

**COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED AND REFERRED  
BUTTE COUNTY WATER COMMISSION  
MEETING OF MAY 2, 2018**

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Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation  
308 Nelson Avenue  
Oroville, CA 95965

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*Wednesday Update**March 28, 2018*

This weekly electronic newsletter is designed to keep you current on California Water Plan news. We welcome comments, suggestions, and any news tips that may be of interest to water planners.

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### **Water data act webinar will cover the requirements and progress of implementation**

A presentation on the requirements of the [Open and Transparent Water Data Act](#) will be available during a [webinar](#) tomorrow, March 29. In addition to being available as a webinar, there will be limited seating for those who want to attend the Sacramento event in person. The program will include an opportunity to ask questions about the act's recently released [implementation progress report](#).

### **Desalination program awards \$44.4 million in grants to nine projects**

DWR has approved [\\$44.4 million in grants](#) under the [Water Desalination Grant Program](#). The total amount is divided among nine projects related to the planning, design, and construction of water desalination facilities. On March 30, DWR will begin [accepting applications](#) for more than \$48 million in grants that are still available.

### **California receives A-grade for laws on water conservation and efficiency**

California has earned an "A-" in the [2017 Water Efficiency and Conservation State Scorecard](#). The Alliance for Water Efficiency and the [Environmental Law Institute](#) grade states on their laws supporting water conservation and efficiency. There is also a component for climate resiliency planning. This is the first update to the scorecard since 2012.



### **Lecture series turns attention to groundwater integration under SGMA**

A [lecture](#) on April 4, in Sacramento, will focus on whether California can successfully integrate groundwater and surface water under the [Sustainable Groundwater Management Act \(SGMA\)](#). The presentation is part of the [Anne J. Schneider Lecture Series](#), which is dedicated to water law and policy.

### **DWR climatologist to speak on forecasting advancements that help water management**

The [American Water Resources Association's](#) speaker series will feature [DWR Climatologist Michael Anderson](#) on Thursday, April 12, in Sacramento. His presentation will look at potential advances in weather forecasting that can support integrated water management in a changing climate.

### **Workshop will include a tree-ring study that may help with drought preparedness**

A [workshop](#) to help Southern California water agencies prepare for the next drought will be held Thursday, April 19, in San Pedro. The [agenda](#) will include new information about paleo droughts in Southern California, as well as details on a [tree-ring study](#) that was used to learn more about the effects of past droughts.

### **60 years of water research history featured in spring edition of institute's newsletter**

The spring edition of the [California Institute for Water Resources newsletter](#) looks back at 60 years of research at the University of California. Along with the history lesson, there is also information on the present, and future plans at the institute. The edition includes an article on how the recent drought may have changed Californians' idea of the ideal coastal landscape.



## This month falls short of the 'March Miracle' of 1991

By: Staff Reports, March 30, 2018

Although some people are drawing comparisons between this month and the "Miracle March" of 1991, that might need a bit of fact checking.

"I think it is safe to officially call it a Miracle March," Chad Blanchard, the federal water master in Reno, told the Reno Gazette Journal.

However in March 1991 Chico got 11.79 inches of rain. At the start of the month the total for that year was 7.79 inches.

This month, Chico got 4.19 inches of rain, added to the 8.79 inches that had already fallen since October.

In the Department of Water Resources' northern region — the mountains that drain into Lake Oroville and Shasta and Trinity lakes — the snowpack increased during March to just 47 percent of normal for this time of year. For all of California, the snowpack is 64 percent of normal.

That's much better than the start of the month, when the northern region was at 18 percent of normal. The snow's water content grew from the equivalent of 4.4 inches to 13.1 inches.

Statewide the snowpack's water equivalent grew from 4.8 inches to 18.8 inches.

"It has been an incredible turnaround," Blanchard said.

The state's reservoirs are more full than usual, with the exception of Lake Oroville.

Oroville is rising, although releases through the Hyatt Powerhouse have largely resumed. Thursday afternoon the lake level was just about 788 feet, up almost 63 feet since the start of the month.

There was 2.06 million acre-feet of water behind the dam, an increase of 600,000 acre-feet during the month.

The late-season storms delivered a welcomed shot of snow, but unlike winter of 2016-17, California is entering the dry season with less snowpack than normal.

"We've been emphasizing this March has been really great and important, but April 1 is likely going to end up in a drought category," said Dan McEvoy, a climatologist at the Western Regional Climate Center. "Don't overlook that."

Indeed, the National Drought Monitor update Thursday said 77 percent of California was still in some form of drought. That was down from 89 percent last week, but the area in extreme drought increased from 0.43 percent of the state to 2.5 percent.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

# CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN eNEWS

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*Wednesday Update*



*April 4, 2018*

This weekly electronic newsletter is designed to keep you current on California Water Plan news. We welcome comments, suggestions, and any news tips that may be of interest to water planners.

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**Implementation of SGMA to be discussed at three workshops and a webinar**

[Three workshops and a webinar](#) will be held this month to discuss implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The first workshop will be Monday, April 23, in Chico. Others will be held in Clovis and Ventura. The webinar will be April 27. The information at the workshops will include planning and technical assistance available from DWR.

**Law report examines questions related to meeting SGMA requirements**

A [new report](#) from the UC Berkeley School of Law examines the legal questions facing groundwater sustainability agencies as they work to meet the requirements of SGMA. In particular, it looks at the way the relationship between groundwater and surface water plays into decisions made by agencies and other stakeholders.

**How water can play a part in conflicts and instability around the world**

The role that water plays in civil unrest and other conflicts will be featured during a [webinar](#) on Wednesday, April 11. The American Water Resources Association will present a look at [The Role of Water Stress in Instability and Conflict](#). Brigadier General Gerald Galloway will discuss the steps the U.S. Government can take to mitigate some of the threats.

**Fact sheet highlights program that provides grants for healthy soils**

The [California Climate and Agriculture Network](#) has released a [fact sheet](#) on an initiative that provides grants to farmers and ranchers who adopt soil-building practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The program also funds projects to showcase healthy soils practices and accelerate their adoption through farmer-to-farmer education. The [Healthy Soils Program](#) is administered by the California Department of Food and Agriculture.



**Initial proposals for Acres for America due by April 26**

The deadline to submit pre-proposals for the [Acres for America](#) program is Thursday, April 26. The land conservation program provides funding for projects that conserve fish and wildlife habitats. The pre-proposals will be narrowed to a select number of applicants to submit more detailed proposals.

**Reclamation releases list of new funding opportunities for water projects**

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has released [new funding opportunities](#) through the government's [WaterSMART](#) program. The funding is available for a number of categories, including projects that result in quantifiable water savings. Water districts and other agencies with water or power delivery authority are eligible to apply.

**Restoration society plans 25th annual conference for next month in San Diego**

The California Society for Ecological Restoration will hold its [25th annual conference](#) May 9-11, in San Diego. The society works to restore native California habitats. Discounted registration fees will be available through April 15.

## Statewide water savings stopped in February

By: Staff Reports, April 6, 2018

Sacramento >> Water conservation is officially dead in California.

The State Water Resources Control Board reported this week that Californians used more water this February than in February 2013, the benchmark pre-drought year.

Water savings have been on a fairly steady decline since mandatory conservation targets were dropped in spring 2017, and crossed zero in February. Water use was up 1 percent, the Water Board said Tuesday.

Locally, conservation rates were better, with Oroville one of the leaders in the state as it often is. Customers of the California Water Service's Oroville Division used 29.4 percent less water in February than they did in February 2013. That was the 11th best of the 381 water agencies that reported their February water use.

Cal Water's Chico Division reported savings of 16 percent, the Paradise Irrigation Division saved 3.5 percent, Del Oro Water Co. had savings of 17.5 percent, and Cal Water's Willows Division had savings of 9.9 percent.

Among other north state cities, Marysville saved 11.4 percent, Yuba City saved 4.6 percent, and Redding saved 0.1 percent. Red Bluff was one of the 176 water agencies that used more water in February than in 2013, up 0.2 percent.

The agencies that used more water in February serve 18.6 million people, according to the Water Board. The 105 agencies that saved more than 10 percent have 4 million customers.

Regionally, the Sacramento River watershed had savings of 9.1 percent. The Bay Area had savings of 6.8 percent and the South Coast used 5.8 percent more than in 2013.

Per capital water use per day was 76.1 gallons statewide. The figure in Oroville was 60 gallons; Chico, 78 gallons; Paradise, 87 gallons; Del Oro, 61 gallons; and Willows, 75 gallons.

The full conservation report can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/feb18water>.

Reach City Editor Steve Schoonover at 896-7750.

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**Wednesday Update****April 11, 2018**

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**DWR director to deliver  
keynote address at  
sustainability summit**

DWR Director Karla Nemeth will deliver the keynote address at the annual [Sustainability Summit](#) on Friday, April 20, in Los Angeles. [The summit](#) will include potential public policies, including State incentives to increase water conservation technology, that would lead to a more sustainable future.

**Tribal Water Summit  
posts climate change video  
from last week's event**

Last week's [Tribal Water Summit](#) has started posting the event's presentations on its website. The first video to be posted is "Climate Conversations," which is a series of short presentations featuring tribal members discussing how climate change is affecting their culture. Other summit presentations will be added to the webpage as they become available. The summit was held April 4 and 5, at the McClellan Conference Center.



**More than \$85 million in  
grants awarded to sustainable  
groundwater planning projects**

DWR has announced [\\$85.8 million in grant funding](#) under the 2017 Groundwater Sustainability Plans and Projects Solicitation. The funding will go to [78 proposals](#) that were submitted to the [Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant Program](#). The program provides grants to projects that develop and implement sustainable groundwater planning.

**Two workshops scheduled  
to discuss framework for  
regulating direct potable reuse**

The State Water Resources Control Board will hold [two workshops](#) this month to get input on a proposed framework for regulating direct potable reuse. The board is working toward establishing a framework by June 1. The workshops will be Monday, April 23, in Oakland; and Thursday, April 26, in Los Angeles.

**Legislative Analyst's Office  
offers ideas for improving  
California's forest management**

Recommendations on creating healthier forests are included in [Improving California's Forest and Watershed Management](#), a report just released by the Legislative Analyst's Office. The report begins by looking at the benefits of forests and how they are managed. It also looks at the shortcomings in the State's management policies, and includes recommended actions for the Legislature.

**Issue brief calls for  
improvements in monitoring  
California's stream flows**

An [issue brief](#) from the University of California is calling for improvements in the monitoring of the state's stream flows. The brief looks at the need for accurate and timely stream flow information to support day-to-day decisions, as well as long-term planning. One of the suggested key actions is to create an expanded stream flow monitoring network.

**Discussion of water laws to  
help vulnerable populations  
to be held tomorrow**

A [webinar](#) tomorrow, April 12, will discuss California water laws aimed at helping the state's vulnerable populations. Attorneys from [Nossaman LLP](#) will provide updates on State efforts to address water service affordability for low-income customers and safeguard children from lead exposure in drinking water.

Thomas, Autum

**From:** Gosselin, Paul  
**Sent:** Friday, April 13, 2018 4:17 PM  
**To:** Thomas, Autum  
**Subject:** FW: Groundwater benefits fact sheet - November 2018 water bond  
**Attachments:** Groundwater elements of November Water Bond.docx

Hi Autum  
Consider this as incoming correspondence  
thanks

**From:** Matteo Crow <matteocrow.waterbond@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2018 4:11 PM  
**To:** matteo crow <matteocrow.waterbond@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Groundwater benefits fact sheet - November 2018 water bond

Dear GSA staff,

Attached is our "groundwater benefits" fact sheet for the November water bond. Nearly every category of the bond includes language for groundwater, in addition to areas of both earmarked funding and priority funding for groundwater projects.

If your agency has not yet endorsed the water bond, please send your confirmation of endorsement to [matteocrow.waterbond@gmail.com](mailto:matteocrow.waterbond@gmail.com). We appreciate your support in helping us pass this measure.

Many thanks,

Matteo Crow

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## **Groundwater elements of November Water Bond**

The November Water Bond includes many elements which will benefit groundwater management in California.

**SGMA implementation.** The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires that groundwater pumping and recharge be brought into balance. The November Bond Act provides \$675 million as grants to local agencies from the Department of Water Resources.

Grants will be made to local agencies to implement their sustainability plans. Grants are limited to \$20 million. Planning grants may be made up to \$1 million. Up to 20% of the grant may be used to establish a trust fund, the proceeds of which can be used to implement groundwater management plan. A 50% cost share is required, which may be waived for disadvantaged communities.

Priorities for grants include the following

critically overdrafted basins

Surface and groundwater interconnected supplies

disadvantaged communities

water quality problems

subsidence

state owned resources

recharge projects

Multibenefit projects

Modification of existing facilities

cost effectiveness

50% cost share, not for DACs

The Office of Sustainable Water Solutions receives \$10 million.

The following sub-allocations are made from the \$675 million

**Borrego Groundwater basin:** \$35 million. This is unique groundwater basin with no imported water supply. Overdraft is impacting our largest state park: Anza Borrego.

**Research:** \$5 million.

**Decision support tools: \$10 million**

**Interagency communication: \$5 million**

**Flood water utilization: \$10 million**

**Other groundwater elements in the bond:**

**Groundwater improvement and storage are mentioned 90 times in initiative, in almost every program.**

**Groundwater desalting: \$400 million. These funds may be used to remediate underground or surface saline water supplies inland from the coast.**

**Friant Kern Canal Repair: \$750 million. These funds will remediate damage caused by groundwater overdraft, and may also be used to recharge groundwater with flood water, and undertake other groundwater programs.**

**Weed management for improved groundwater recharge: \$100 million. Excessive water use by invasive weeds results in a loss of a million acre feet or more of groundwater throughout California each year. Some of the worst plants are yellow starthistle, Arundo, and tamarisk. These funds can be used in matching programs to control these invasive plants.**

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**Wednesday Update****April 18, 2018**

This weekly electronic newsletter is designed to keep you current on California Water Plan news. We welcome comments, suggestions, and any news tips that may be of interest to water planners.

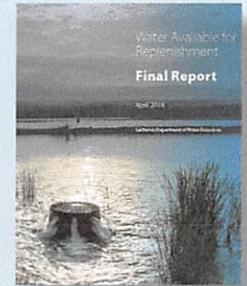
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### **DWR report estimates water that is available to replenish groundwater basins**

DWR has released the final [Water Available for Replenishment](#) report. It presents the best estimate of water that can be used to replenish the state's groundwater basins. The estimates cover each of California's 10 hydrologic regions and 56 planning regions. [The report](#) includes a variety of strategies, including conservation, recycling, and desalination, that will be needed to secure regional water supply and quality.



### **CWC schedules meetings with Water Storage Investment Program applicants**

The California Water Commission (CWC) will spend two days next week [meeting with applicants](#) for the [Water Storage Investment Program](#). CWC staff will discuss updated technical reviews and the public benefit ratios for each application. The meetings will be April 24 and 25, in Sacramento.

### **UCLA delivers report on the future of the Sierra under climate change**

A look into the future, and what it might hold for the Sierra snowpack under climate change, is the subject of a [new report](#) from the UCLA Center for Climate Science. [Climate Change in the Sierra Nevada: California's Water Future](#) looks at the many water management challenges that will come with predicted smaller snowpacks and earlier runoffs.



### **Agricultural program and earthquake scenario on growth council agenda**

The [next meeting](#) of the Strategic Growth Council will include an action item to adopt the final draft guidelines for the [Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program](#). There will also be a presentation on a new [risk scenario for a major earthquake](#) in Northern California. The meeting is April 20, at Sacramento City Hall.

### **New planning partnership offers information to agencies across California**

City planners are getting a new resource in the form of a partnership between [UrbanFootprint](#) and the State of California. UrbanFootprint is a cloud-based platform that will provide information to hundreds of California cities, counties, and agencies. The partnership will provide access to a data library, planning scenarios, and analysis modules to help with developing community designs.

### **Guide provides water efficiency ideas for commercial kitchens**

Operators of commercial kitchens can learn about water use efficiency from a [new guide](#) being offered by the Alliance for Water Efficiency. The guide offers best practices, case studies, and strategies for the most common high-use equipment.

### **DWR workshop will demonstrate new approach to land area measurement**

A new approach to land area measurement will be demonstrated during a [workshop](#) on May 16, in Sacramento. DWR will show how it is using remote sensing technology to measure landscape areas for California's retail urban water suppliers. An online option will be available to those who can't attend the workshop in person.

## **Central Valley Project water allocations raised**

**By: Staff Reports, April 20, 2018**

The Bureau of Reclamation Friday updated allocations for Central Valley Project contractors for the 2018 contract year.

All water users north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta will get 100 percent of their contracted supply. Earlier numbers announced in March gave north-of-delta agriculture 20 percent and municipal and industrial users 70 percent.

South of the Delta, farmers will get 40 percent of their water, and doubling of the 20 percent announced in February. Municipal and industrial users south of the delta were increased from 70-75 percent.

“Thanks to late March and April precipitation and the positive results of the California Department of Water Resources April snow survey, Reclamation is pleased to announce this increased allocation for CVP water contractors,” said Mid-Pacific Regional Director David Murillo in a press release.

“Even with the recent gains in water supply, the year as a whole has still been relatively dry. We will continue to monitor our ability to manage temperature in the Sacramento River and meet other regulatory requirements throughout the system, and may need to adjust our plans as the year evolves.”

Water supply updates are posted at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvp-water/index.html>.

## State releases new benefit assessments of Sites, other water storage proposals

By: Steve Schoonover, April 20, 2018

Sacramento >> Another step was taken Friday toward spending water storage bond money, when updated public benefit assessments were released by the State Water Commission for Sites Reservoir and the other nine projects still seeking the funds.

The money — \$2.7 billion — was included in the Proposition 1 bond measure approved by voters in November 2014.

The money cannot pay to just increase the amount of water stored. Instead, the language of Proposition 1 limits the money's use to achieve five public benefits: ecosystem benefits, water quality, flood control, emergency response and recreation.

In December, the initial 11 applicants offered their estimates of the value of the public benefits of their projects. The commission staff came back in February with numbers far lower than the applicants.

Ten of the applicants appealed, and what was released Friday was the commission's response to those appeals. The numbers were generally higher than those of February, but not as high as the applicants' estimates.

### The numbers

The public benefit value of Sites Reservoir, the off-stream reservoir proposed west of Maxwell, was put at \$933.3 million, an increase from February's \$662.3 million. Sites backers were seeking \$1.388 billion. The proposed 1.8 million acre-foot lake would cost \$5.2 billion to build in total.

The increase reflects the acceptance of benefits for wildlife refuges and the Yolo Bypass. Claimed benefits to anadromous fish were rejected, as was the claim the project would help maintain the cold water pool in Lake Oroville.

"The Sites Project offers the state an opportunity to manage a significant amount of water to benefit wildlife and native fish in the Sacramento Watershed," said Sites Project Authority Chairman Fritz Durst in a press release.

"We think there is still room for discussion with the Commission about the benefits we offer for salmon. We greatly appreciate the work done by staff to evaluate all of the Prop 1 applicants, and look forward to continuing to make our case with the Commission in May."

Temperance Flat Reservoir, proposed on the San Joaquin River above the existing Friant Dam, was given a public benefit of just \$171.3 million, though \$1.055 billion had been sought. The new number was better than the zero the project was given in February.

Two other dam projects fared better. The public benefit of the Pacheco Reservoir expansion in Santa Clara County jumped from zero to \$484.5 million. The Los Vaqueros Reservoir expansion in Contra Costa County increased from zero to \$422.6 million.

Water Commission Executive Director Joe Yun said the zeros given to eight of the 11 projects in February resulted primarily from weak data on ecosystem benefits. "When we could not substantiate them, we pulled them out," he said.

Commission staff met with the applicants after the February num-

bers were released to explain what was necessary, but two of the projects — a reservoir in San Diego and a groundwater bank in Kern County — still ended up with zeros. In addition, backers of the Centennial Reservoir project proposed on the Bear River chose not to appeal.

Four other groundwater banks — one in Sacramento County, one in the southern San Joaquin Valley and two in Southern California — were given public benefits ranging from \$72.5 million to \$171.3 million.

Yun said the numbers were based on evaluation of the proposals by the Department of Water Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife and Water Resources Control Board.

All told, the public benefit estimates total just under \$2.6 billion. Yun said that's a little more money than is available as bond service and administration take a share of the \$2.7 billion in the proposition.

### What's next

Yun said the commission staff will meet with applicants next week for further discussions, and the applicants would be able to make their case before the Water Commission itself during a meeting May 1-3.

The public benefits will be set at that time. That doesn't mean the projects will get that much money. Yun called the numbers a "ceiling," the maximum possible.

Between May and July, the commission staff will rank the projects, based on their relative environmental benefit, resilience and the likelihood the project will actually get done. Resilience involves the amount of flexibility a project will add to the water system, and how it would help in severe scenarios of climate change.

In July, the commission will weigh the public benefits and the rankings and make allocation decisions.

That doesn't mean the applicants get the money then. They still have to secure necessary environmental permits and the rest of the funding needed for the project.

"It gives them the certainty they need to complete the process," Yun said.

The Water Commission has until the end of 2021 to actually allocate the funds, but Yun said the money will be made available to each applicant as soon as it completes its work. That way a small, simple project will not be delayed waiting for a large, complicated one.

"The commission from the beginning has been eager to get this money out the door," Yun said.

Reach City Editor Steve Schoonover at 896-7750.

## **Meeting Thursday on groundwater plans for northern Butte County**

**By: Staff Reports, April 20, 2018**

**Chico >> A workshop on managing the groundwater underneath northern Butte County is planned Thursday in Chico.**

**The meeting on what's being done to implement the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act is 6-8 p.m. at the Masonic Family Center, 1110 W. East Ave.**

**The law passed in 2014 requires plans to be developed to maintain groundwater levels and quality in the various basins around the state.**

**The meeting Thursday will focus on what's called the Vina Subbasin, which covers the valley floor between Big Chico Creek and Deer Creek in Tehama County.**

**Those boundaries are due to change however, as Tehama County has asked the Department of Water Resources to detach everything north of the county line, and the city of Chico is asking to add all the area in the city limits south of Big Chico Creek.**

**That would leave three agencies to govern the basin — Chico, Butte County and the Rock Creek Reclamation District.**

**Thursday's meeting will provide a chance to meet representatives of those three and view a draft governance structure on how the three would work together.**

**General information on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act will also be available.**

**More information is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/sgmabutte>.**