostage.*”

U.S. Drought Monitor California

U.S. Drought Monitor
California

October 24, 2023
(Released Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:
Roc ky Bilotta
NCEI/NOAA



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Statistics

Statistics type

Week	Date	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4	DSCI
Current	2023-10-24	94.32	5.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Last Week to Current	2023-10-17	94.32	5.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
3 Months Ago to Current	2023-07-25	74.43	25.57	6.29	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Start of Calendar Year to Current	2022-12-27	0.00	100.00	97.94	80.56	35.50	7.16	
Start of Water Year to Current	2023-09-26	94.01	5.99	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	
One Year Ago to Current	2022-10-25	0.00	100.00	99.77	91.83	43.06	16.57	

The West

Much of the West remained as status quo this week. Precipitation fell across much of the region, which was enough to prevent further degradation but not enough to warrant large improvements. Heavier precipitation fell across parts of Montana, with rain totals up to 300-400% above normal, over the past week. This beneficial rainfall, along with precipitation percentiles and short-term SPI/SPEI, soil moisture and streamflow data, resulted in abnormal dryness (D0) and moderate (D1) to severe (D2) drought improvements along the northern parts of Montana.

As for temperature, much of the region was well above normal with temperatures up to 15°F above normal. Parts of the Southwest are experiencing record warm temperatures for this month-to-date period, while Phoenix, AZ, reached 105°F on October 16th and 104°F on October 19th and 20th, setting the three hottest temperatures on record for this time of the year. These above-normal temperatures coupled with below-normal precipitation resulted in the expansion of D1 and D2 in southern Arizona and across the state of New Mexico. Introduction of D3 was also added to northwest New Mexico based on precipitation deficits and short-term SPI/SPEI and soil moisture data.

While the Biden administration Throws Away Billions, At Least Some Goes To Something That Should Have Been Done a Few Decades Ago

Feds OK plans for major expansion of San Luis Reservoir

The Federal bipartisan infrastructure law and the WIIN Act have combined to fund a major expansion of San Luis Reservoir.

By [Daniel Gligich](#)

October 20, 2023

<https://sjvsun.com/ag/feds-ok-plans-for-major-expansion-of-san-luis-reservoir/>

Friday, the Department of the Interior and San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority improved plans to implement the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project.

California is getting its first major water storage project in a dozen years, expanding an existing

reservoir through federal funding.



The big picture: *The project will create an additional 130,000 acre-feet of storage space in the San Luis Reservoir.*

- *Once completed, it is expected to deliver additional water for two million people, over one million acres of farmland and 135,000 acres of Pacific Flyway wetlands.*
- *It's the first major water storage project in California since 2011.*
- *\$95 million of the project's cost from the 2021 infrastructure law as well as the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act.*
- *The infrastructure law previously provided over \$100 million to increase the dam crest by 130 feet to improve seismic safety. The new project will add an additional 10 feet for water storage expansion.*
- *Spanning over three miles long, the Sisk Dam is located about 12 miles west of Los Banos and stands 382 feet high.*

Always the First Option in California: More Rationing

California Weighs Plan to Cut Daily Water Use

Water agency officials say plans will spike infrastructure and administrative costs and hike water bills

[Susannah Luthi](#)

October 19, 2023

<https://freebeacon.com/california/california-weighs-plan-to-cut-daily-water-use/>

California's water regulators are weighing plans to limit individual daily water consumption to just 42

gallons per day by the end of the decade, with proposed rules that suppliers and agencies around the state are warning will hike people's water bills with little benefit.

The state water board's [proposed rules](#) map out its planned enforcement of a [2022 law](#) ordering urban water suppliers to cut indoor allowances from 55 gallons to 47 gallons per day in 2025 and 42 gallons by 2031. Californians' [average daily consumption](#) of 51 gallons is already much lower than the U.S. average of 80 to 100 gallons per person per day, according to the [U.S. Geological Survey](#).

Water agency officials and suppliers around the state petitioned the board earlier this month to scale back its plan, complaining that the proposed regulations—which would limit water use for pools, landscape, and indoor use—would spike water infrastructure and administrative costs, hit every household with higher bills for less water, and impose onerous burdens on local regulators and constituents alike.

Californians are no stranger to paying higher prices in the name of fighting climate change. Earlier this year, Bay Area regulators [voted](#) to ban new gas furnaces and water heaters—a move that locals said could cost them tens of thousands of dollars in home retrofitting when they have to replace their old appliances. Electricity prices have soared nearly [70 percent](#) since 2010 when the state started replacing fossil fuels with solar and wind power, which make up [27 percent](#) of California's power generation compared to [13.6 percent](#) for the nation. And California consistently [averages](#) the highest fuel prices in the nation, thanks in part to [special refinery rules](#).

"California Democrats want the state to set an example for the world of environmental sustainability," said Edward Ring, senior fellow at the conservative California Policy Center and state water policy expert. "But the way that they're going about it is by enforcing rationing and high prices onto ordinary Californians for every aspect of life."

The plan would save roughly less than 1 percent of the state's total managed water, according to California's [own assessment](#). The state [claims](#) that the proposed regulations would cost about \$13.5 billion but save \$15.6 billion by reducing water supply and usage. But an [independent assessment](#) from a regional water agency said the real costs for communities and residents will likely top \$7.4 billion, as the regulations and infrastructure costs will simply make the lesser amounts of water more expensive.

Amid a growing number of threats, can the San Joaquin Valley adapt to climate change?

By [Hayley Smith](#) Staff Writer

<https://www.latimes.com/california/newsletter/2023-10-25/can-san-joaquin-valley-adapt-to-climate-change-essential-california>

*Good morning. It's **Wednesday, Oct. 25**. I'm Hayley Smith, an environment reporter at The Times, bringing you today's edition of Essential California. Here's what you need to know to start your day.*

- *If California is a front line of climate change, the San Joaquin Valley is ground zero. Can it adapt?*
- *California DMV pulls permits for Cruise's driverless cars*
- *Officials urge California residents to brace for flooding as El Niño looms*

In the summer of 2022, I found myself standing atop dry, cracked dirt beneath the white-hot sun of California's San Joaquin Valley. The state was three years into a punishing drought, and I was interviewing a Tulare County resident whose well had run dry. The man had no reliable source of

drinking water, and he wasn't sure when or how he would get one.

Less than a year later, I found myself in the valley once again — only this time, I was standing at the edge of Tulare Lake, which was reborn amid one of California's wettest winters in recent memory. The lake had been drained for agriculture more than a century earlier, but the pounding rain overtopped rivers and burst through levees to fill it once again. I could see the tops of telephone poles and almond trees poking up from its stagnant depths.

The valley, it seemed to me, can't catch a break.

In fact, residents there are dealing with a dizzying array of climate challenges, often at the same time. In addition to whiplash-inducing swings from extreme drought to extreme flooding, the valley consistently suffers from the worst air quality in the nation, which can be made worse by lung-searing smoke from nearby wildfires. Overuse of the valley's groundwater has translated into some of the worst land subsidence on earth, and all the while, temperatures continue to rise.

If California is a front line of climate change in America, the San Joaquin Valley may well be ground zero.

But unpacking why that is the case — and what can be done about it — revealed a complex web of factors. Over the last several months, I made multiple trips to the valley and spoke with residents, academics, politicians, farmworkers and community leaders to form a clearer picture of a region in flux.

I learned that over time, the valley underwent a dramatic shift from a humid landscape to one that is rapidly aridifying — a transition that weakened its natural ability to cope with climate change. The region's transition toward industrial agriculture, and its central role in the state's oil and gas production, further taxed its resources.

The Colorado River

The Bureau of Reclamation, because of the abundant precipitation this past winter in California, and a generous snowpack in the Rockies, has been given at least a recess from the tough decisions on how to ration the waters of the Colorado River. Bragging about how California, Arizona and Nevada have agreed to cut back their withdraws from the river by three million acre feet, does not provide a long-term solution, and though the water behind Hoover Dam and Glenn Canyon Dam has risen a few feet this year, both reservoirs still remain at about one-third full.

Several articles describe the current state of the river and, once again, demonstrate that a generation of political leaders, water managers and others have no intention of abandoning their business as usual "crisis management" methods for a determination to actually solve the crisis.

As I reported last week, the solution has been on the table for decades. Build the North American Water and Power Alliance. See last week's report: <file:///C:/Users/patru/OneDrive/Desktop/CA%20Drought/20231019-California-Water-and-Infrastructure-Report.pdf>

'Humans must solve the problem': Public heard in Colorado River report

By [Brett Clarkson](#) Las Vegas Review-Journal

October 19, 2023 - 7:47 pm

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/politics-and-government/nevada/humans-must-solve-the->

[problem-public-heard-in-colorado-river-report-2924967/](#)

A new report released Thursday by the Bureau of Reclamation shows the wealth of public feedback officials received as they begin the process of developing new guidelines for the Colorado River, which provides water to about 40 million people in the Southwest.



The Colorado River meanders along within the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area about the Hite Crossing Bridge on Saturday, April 22, 2023, in Hite, Utah. (L.E. Baskow/Las Vegas Review-Journal) @Left_Eye_Images

The “Scoping Report for Post-2026 Colorado River Reservoir Operations,” shows what federal, state and local governments, tribes, advocacy groups, individuals, and anyone with an interest in the vitally important, 1,400-mile-long river are asking for when it comes to how the Colorado and its dams and reservoirs will be managed after several sets of guidelines and agreements governing its use expire at the end of 2026.

The bureau received more than 24,000 letter submissions over two months, the report said. The comments came in after the bureau said in a June 16 notice that it was formally beginning the process to prepare an environmental impact statement ahead of the development of post-2026 guidelines that would replace the expiring rules.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration on Thursday announced a timeline for setting the new guidelines. According to a news release from the Department of the Interior, a draft environmental impact statement is expected by the end of 2024 and will include a public comment period. A final environmental impact statement will be ready by late 2025.

The new guidelines, which would replace the 2007 Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and the Coordinated Operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead, would take effect in 2027.

Federal officials say plan for water cuts from 3 Western states is enough to protect Colorado River

The U.S. Department of the Interior is throwing its support behind a proposal by Arizona, Colorado and Nevada.

Author: Kathleen Ronayne, Associated Press, Amy Taxin
Published: 5:11 PM PDT October 25, 2023

Updated: 5:36 PM PDT October 25, 2023

<https://www.abc10.com/article/news/local/california/colorado-river-water/103-de3628fa-e97d-4b0a-bf3a-9e985e98c467>

CALIFORNIA, USA — Federal officials said Wednesday that conditions have improved on the Colorado River to the point that a plan by [California](#), Arizona and Nevada to voluntarily reduce water use should help keep the river basin on stable footing for the next few years.

The U.S. Department of the Interior said in a statement that the risk of reaching critically low water elevations at Lake Powell and Lake Mead, the river's two key reservoirs, has gone down substantially.

“We have staved off the immediate possibility of the System’s reservoirs from falling to critically low elevations that would threaten water deliveries and power production,” Deputy Secretary Tommy Beaudreau said in a statement.

Western States’ planned water cuts are enough to avert a Colorado River crisis, for now

by [Rachel Becker](#) October 25, 2023

<https://calmatters.org/environment/water/2023/10/colorado-river-california-water-cuts/>



The All American Canal flows past the Imperial Sand Dunes near Felicity on Dec. 5, 2022. Photo by Caitlin Ochs, Reuters

In summary

Wet weather and planned cuts by California, Arizona and Nevada averted declines that could have threatened water deliveries and power production — but long-term threats to the Colorado River remain.

California, Nevada and Arizona’s historic pact to cut their use of the Colorado River’s overtapped supplies should be enough to keep the basin’s massive reservoirs from hitting dangerously low levels — for now, a federal analysis reported today.

With the release of its revised environmental assessment today, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is poised to move forward with the three-state plan to give up about 13% of water they receive from the Colorado River through the end of 2026. Next comes 45 days of public comment on the assessment, which is expected to be finalized in early 2024.

At stake is a water supply for [40 million people](#), [seven states](#), [30 federally recognized Tribal Nations](#), and [5.5 million acres of agriculture](#). A combination of an ample Rocky Mountain snowpack, wet weather and the states' planned cuts averted imminent declines that could have threatened water deliveries and power production, federal officials say. But federal they warned that long-term threats to the vital supply remain.

“The Colorado River Basin’s reservoirs, including its two largest storage reservoirs, Lake Powell and Lake Mead, remain at historically low levels,” U.S. Bureau of Reclamation commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton said in a statement. “Today’s advancement protects the system in the near-term while we continue to develop long-term, sustainable plans to combat the climate-driven realities facing the Basin.”

A tipping point delayed, but not avoided

Last summer, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton warned that the basin of the iconic Colorado River, which flows through the Grand Canyon, was “approaching a tipping point.”

With a decades-long megadrought parching the region, the basin’s massive reservoirs [Lake Powell](#) and [Lake Mead](#) — the largest in the country — had reached historically low levels. Touton called on the seven basin states to cut their water use by about 2 to 4 million acre-feet per year — more than 7 times the amount Nevada receives in a year.

Funding from President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and voluntary water conservation commitments will save 3-million-acre feet of water through 2026

From the Department of Interior:



The Biden-Harris administration today announced next steps in the Administration’s efforts to protect the stability and sustainability of the Colorado River System and strengthen water security in the West. The Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation released a revised [draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement](#) (SEIS) as part of the ongoing, collaborative effort to update the current interim operating guidelines for the near-term operation of Glen Canyon and Hoover Dams to address the ongoing drought and impacts from the climate crisis.

In order to protect Glen Canyon and Hoover Dam operations, system integrity, and public health and safety through 2026 – at which point the current interim guidelines expire – an initial draft SEIS was [released](#) in April 2023. Following a [historic consensus-based proposal](#) secured by the Biden-Harris administration in partnership with states – which committed to measures to conserve at least 3 million-acre-feet (maf) of system water through the end of 2026 enabled by funding from President Biden’s Investing in America agenda – Reclamation temporarily withdrew the draft SEIS to allow for consideration of the new proposal.

Today’s revised draft SEIS includes two key updates: the Lower Basin states’ proposal as an action

alternative, as well as improved hydrology and more recent hydrologic data. The release of the revised draft SEIS initiates a 45-day public comment period.

Blame Everything on Climate Change, Not the Incompetent Policies of the Past Decades

Fire, other ravages jeopardize California's prized forests

Forest in California may be disappearing

By BRIAN MELLELY Associated Press

October 25, 2023, 10:07 PM

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/fire-ravages-jeopardize-californias-prized-forests-104341965>



Pines that were cut down after being killed in the 2021 Caldor Fire lie on the floor of Eldorado National Forest, Calif., near Lake Tahoe, on Oct. 22, 2022. Scientists say forest is disappearing as increasingly intense fires al...
The Associated Press

Dead pines, firs, and cedars stretch as far as the eye can see. Fire burned so hot that soil was still barren in places more than a year later. Granite boulders were charred and flaked from the inferno. Long, narrow indentations marked the graves of fallen logs that vanished in smoke.

Damage in this area of Eldorado National Forest could be permanent — part of a troubling pattern that threatens a defining characteristic of the Sierra Nevada range John Muir once called a “waving sea of evergreens.”

Forest like this is disappearing as increasingly intense fires alter landscapes around the planet, threatening wildlife, jeopardizing efforts to capture climate-warming carbon and harming water supplies, according to scientific studies.

A combination of factors is to blame in the U.S. West: A century of firefighting, elimination of Indigenous burning, logging of large fire-resistant trees, and other management practices that allowed small trees, undergrowth and deadwood to choke forests.

Drought has killed hundreds of millions of conifers or made them susceptible to disease and pests, and more likely to go up in flames. And a changing climate has brought more intense, larger and less predictable fires.

California has lost more than 1,760 square miles (4,560 square kilometers) — nearly 7% — of its tree cover since 1985, a recent study found. While forest increased in the 1990s, it declined rapidly after

2000 because of larger and more frequent fires, according to the study in the American Geophysical Union Advances journal.

A study of the southern Sierra Nevada — home to Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks — found nearly a third of conifer forest had transitioned to other vegetation as a result of fire, drought or bark beetles in the past decade.

Feature: Washington Swamp Gnaws Away at Divine Space Mandate; FAA/Fish & Wildlife Hold Moon Mission Hostage



By [Michael Carr](#)

October 21, 2023

https://www.larouchepac.com/washington_swamp_gnaws_away_at_divine_space_mandate

[Login to follow](#)



Starship Test Flight Mission. April 16, 2023. Official SpaceX Photo

Many a person or animal has disappeared in the swamp, never to be seen again. Over the past 50+ years the Washington swamp has been deepening. Thousands of people earn their pay by tracking down and destroying anything or anyone that, or who, represents human progress.

According to the [report of SpaceflightNow.com](#), this past week former NASA Associate Administrator for Human Exploration and Operations, and current Vice President, Build and Flight Reliability for SpaceX Bill Gerstenmaier testified before Congress about the slow regulatory approval process for testing of the SpaceX Starship system—the system which is key to implementing President Trump’s and NASA’s Artemis Project for establishing a permanent human presence on the Moon:

“These delays may seem small in the big scheme of things, but a continuous delay of each and every test flight just adds up and eventually, we’ll lose our lead and we’ll see China land on the Moon before

we do.”

“Licensing, including environmental approval, often takes longer than rocket development. This should never happen and it’s only getting worse.”

The next Starship prototype has been ready to fly since mid-September but has been held up by the FAA and the Fish and Wildlife Service! —both of which must grant approval before the next flight. SpaceX intends to fly 2 more Starship missions this year, and many more next year, but right now Starship is mired in the swamp.

As President, Donald Trump acted to begin draining the swamp and promoting the revival of the nearly drowned nuclear and space programs, and industry and agriculture in general. Now the swamp is attempting to swallow up President Trump in legal quicksand. And a significant segment of Congressional Republican swamp creatures have been doing their part for swamp rat rights in a vain attempt to stop the growing movement behind President Trump’s return to the White House.

Call your Republican Congressional Representative and demand that the House of Representatives defund the prosecutions of President Trump, and the British Empire’s wars in Ukraine and the Middle East. [Sign and circulate the petition.](#)