

Mid-Pacific Region
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Reclamation Announces Initial Water Supply Allocation for the Central Valley Project

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The Bureau of Reclamation today announced the initial 2016 water supply allocation for Central Valley Project (CVP) contractors. This allocation is based on a cautious estimate of the amount of water that will be available for delivery to CVP water users and reflects current reservoir storages, precipitation and snowpack in the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada.

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) reports that as of March 30, 2016, the statewide average snow water equivalent in the Sierra Nevada is 24.4 inches, as compared to two inches on this date last year, and rainfall is currently at 125 percent of the historical average. However, in 2015 California experienced its fourth year of drought, and although conditions have greatly improved, Gov. Jerry Brown's Emergency Drought Proclamation, issued January 17, 2014, remains in effect.

“While we are on track for near-average precipitation season this year, the ongoing and residual impacts of the multi-year drought continue. The impacts this summer will be greatest on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley and some areas served by New Melones Reservoir,” said Reclamation Mid-Pacific Regional Director David Murillo.

Reclamation determines the allocation of CVP water for agricultural, environmental, and municipal and industrial (M&I) purposes based upon many factors including hydrologic conditions, reservoir storage levels, water quality requirements, relative priority of water rights, contractual obligations, and endangered species protection measures.

This initial CVP allocation is also based on conservative assumptions regarding Delta operations over the next couple of months; however, should conditions improve, CVP supplies could also improve, with increased supplies to Reclamation contractors in the hard-hit San Joaquin Valley. Reclamation will continue working with the DWR, federal and state fishery agencies, our contractors, and others to effectively carry out project operations and improve water supply consistent with all applicable laws.

North-of-Delta Contractors

- Agricultural water service contractors North-of-Delta are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.
- M&I water service contractors North-of-Delta are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.
- Sacramento River Settlement Contractors are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.

In-Delta

- The Contra Costa Water District, which receives water directly from the Delta, is allocated 100 percent of its contract supply.

South-of-Delta Contractors

- Agricultural water service contractors South-of-Delta are allocated 5 percent of their contract supply.
- M&I water service contractors South-of-Delta are allocated 55 percent of their historic use.
- San Joaquin River Exchange and Settlement Contractors are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.

Wildlife Refuges

- Wildlife refuges (Level 2) North- and South-of-Delta are allocated 100 percent of their contract supply.

Friant Division Contractors

- Pursuant to Reclamation's March 18 notification to Friant Division contractors and based upon Millerton Lake storage and current and forecasted hydrologic conditions in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin, the Friant Division allocation is 30 percent of Class 1 supplies.
- In addition, an Uncontrolled Season supply of 100,000 acre-feet and Unreleased Restoration Flow supply related to the San Joaquin River Restoration Program of 85,000 acre-feet are being made available as blocks that need to be scheduled and delivered by May 1 and May 15 respectively to avert flood management concerns.

Eastside Water Service Contractors

- Eastside water service contractors (Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District and Stockton East Water District) will receive 0 percent of their contract supply due to a lack of available CVP supplies from New Melones Reservoir.

In 2015, Reclamation undertook extraordinary actions to provide public health and safety supplies to our M&I contractors, meet our obligations to the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors and South-of-Delta refuges, and facilitate water transfer and water sharing agreements throughout the Central Valley.

The CVP began the water year last October with only 47 percent of average storage overall and just 27 percent of average storage in the Federal share of San Luis Reservoir. This compares to 85 percent of average overall for the CVP and 53 percent of average storage in the Federal share of San Luis Reservoir today. Dry conditions in the fall of 2015 also hampered the filling of San Luis Reservoir. Further, throughout the fall and most of the winter, Reclamation held releases to minimal levels to conserve storage in upstream reservoirs.

The combined effect of four years of drought, lack of available water at the beginning of the 2016 water year, and restrictions to protect listed species are impacting the amount of water that can be allocated to South-of-Delta agricultural water service contractors. As the water year progresses, changes in hydrology and opportunities to deliver additional water will influence future allocations. Water supply updates will be made as appropriate and posted at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvp-water/index.html>.

For additional information, please contact the Public Affairs Office at 916-978-5100 (TTY 800-877-8339) or email mppublicaffairs@usbr.gov.

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