



Photo shows buildings including Coffee Wareroom; flooded streets with men in rowboats in Sacramento, Calif. during 1861-62 floods. (Photo credit: California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.)

California Water and Infrastructure Report

For January 25, 2024

(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

A Note to Readers

Nature is providing a mixed message this winter. While the snowpack remains significantly below the average level for this date, and the actual overall precipitation also is below average, a succession of storms and atmospheric rivers have been drenching most of California over the last couple of weeks, and more are on the way.

So, the reservoirs are full or nearly so, but it is the snowpack in the Sierras that provide the water needed later in the summer and fall. Thirty percent of the water California cities and agriculture require each year comes from the snowpack. And the “snow drought” does bring on the threat of a new drought this coming summer.

A competent article from *Fox* today, “*California's 'ArkStorm': Historic 1000-year floods of 1861-62 featured 8 weeks of atmospheric rivers,*” and illustrated by our photo above, demonstrates that this year's storms are not anything new.

While some are claiming that the storms this winter are unprecedented and driven by climate change, they are ignoring the “megaflood” of the winter of 1861-62.

Paleoclimatologists have often studied and written on this megaflood that put Sacramento under 30 feet of water for months and created a giant lake covering the entire Central Valley of the state.

The climate history of California over several thousand years had been one of alternating megafloods and megadroughts. Some of those droughts lasted as long as 100 years.

The present two decades of lengthy droughts and a few winters of extreme flooding that the state has experienced, are neither something new, nor should be used as propaganda pushing the narrative that all unusual weather is “more evidence” of mankind's caused climate change.

Three articles provide more on the Silicon Valley billionaires attempting to create the globalist's “15 minute city” by taking over Solano County north of the Bay Area. Fifteen minute cities are the Utopian dream of creating cities in which you do not need a family car for living in it, as everything you need (work, schools, shopping, parks) will be within walking distance or public transit within 15 minutes of your home.

That delusion should be contrasted with what *President Donald Trump* has proposed in working with the Democratic mayors of major cities throughout the country to bring new industry to those cities, and having created productive jobs for millions of residents, then rebuild those cities. Trump has discussed this in his campaign events several times in recent weeks.

Our final item this week is, “Nearly 4,500 dealerships representing all major auto manufacturing brands from every state recently signed a letter to President Joe Biden asking him to “tap the brakes” on his proposed electric vehicle mandate based on a lack of consumer demand.”

U.S. Drought Monitor

January 23, 2025

The West

Above-normal temperatures dominated much of the region with departures of 9-12 degrees above normal over portions of western Wyoming, northern Nevada, central Idaho and northeast Utah.

Temperatures were cooler than normal over Washington, northern Oregon, northern Idaho and much of Montana.

The greatest rains were along the coast with some flooding issues being reported this week, especially in southern California.

Further inland, it remained dry and the dryness coupled with the warmer temperatures has allowed for snow drought to develop, especially in the northern Rocky Mountains.

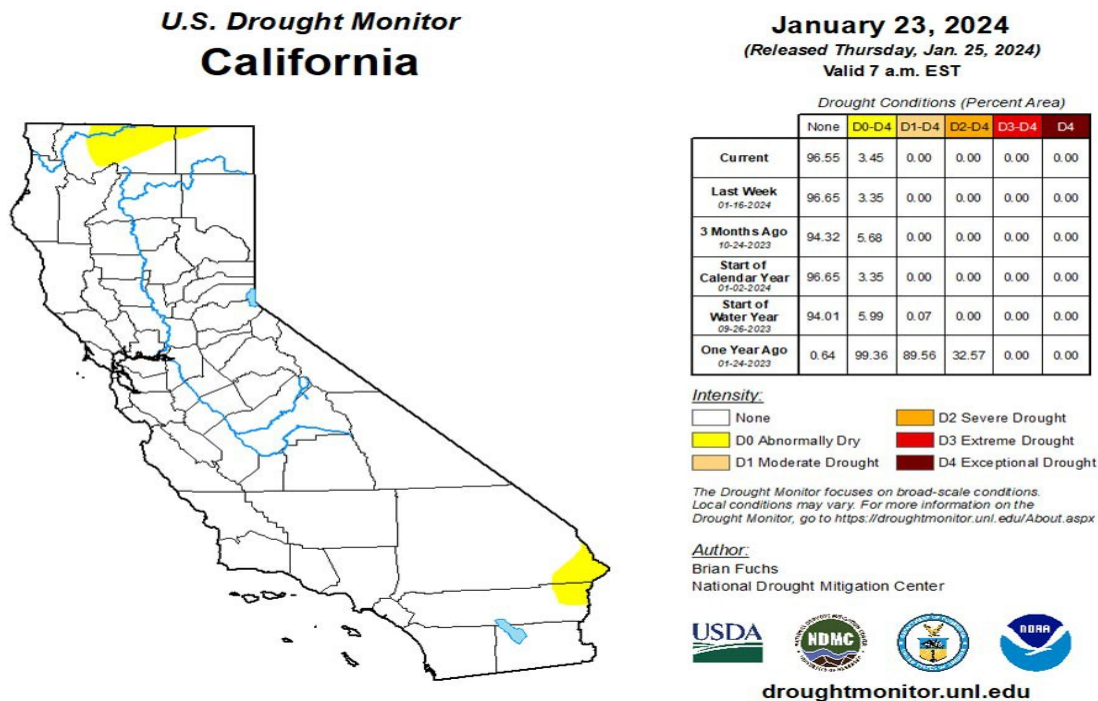
The wetter pattern over the most recent weeks allowed for a reassessment of conditions over New Mexico and into eastern Arizona, where improvements were made.

Areas of extreme and exceptional drought were reduced this week in western New Mexico while severe drought was improved in western New Mexico into eastern Arizona.

Moderate drought was expanded over western Wyoming and severe drought was expanded over western Montana.

Oregon had moderate and severe drought improvements in the west while moderate drought expanded in the central portion of the state.

Washington saw moderate drought improved along the northwest coast and western portions of the state with abnormally dry conditions expanding in the north central.



Historic California rain could foreshadow more extreme rainfall in coming weeks

El Niño conditions are fueling wetter weather patterns on the West Coast.

By [Max Golembo](#), [Julia Jacobo](#), and [Dan Peck](#)

January 24, 2024, 1:11 PM

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/historic-california-rain-foreshadow-extreme-rainfall-coming-weeks/story?id=106643363>

Southern California may have just experienced a historic amount of rainfall, but more extreme precipitation is headed toward the region.

More than [a month's worth of rain](#) fell in a span of three hours in San Diego on Monday, according to the National Weather Service. The city saw its wettest January day on record and wettest overall day in nearly 100 years on Monday with 2.73 inches of rain on Monday. Typically, San Diego sees an average 1.98 inches of rain in the entire month of January, records dating back to 1850 show.

The Southern California coast has been getting slammed with moisture this week, with up to 9 inches of rain falling in parts of the region over the weekend into Monday. Dozens of rescues were reported

around San Diego County due to this historic rainfall.

While the area got a much-needed reprieve beginning on Tuesday, there is growing concern for multiple rounds of heavy rain targeting these same areas in California and other parts of the West beginning later next week and lasting through early February, forecasts show.

In the coming weeks, many of the potential heavy rain events along the West Coast will likely be fueled by atmospheric rivers. Atmospheric rivers, essentially rivers in the sky that collect moisture from tropical areas and redistribute the water to other latitudes, are natural part of the global weather system. But climate change is expected to impact the intensity and frequency of atmospheric rivers in the future as global warming leads to more moisture being evaporated into the atmosphere, according to recent research by NOAA.

‘Snow drought’ darkening California’s water outlook

While statewide rainfall is below average, climatologists are especially concerned about the lack of snow in California's largest "reservoir" — the Sierra Nevada mountain range.

[Natalie Hanson](#) / January 22, 2024

<https://www.courthousenews.com/snow-drought-darkening-californias-water-outlook/>



A nearby mountain peak still has a good amount of snow near the Phillips Station meadow in California. (Fred Greaves / California Department of Water Resources)

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (CN) — Despite a spate of recent storms, scientists say California needs more winterlike weather to bolster its water supply and avoid another drought.

Daniel McEvoy of the Western Regional Climate Center at the Desert Research Institute said in a panel Monday that much of California and Nevada have seen below average rainfall since the water year began on Oct. 1. Both are still reeling from severe drought, particularly in Nevada’s Colorado River basin.

“We have a snow drought underway across the Sierra Nevada,” McEvoy said. Much-needed large winter storms haven’t materialized, particularly in the northern Sierra, which was at 66% of average as of Jan. 18, and the southern Sierra, sitting at 40% of average.

Despite the unusually dry and warm start, the U.S. Drought Monitor shows very little measurable drought in the state thus far. Most of the reservoirs in the region have plenty of water and are above average for this time of year, at about 114% — other than a few like Shasta and Trinity. And soil moisture, which is helpful to hold onto stored water, is measuring around average.

Both of these benefits are due to a very wet prior winter, McEvoy said.

California Snowpack Grows Significantly Since Beginning the New Year

January 22, 2024 [Agri-Business](#), [Water](#)

<https://agnetwest.com/california-snowpack-grows-significantly-since-beginning-the-new-year/>

While still behind the overall average, the California snowpack has made significant gains since the beginning of the year. On December 31, the snowpack was measured at just 26 percent of the average for that time of year, with 2.5 inches of average snow water equivalent. The latest readings from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) put the statewide summary in a much better position. [As of January 22](#), the California snowpack was measured at 55 percent of the average for this date. The measurement represents an average snow water equivalent of 8.2 inches. So far, California has amassed 30 percent of the overall April 1 average.

This Year's Storms Are Not Anything New

While some are claiming that the storms this winter are unprecedented and driven by climate change, they are ignoring the “megaflood” of the winter of 1861-62.

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In the climate history of California over several thousand years had been one of alternating megafloods and megadroughts. Some of those droughts lasted as long as 100 years.

The present two decades of lengthy droughts and a few winters of extreme flooding that the state has experienced, are neither something new, nor should be used as propaganda pushing the narrative that all unusual weather is “more evidence” of mankind's caused climate change.

What follows are excerpts from an article published today on the California and Northwest megaflood of the winter of 1861-62.

Here is the link to the book review I wrote on the subject about a decade ago:

Are We Controlled by the Whims of Nature, or Will We Create Our Future?
by Patrick Ruckert

The West Without Water: What Past Floods, Droughts, and Other Climatic Clues Tell Us About Tomorrow

by B. Lynn Ingram and Frances Malamud-Roam

Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013

https://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2014/eirv41n19-20140509/48-52_4119.pdf

California's 'ArkStorm': Historic 1000-year floods of 1861-62 featured 8 weeks of atmospheric rivers

Imagine Disneyland under feet of water for weeks. Rivers swelling to levels never seen before and never seen since. Days of rain stretch into weeks as floodwaters rise to epic levels.

By [Scott Sistek](#) Source [FOX Weather](#)

January 25, 2024

<https://www.foxweather.com/extreme-weather/arkstorm-california-floods-1861-8-weeks-atmospheric-rivers>

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Imagine Disneyland under feet of water for weeks. Rivers swelling to levels never seen before and never seen since. Days of rain stretch into weeks as floodwaters rise to epic levels.

California may have endured an onslaught of tropically-infused atmospheric river storms that filled the calendar for months at the end of 2022 and the start of 2023 and is staring at another atmospheric river this weekend, but those storms pale in comparison to the historic floods during the winter of 1861-1862.



Floodwaters in Sacramento, California in January 1862. (California State Library / FOX Weather)

Colloquially today known as an "ArkStorm" - a deft reference to an "atmospheric river (AR) 1,000 (k) year storm" - the storms were a recipe for disaster for a young region that had recently been settled. Abraham Lincoln was president at the time, and America was embroiled in the first months of the Civil War. But out West, California's population was bulging to about a half million in the wake of the great Gold Rush about a dozen years prior.

As the end of December neared, the storm track shifted to the south, now aiming one juicy storm after another at California, while the Pacific Northwest went into an eventual deep freeze.

Storms would keep smashing into California for the next 7-8 weeks. Schick estimated that six of the storms would be categorized as at least "exceptional" atmospheric river storms.

"Measurements on the Sacramento River indicate the first and most substantial rise in December peaking about Dec. 12," Schick said. "The river did not recede much after that. Subsequent storms pushed it up to several more, even higher peaks into mid-January 1862. The flooding just wouldn't quit."

Widespread flooding swamped large stretches of Central California's valleys. In one stretch of valley that measured about 30 miles wide and 250 miles long, water depths ranged from a few inches to 30 feet in some areas. Telegraph poles were underwater.

Southern California's turn to feel the historic wrath of the atmospheric rivers

Southern California wasn't spared as the relentless storm track moved south into the region in January 1862. The Santa Ana River in Southern California measured water flow on Jan. 22 at 318,000 cubic feet per second – about half the flow of the Mississippi River despite being a tiny fraction of its size.



Photo shows buildings including Coffee Wareroom; flooded streets with men in rowboats in Sacramento, Calif. during 1861-62 floods. (California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.)

Floodwaters stretched across the Los Angeles Basin and parts of Orange County, south into [San Diego](#). Where Disneyland sits today would have been flooded under 2-4 feet of water for 3-6 weeks, according to Schick.

Throughout the U.S., the Aquifers That Provide Both Drinking Water and the Irrigation Water for Agriculture Are Being Drained

Majority of America's underground water stores are drying up, study finds

by [Saul Elbein](#) - 01/24/24 11:00 AM ET

<https://thehill.com/policy/equilibrium-sustainability/4426143-majority-of-americas-underground-water-stores-are-drying-up-study-finds/>

Many of America's critical sources of underground water are in a state of rapid and accelerating decline, a new study has found.

More than half of the aquifers in the United States (53 percent) are losing water, according to research published Wednesday in Nature.

And in about 1 in 8 American aquifers — roughly 12 percent — the collapse of underground water levels has sped up during the 21st century, the researchers found.

“Groundwater levels are declining rapidly in many areas,” co-author Scott Jasechko of the University of California, Santa Barbara told The Hill.

“And what’s worse, the rate of groundwater decline is accelerating in a large portion of areas,” Jasechko said.

The impacted aquifers support much of the U.S. food system, as well as providing water used by many Americans. And the country is not alone in its losses: The study found rapid loss of water in aquifers that supply hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

Keeping Track of the Billionaires Attempting to Takeover Solano County

The globalists, like Charles Schwab of the World Economic Forum, and George Soros Do Want You to ”Own Nothing and Love It.”

One of the Utopian dreams put forth by these billionaire parasites is called “15 Minute Cities.”

For the first time we do have an article on the Bay Area's Silicon Valley billionaires attempt to take over Solano County and turn the largely rural/agricultural region into one of those “15 Minute Cities.”

It is mentioned in one of the three articles this week on the secret and underhanded, and as one member of Congress put it (Democratic Rep. John Garamendi) “as 'mobster techniques', used by *California Forever* and *Flannery Associates*, in buying 60,000 acres of mostly farm land in the county.

New renderings and details emerge for California Forever, the \$800 million city proposed for Silicon Valley

By [Daniel Roche](#) • January 23, 2024 • [Architecture](#), [Development](#), [Urbanism](#), [West](#)
<https://www.archpaper.com/2024/01/new-renderings-details-california-forever-800-million-city-silicon-valley/>

The new drawings from California Forever show walkable urban fabric replete with schools, office buildings, and factories. (Courtesy California Forever)

When [California Forever](#)—the \$800 million venture to build a city on rural land in Silicon Valley—was [first unveiled in September](#), it was light on specifics. Now, a [filing](#) with the Solano Registrar of Voters, and a new set of renderings, the vision for a speculative community that’s twice the size of San Francisco has become a little bit clearer.

Phase one of the project seeks to house about 50,000 residents across an 18,600-acre site in Solano County, [California](#) between San Francisco and Sacramento, just outside the Travis Air Force Base. While most of the acreage will be used for housing, schools, office, and commercial use, about 4,000 acres will be used for parks, trails, urban ecological habitat, community gardens, and other types of open space, California Forever said. Renderings even show jovial factory workers within a manufacturing hub to demonstrate the full range of blue- and white collar jobs California Forever is looking to create and foster.

The new community is replete with urban fabric that's practically identical to blocks in the Upper West Side, or Brooklyn Heights. It evokes what New Urbanists call the [15-minute city](#), where everything from housing, grocery stores, schools, etc. is reachable by foot, bike, or train within a fifteen minute commute.

The Farmers Had What the Billionaires Wanted

Conor Dougherty

Sun, January 21, 2024 at 8:05 AM PST · 19 min read

<https://news.yahoo.com/farmers-had-billionaires-wanted-160525488.html>

Jan Sramek, the CEO of California Forever and Flannery Associates who has bought up over 60,000 acres of nearby farmland with plans to build a new city, in Solano County, Calif. on Dec. 21, 2023. (Aaron Wojack/The New York Times)

RIO VISTA, Calif. — When Jan Sramek walked into the American Legion post in Rio Vista, California, for a town hall meeting last month, everyone in the room knew that he was really just there to get yelled at.

For six years a mysterious company called Flannery Associates, which Sramek controlled, had upended the town of 10,000 by spending hundreds of millions of dollars trying to buy every farm in the area. Flannery made multimillionaires out of some owners and sparked feuds among others. It sued a group of holdouts who had refused its above-market offers, on the grounds that they were colluding for more.

The company was Rio Vista's main source of gossip, yet until a few weeks before the meeting no one in the room had heard of Sramek or knew what Flannery was up to. Residents worried it could be a front for foreign spies looking to surveil a nearby Air Force base. One theory held the company was acquiring land for a new Disneyland.

Now the truth was standing in front of them. And somehow it was weirder than the rumors.

The truth was that Sramek wanted to build a city from the ground up, in an agricultural region whose defining feature was how little it had changed. The idea would have been treated as a joke if it weren't backed by a group of Silicon Valley billionaires who included [Michael Moritz](#), a venture capitalist; Reid Hoffman, an investor and co-founder of LinkedIn; and Laurene Powell Jobs, the founder of the Emerson Collective and the widow of the Apple co-founder Steve Jobs. They and others from the technology world had spent some \$900 million on farmland in a demonstration of their dead seriousness about Sramek's vision.

He spent about 20 minutes pitching his plans before submitting to questions and resentments. People accused him of pushing small farms out of business. They said Flannery's money was turning families against each other.

"Good neighbors don't sue their neighbors!" one man yelled to applause.

Rep. John Garamendi, a Democrat from the area, characterized moves like this as "mobster techniques."

Solano County billionaires' utopia: Seeking support but picking fights

Criticism mounts over California Forever rollout

By [Ethan Baron](#) | ebaron@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group

PUBLISHED: January 21, 2024

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2024/01/21/solano-county-billionaires-utopia-bumblng-toward-a-pr-trainwreck/?share=ocnw0atulabb2ettwnbw>

The company pursuing a controversial plan to build a new city on bucolic Solano County farmland insists that public approval is crucial to the success of its for-profit utopia. But California Forever's leaders have been making adversaries from the get-go.

Nearly every step of the Silicon Valley billionaire-backed development [has met resistance](#). In response, California Forever has been picking fights — with landowners, concerned citizens and even the Solano County Land Trust, a high-profile conservation group.

“The first time they encounter a problem, they pull out their sword and they start waving it around — it's not a good look,” said Sam Singer, a prominent public relations and political consultant who has smoothed the way for other major Bay Area redevelopments, including Treasure Island and the Hunters Point and Mare Island naval shipyards. “Whoever advised them from a political and public relations perspective gave them some of the worst advice we've ever seen.”

“Billionaires and bullies is, I think, how people look at them,” said Singer, who described the project — a planned walkable mix of homes, shops, schools, parks, offices and factories — as a “bold,” support-worthy enterprise jeopardized by PR missteps.

Evs Are Not Selling

More car dealerships join call to 'tap the breaks' on EVs

By Lauren Jessop | The Center Square contributor

Published: January 22, 2024 6:12pm

https://justthenews.com/nation/states/center-square/more-car-dealerships-join-call-tap-breaks-evs?utm_source=daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter

Nearly 4,500 dealerships representing all major auto manufacturing brands from every state recently signed a letter to President Joe Biden asking him to “tap the brakes” on his proposed electric vehicle mandate based on a lack of consumer demand.

Since [the letter](#) was sent in November 2023, dealerships continue to add their names to the list – including 85 from Pennsylvania.

The [Biden administration](#) set a target for battery electric vehicles, also known as BEVs or EVs, to account for half of all new vehicle sales by 2030 – [some states](#) have taken steps to ban internal combustion engine vehicles altogether by 2035.

The letter says while admirable, the goal becoming a reality requires consumer acceptance. In addition to what customers are telling them, dealers say the best indicator of demand are the EVs “stacking up on our lots.”

Enthusiasm for EVs has stalled, the dealers say, “even with deep price cuts, manufacturer incentives, and generous government incentives.”