

# California Drought Update



**For January 26, 2017**

**by Patrick Ruckert**

**Published weekly since July, 2014**

<http://www.californiadroughtupdate.org>

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

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*The question which confronts us is... the whole question of our resource development in the western United States in the 1960's... Surely a continent so rich in minerals, so blessed with water, and a society so replete with engineers and scientists can make and must make the best possible use of the bounty which nature and God have given us, public and private, federal and local, cooperative and corporate.*

*If we can apply to the challenges of the sixties the same principles of efficiency, cooperation, and foresight, which made this great dam possible, the same principles which cause American technicians to be sought out the world over to assist in developing the Nile, the Volta, the Mekong and the Indus Rivers, then we can look to a happy future.... I don't want to see the United States second in space or in the development of power resources. And I think it's most appropriate in this great decade that we light the entire country.*

*President John F. Kennedy  
Oahe Dam, August 17, 1962*

## **A Note To Readers**

Obama is history, a dark chapter of it. The new President, Donald Trump, will be what we make him to be. As he said in his inaugural address, he is just the agent of the American people. That is the challenge for you-- you must not sit back and say, "let's see what happens;" for if you do that, then the snakes will slither in, as they are already beginning to do.

One snake already in the house is the new Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, a long-time partner of-- get this-- George Soros. Here is the story: **“Keep George Soros' Ally Steven Mnuchin Away from Trump Treasury!”** <https://larouhepac.com/20170126/keep-george-soros-ally-steven-mnuchin-away-trump-treasury>

The only human response to drought is to do what humans alone can do: Prepare for it-- build the water infrastructure, as President Kennedy often said, that will be required for the next generation. And since we have built virtually no water infrastructure in California since 1972, not only have we failed two generations, but we have failed ourselves.

President Trump says he wants to build the most modern infrastructure in the world. He has a long way to go to catch up to China, but let us work to ensure he unleashes his stated intent. The Democrats in the Congress have proposed an infrastructure building program too. The problem with both Trump's plan and that of the Democrats is two-fold: One, so far, they are a slap-dash list of necessary but unfocused projects-- there is no over-all mission sense to them; no frontiers to conquer that will lift the entire economy to a new and higher platform of productivity. To do so requires an aggressive manned space program and fusion power, along with President John Kennedy's plan for building nuclear-powered desalination plants up and down the coast of California.

Second, the level of and how to fund a large infrastructure building program is not only incompetent, but won't work. What is proposed is discussed in this article: **“Three National Infrastructure Bank Plans with Doubtful Financing.”** <https://larouhepac.com/20170125/three-national-infrastructure-bank-plans-doubtful-financing>

I refer readers back to the past week's issues of this report on “LaRouche's Four Laws” for a detailed policy of how to not just fund infrastructure, but to ensure that the Wall Street gambling casino is shut down and a Hamiltonian credit system is established to truly make America great again. Those articles can be found at <http://www.californiadroughtupdate.org>, or <https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaDroughtUpdate>.

The Trump administration has put forward a list of 50 priority projects, which include two in California. That story is presented in the report below. Trump also killed the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade treaty, also covered below since some in agriculture in the state favored it.

As for the drought, the *U.S. Drought Monitor* reports that one-half of the state is now free from drought. The Monitor posted below tells the story. But, the deluge the state has received over the past weeks has led the governor to declare a flood emergency in 50 counties. So, and this has to be a first: The state is simultaneously in both a state of drought emergency and a state of flood emergency. Only Jerry Brown could have done that.

This week's report concludes with some interesting, and some not so interesting, items on desalination and other atmospheric moisture management developments.

## U.S. Drought Monitor

Half of the state is now free from drought. Just a reminder: That means half of the state is still in drought. You can smile, but don't get too giddy.

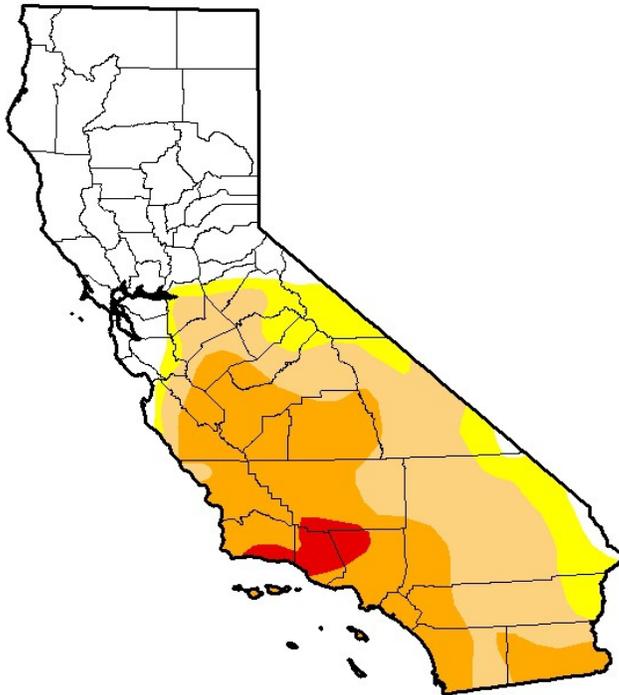
The drought free portion of the state now totals 49 percent. Just in the past week the “severe drought” category dropped from 44 to 26 percent of the state. An even more dramatic drop was in the “extreme drought” category which went from 24 percent to 2 percent. And for the first time since mid-2014,

none of the state is in the serious category of drought, “exceptional drought.”

The Sierra snowpack is now at 191 percent of its historic average and 106 percent of the April 1 historical average. As long as it does not melt, the snowpack, which provides about 30 percent of the water for the state during the summer and into September, should suffice.

## U.S. Drought Monitor California

**January 24, 2017**  
(Released Thursday, Jan. 26, 2017)  
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
<b>Current</b>	38.73	61.27	51.40	26.46	2.16	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> <i>1/17/2017</i>	35.56	64.44	57.51	44.35	24.30	2.13
<b>3 Months Ago</b> <i>10/25/2016</i>	8.96	91.04	81.12	61.80	42.80	21.04
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> <i>1/2/2017</i>	18.07	81.93	67.61	54.02	38.17	18.31
<b>Start of Water Year</b> <i>9/27/2016</i>	0.00	100.00	83.59	62.27	42.80	21.04
<b>One Year Ago</b> <i>1/26/2016</i>	0.00	100.00	95.35	86.13	63.96	40.21

**Intensity:**

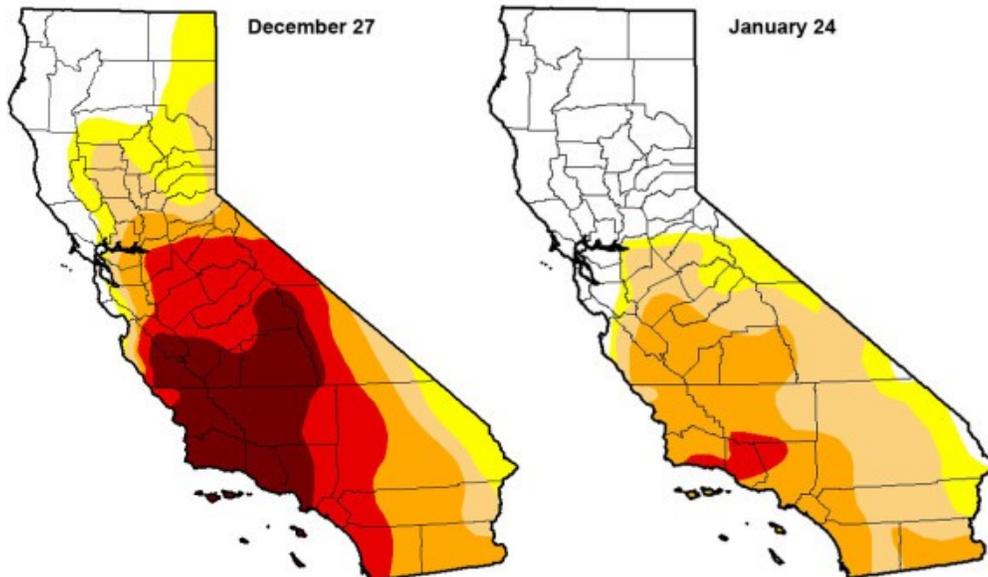
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

*The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.*

**Author:**  
Richard Tinker  
CPC/NOAA/NWS/INCEP

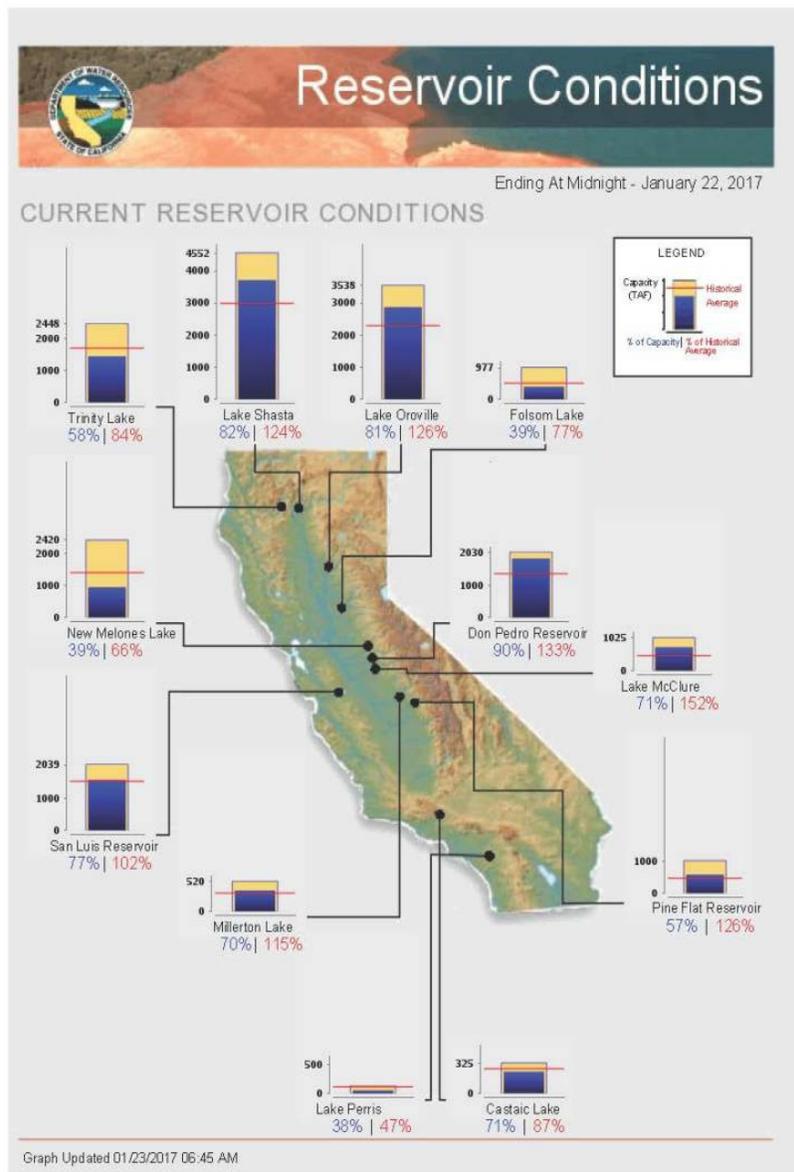


<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>



# Reservoirs

All of the larger reservoirs are at least at their historical average for this date, including San Luis, which is the first time we can say that these past six years. San Luis is the critical “choke-point” of the entire Central Valley water management system, and is used by both the state and the federal government as a reservoir for both agriculture and for southern California. San Luis is now at 78 percent full and should be full by April 1.



## Some Reports

As mentioned in the “Note to Readers” above, Governor Brown has declared both a drought emergency and a flood emergency, which has to be the first state ever to have both simultaneously. Here are a couple of excerpted articles to fill you in on this unique moment of history. You can tell your grand kids about it.

## **Gov. Brown declares state of emergency following storm series**

KPCC staff

January 24, 2017

<http://www.scpr.org/news/2017/01/24/68394/gov-brown-declares-state-of-emergency-following-st/>

*A state of emergency was declared across California after winter storms blanketed the state with rain and snow, causing flooding, mudslides, traffic woes and other issues.*

## **California storm causes flooding, triggers evacuations**

Jan. 22, 2017

<http://www.ocregister.com/articles/rain-741910-angeles-santa.html>

By The Associated Press

*LOS ANGELES – Fast-moving floodwaters swept through California mountain communities and residents fled homes below hillsides scarred by wildfires as the third – and largest – in the latest series of storms brought a deluge Sunday and warnings about damaging mudslides.*

## **How To Understand Where We Are**

This excerpted article provides some perspective for understanding the current state of the drought and the droughts more longer-term impact. Click on the link to read the details.

### ***Five Things to Know About California's Drought After Big Storms***

*California has been hit with multiple large storms in the last month that have brought above-average snow and rainfall to most of the state. Here's a look at what that means for the state's more than five-year drought.*

By Tara Lohan

January 24, 2017

<https://www.newsdeeply.com/water/articles/2017/01/24/five-things-to-know-about-californias-drought-after-big-storms>

- 1. Officially the drought is not over*
- 2. The area of drought is shrinking*
- 3. It's raining and snowing a lot*
- 4. Groundwater still a problem*
- 5. Drought impacts will last for decades*

*A healthy snowpack and mostly full reservoirs bodes well for water being available this summer, but it doesn't mean that all of California's water problems are solved. U.C. Davis professor Jay Lund, director of the [Center for Watershed Sciences](#), said that it will take decades for the state to recover from many of the drought's impacts.*

*“Certainly the groundwater in the southern Central Valley (south of the Delta) will remain low in many*

areas for years or even decades. Some groundwater in this region might never recover, as it is so dry down there,” said Lund.

Similar sentiments were expressed in an [opinion piece by Peter Gleick](#), president-emeritus and chief scientist of the water think tank the [Pacific Institute](#).

“More than 100 million trees have died from drought, temperature stress and insect infestation,” Gleick wrote. “It will take decades for forests to regenerate, and the dead trees and damaged soils will pose forest fire and landslide risks for years.”

One other article-- this one tempering the “end of the drought” narrative that dominates the media:

### ***Massive Rainfall Only Putting A Dent In The Drought***

January 24, 2017 7:25 PM

<http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2017/01/24/massive-rainfall-only-putting-a-dent-in-the-drought/>

**OXNARD (CBSLA.com)** — One week and three *storms* later, you would think the drought would be over.

“At this point, it’s not enough,” hydrologist Jayme Labor with the National Weather Service Oxnard *said*.

Labor says while the past week’s storms are short-term relief, we would need a lot more rain to say goodbye to the *drought*.

“I think we need to have another year like this following it to see the *drought* completely go away in Southern California,” said Labor.

While the Southland has had days of record rainfall this winter, we still need to make up for our lack of rain over the past five years.

## **The Water Supply For This Year**

Last week the state Water Resources Board announce that it would supply to contractors this year 60 percent of their requests. The federal U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, which runs the Central Valley Project, made an announcement this week, which is reported in the excerpted article below from *Agalert*:

### ***CVP remains cautious on water allocation***

<http://www.agalert.com/story/?id=10529>

January 25, 2017

By Christine Souza

As each passing storm delivers more snowpack to the mountains and fills many California reservoirs to above-average levels, operators of the federal Central Valley Project remain cautious about projecting agricultural water supplies for the coming year.

In preparation for its initial 2017 water supply announcement, expected next month, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which operates the CVP, released an update of water conditions for its reservoirs. The

*largest, Shasta Lake, stood at 82 percent of capacity and 124 percent of average as of last week. The reservoir level at Shasta is so high that water officials have been releasing water down the Sacramento River for flood-control purposes, in preparation for subsequent storms.*

*But bureau leaders said it's still too early to make a projection about whether CVP agricultural customers south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta can expect more water than the 5 percent supply the project delivered last year. The CVP delivered no water to those customers in 2014 or 2015.*

*As required by its contracts with water districts, the CVP will make an initial declaration of whether 2017 is a Shasta Critical year on or before Feb. 15, according to the bureau.*

*In the CVP service area, Sal Parra Jr., who farms in western Fresno County within the Westlands Water District, said knowing the CVP allocation early would be helpful to growers.*

*"For planting purposes, it's good to know so we have a supply that we can count on, to figure out how many acres and what crops to plant. The sooner we know that information, the better," Parra said. "The state's allocation has already been increased to 60 percent. We should have at least an indication of what to expect, given the amount of hydrology that we've had."*

*Parra noted that farmers in the region have been told, at this point, to expect an initial CVP allocation of between 10 percent and 15 percent.*

## **For Entertainment Purposes Only**

### ***Evolution of the California drought, 2011-2016***

*[Alex E 5:28:00 AM Drought, Maps, USA](#)*

*<http://www.ecoclimax.com/2017/01/evolution-of-california-drought-2011.html>*

April 5, 2011



# Trump's Infrastructure Plan

This week the priority list of 50 projects of President Trump's infrastructure plan, with a price-tag of \$137 billion, , was widely covered in the media. The articles excerpted below have the details, including a list of the projects.

Two projects on the list are in California-- the Huntington Beach desalination plant and the Cadiz Valley Water Project. Both are beyond the drawing boards and near the end of the permit and regulatory process. Since these projects are projects of private companies it remains to be seen how the Trump administration would participate in them. Does that mean government money would be added to the already adequately funded pool that the companies have? The Huntington Beach desalination plant is a project of Poseidon, the same company that built the Carlsbad plant that began producing water in December, 2015, and I have frequently covered the Huntington Beach plant in my weekly reports. The Cadiz project apparently has survived all court challenges. Here is a fairly thorough background article on the Cadiz project: <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/water-664957-cadiz-project.html>. And here is a link to the Cadiz company site: <http://cadizinc.com/water-project/>

## ***EXCLUSIVE: Trump team compiles infrastructure priority list***

*By Lynn Horsley, Steve Vockrodt, Walker Orenstein and Lindsay Wise*

*The Kansas City Star and McClatchy Washington Bureau*

*January 24, 2017*

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/white-house/article128492164.html#storylink=cpy>

*President Donald Trump's team has compiled a list of about 50 infrastructure projects nationwide, totaling at least \$137.5 billion, as the new White House tries to determine its investment priorities, according to documents obtained by McClatchy's Kansas City Star and The News Tribune.*

*The preliminary list, provided to the National Governor's Association by the Trump transition team, offers a first glimpse at which projects around the country might get funding if Trump follows through on his campaign promise to renew America's crumbling highways, airports, dams and bridges. The governor's association shared that list with state officials in December. The group told the officials the projects on that list were "already being vetted."*

*The projects have to meet specific criteria:*

- *A national security or public safety "emergency."*
- *"Shovel-ready," with at least 30 percent of initial design and engineering work complete.*
- *Direct job creator.*
- *Project with the potential for increased U.S. manufacturing.*

## ***Huntington Beach desalination plant is among Trump priorities, leaked document shows***

*Jan. 24, 2017*

Updated Jan. 25, 2017

<http://www.ocregister.com/articles/plant-742106-water-agencies.html>

*A document purportedly leaked from the Trump administration indicates that the proposed desalination plant in Huntington Beach is among 50 infrastructure projects nationwide that the president has designated as a priority.*

*The Kansas City Star and The News Tribune [reported Tuesday](#) that the \$1 billion Poseidon Water desalination plant is on a list of dozens of projects across the country that would cost an estimated \$137.5 billion in public-private partnerships.*

*Three regulatory agencies must approve the project for it to proceed to the next phase of development. Those agencies are the State Lands Commission, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Coastal Commission. It could clear all those hurdles by the end of the year.*

*Though the desalination plant caught the eye of the president, people who oppose the plant are quick to point out that all the regulatory agencies overseeing the plant's construction are in California. None is a federal agency.*

*Another California project that could get fast tracked, however, is the [Cadiz Valley Water project](#), which promises to tap into an underwater reservoir in the desert and requires the oversight of federal agencies including the Bureau of Land Management. That project could create nearly 6,000 jobs and would cost \$250 million, according to the leaked document.*

## **Trump Dumps the TPP**

As expected, President Trump announced this week that the U.S. was pulling out of the negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership treaty, not everyone is happy with that, including some California farmers. The excerpted article below presents the view of some farmers. What follows are some comments from other farmers who do agree with the President.

### ***Valley farmers disappointed with Trump pulling out of Trans-Pacific Partnership***

*By Robert Rodriguez*

*January 23, 2017*

<http://www.fresnobee.com/news/business/agriculture/article128296454.html#storylink=cpy>

*Agriculture leaders expressed disappointment over President Donald Trump's decision Monday to pull out of a [12-country trade deal](#) that would have boosted exports from San Joaquin Valley farmers.*

*Trump made good on a campaign promise by signing an executive order ending the United States' participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, a wide-reaching agreement that affected numerous industries, including agriculture.*

*Had Congress approved the pact, the American Farm Bureau estimated, California farmers of fruits and nuts could have reaped \$562 million in sales through lower tariffs and the elimination of tariffs. Dairy producers could have potentially pulled in \$53 million in added revenue.*

And from some farmers who look at the bigger picture. These are comments from Face Book:

*Yes, many ag industry groups were lobbying in favor, including the wheat industry I'm part of as it was supposed to put us back on even footing with Australia and others, but it was a horrible deal as a whole for our country. Definitely more in favor of bilateral deals that are fair across-the-board. Besides, we're pretty screwed on exports until the dollar softens anyway...*

*As a rancher i think it would have helped the cattle prices but im not selfish,it was a bad deal for the most part and i wont put my personal gains over the country.*

## **Brown Throws a Tantrum**

Of course, we should expect nothing less from Jerry.

### ***California governor defiant in face of Trump agenda***

By JULIET WILLIAMS

Associated Press

January 24, 2017

[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US\\_CALIFORNIA\\_STATE\\_OF\\_STATE?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_CALIFORNIA_STATE_OF_STATE?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT)

*SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) -- Gov. Jerry Brown forcefully defended California's efforts to curb global warming, protect immigrants and expand health care, vowing in his State of the State address Tuesday to fight the Trump administration if it tries to roll back the state's accomplishments.*

*"California is not turning back. Not now, not ever," he declared.*

*Brown is projecting a \$1.6 billion budget deficit and proposing \$3 billion in spending cuts, largely to social programs that his fellow Democrats support. In his address, he did not propose any new policies.*

## **Update on Lake Mead**

### ***Western drought watchers eye Lake Mead water level***

By [The Associated Press](#) | Mercury News

January 20, 2017

By KEN RITTER

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/01/20/western-drought-watchers-keep-wary-eye-on-lake-mead-level/>

*The lake level on Friday was 8 feet above the line — down about 130 feet since 2000. The lake was last at full capacity in 1983.*

*Lake Mead is the biggest reservoir in the system that irrigates Southern California crops and provides drinking water to some 40 million people.*

*Federal water managers say it'll take a lot more snow and rain than parts of the West have seen in recent weeks to make a dent in the drought.*

*“Even if we have a good water year like we did in 2011, that doesn't undo 16 years of drought,” said Rose Davis, a Bureau of Reclamation spokeswoman in Nevada.*

*The bureau says there's still about a 50-50 chance that a water shortage declaration will be made in August to trigger cuts in supplies to Arizona and Nevada in January 2018.*

## **Desalination**

As I wrote last week, there is more action on the desalination front, including some by the Trump administration, but still there is no comprehensive, over-all plan for a serious building program. Here are some articles from this past week. The one discussing the new Russian method should be noted. In addition, I include here a report on China's artificial rain making project.

This first article has a bunch of questions and answers that are useful for those who do not know to much about the topic.

### ***Desalination is no longer a pipe dream in Southern California***

<http://www.dailybulletin.com/article/LF/20170122/NEWS/170129828>

By [Lauren Williams](#), *The Orange County Register*

Posted: 01/22/17,

*Among the local projects under consideration, two face particularly stiff opposition — a \$380 million plant in El Segundo that could churn out 20 million gallons each day and a \$1 billion plant in Huntington Beach that would generate 50 million gallons a day.*

*By summer, the State Lands Commission could issue a new environmental report on the Huntington Beach plant and renew a lease with the company behind the plant, Poseidon Water. If state and regional approvals come later this year, the project could go online by 2021. The El Segundo project also needs various approvals, and could open by 2023.*

Here are two articles on the Russian research program:

### ***Researchers develop hybrid nuclear desalination technique with improved efficiency***

January 24, 2017

<https://phys.org/news/2017-01-hybrid-nuclear-desalination-technique-efficiency.html>

*The majority of modern desalination technologies are based on distillation of thermal energy, including nuclear desalination, or using desalination membranes (reverse osmosis and electrodialysis membranes). In the process of distillation, salt water is boiled, and produced steam leaves the system and is condensed as fresh water. If a nuclear reactor is used as the heat source, the method is called nuclear desalination.*

*For the normal functioning of desalination plants, quality of the source water must meet certain strict requirements. This entails the need for a pre-treatment system, the cost of which is sometimes two to*

three times more than the cost of the [desalination plant](#) itself.

Scientists from the National Research Nuclear University MEPhI (Russia) have developed a new technology and technological schemes for a pretreatment unit taking into account data on the composition of pollutants, salinity and performance of water treatment systems. It is based on the reagent methods with hydrodynamic activation of the process of pollutant withdrawal in coagulation, flocculation and adsorption, which reduces the unit's size and cost. Moreover, the majority of the sparingly soluble salts can be removed in the pretreatment unit, which increases the efficiency of the system as a whole.

From the pre-water treatment unit, salt water flows into the desalination unit, a very energy-intensive process. Hybrid desalination schemes are proposed to reduce the energy consumption of the desalination process. These schemes use distillation and membrane methods in combination, to produce both drinking water and process water.

### **Russian Researchers Develop More Efficient, Hybrid Nuclear Desalination Technology**

Jan. 24 (EIRNS)—Russian researchers have developed a new, more efficient hybrid method for desalination, using both the heat from nuclear reactors, and conventional membranes, after the pretreatment of water.

The pretreatment in this new process takes account of the salinity and composition of pollutants in the water, and using hydrodynamic and chemical properties of the materials, removes them by techniques including coagulation, and taking solid colloids out of suspension. Current systems use either membranes or heat distillation.

The hybrid combination of the use of the heat from the nuclear plant for distillation along with the membrane methods following the pretreatment, can reduce the size, energy consumption, and cost of the desalination unit.

The work is being carried out at the National Research Nuclear University. The technique is intended to be used by Rosatom in new nuclear power plants, such as in Egypt, where the installation of desalination technology is planned.

Here is the excerpted article on China's artificial rain project:

### **China wants to make it rain over an area bigger than Britain and France**

24 Jan, 2017

<https://www.rt.com/business/374926-china-region-rainmaking-project/>

An artificial rain project costing 1.15 billion yuan (\$168 million) has been approved by China's top economic planning agency for the country's dry northwestern provinces; the South China Morning Post reported.

The project is part of a government program to modify the weather and will take three years. It comes as China's Meteorological Administration found that with the proposed investment, rainfall and snow could rise in a 960,000 sq km area which is 10 percent of the country, and more than one-and-a-half times the size of France.

The money will cover the purchase of four new planes, the upgrade of eight existing aircraft, the development of 897 rocket launch devices and connection of 1,856 devices to digital control systems.

The rainmaking project is expected to help with "ecological security, water resource allocation,

*drought-fighting and forest fire prevention” in provinces plagued by water shortages, according to He Shengcun, an official at the Qinghai provincial government’s “weather influencing” office.*

*China's northwestern provinces — Gansu, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Ningxia and Xinjiang — are large desert areas, experiencing little rain. It is typically hot and dry during summer and severely cold in winter.*

*Shengcun told the China News Service that artificial rainfall enhancement had increased precipitation by 55 billion cubic meters from 2006 to 2016, equivalent to about 150 percent of water contained in the Three Gorges reservoir. The Three Gorges is a hydroelectric dam in China, with the world's largest power station with a capacity of 22,500 MW.*

## **The River Basins of the U.S. and the West**

This will serve to introduce the idea of a continental water management project as was envisioned in the 1960s project, the North American Water and Power Alliance (NAWAPA). More next week. The first map is of all of the river basins in the lower-48 states. The second is of the southwestern river basins.

### ***The veins of America: Stunning map shows every river basin in the US***

By [Cheyenne Macdonald](#) and [Mark Prigg](#) For [Dailymail.com](#)

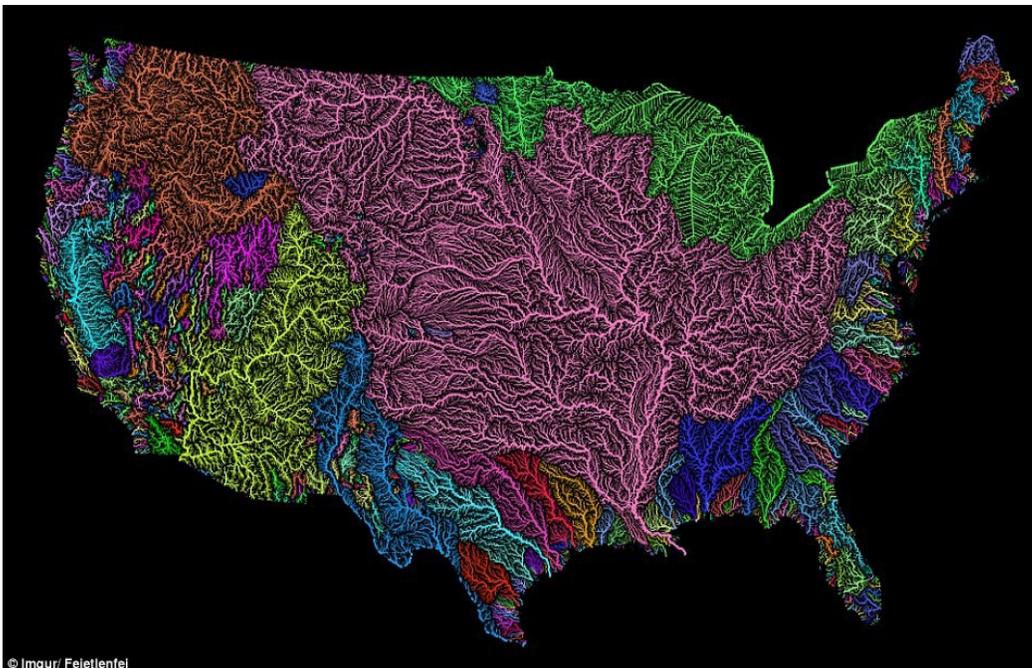
21 October 2016

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3860062/The-veins-America-Stunning-map-shows-river-basin-US.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3860062/The-veins-America-Stunning-map-shows-river-basin-US.html?utm_campaign=coschedule&utm_source=facebook_page&utm_medium=American%20Rivers)

[utm\\_campaign=coschedule&utm\\_source=facebook\\_page&utm\\_medium=American%20Rivers](#)

*A stunning new map shows the complex network of rivers and streams in the contiguous United States.*

*Created by Imgur user [Fejetlenfej](#), a geographer and GIS analyst with a ‘lifelong passion for beautiful maps,’ it highlights the massive expanse of river basins across the country – in particular, those which feed the Mississippi River.*



*There are 18 major river basins in the 48 states of the contiguous US, but much of the map is dominated by the massive catchment area for the Mississippi River; including the Upper and Lower Mississippi River Basins, along with Missouri River Basin and the Arkansas-White-Red Basin, as seen in pink.*

*The top left portion of the map shows much of the Pacific Northwest basin, illustrated in a brownish-orange color.*

*And, the Upper and Lower Colorado River basins stand out as well, in bright yellow.*

*The San Joaquin basin is the light blue on the far left.*

