

## State of Emergency Proclamation

**WHEREAS** climate change is intensifying the impacts of droughts on our communities, environment and economy, and California must therefore improve drought resiliency and prepare to respond to more frequent, prolonged, and intense dry periods; and

**WHEREAS** much of the West is experiencing severe to exceptional drought and California is in a second consecutive year of dry conditions, resulting in drought or near-drought throughout many portions of the State; and

**WHEREAS** these drought conditions can result in degraded water quality, fallowing of productive farmland, setbacks to vulnerable and rural communities through job losses and longer-lasting recoveries, significant impacts to tribal, commercial, and recreational salmon fisheries, constraints on access to traditional lifeways, loss of aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity, and ecosystem impacts; and

**WHEREAS** drought conditions vary across the State and some watersheds, including the Russian River and Klamath Basin, are extremely dry and are facing substantial water supply and ecosystem challenges; and

**WHEREAS** it is necessary to expeditiously mitigate the effects of the drought conditions within the Russian River Watershed, located within Mendocino and Sonoma counties, to ensure the protection of health, safety, and the environment; and

**WHEREAS** experience in the last drought has demonstrated the value of preparing earlier for potential sustained dry conditions, the need to improve our monitoring and forecasting capabilities, and many other lessons that are captured in the Administration's *Report to the Legislature on the 2012-2016 Drought*; and

**WHEREAS** the State and its many partners have strengthened drought resilience since the last drought including state investments in water management systems, implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, establishment of the Safe and Affordable Fund for Equity and Resilience Program, development of the Administration's *Water Resilience Portfolio*, and continued water conservation by Californians whose current statewide urban water use is 16% lower than at the beginning of the last drought; and

**WHEREAS** state agencies have been actively responding to current drought conditions and preparing for the possibility of a third dry year including through convenings of the interagency drought team, which was established at my direction, to organize, focus, and track changing conditions, coordinate state agency responses, and work closely with partners across the State; and

**WHEREAS** under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that the conditions caused by the drought conditions, by reason of their magnitude, are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single local government and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to appropriately respond; and

**WHEREAS** under the provisions of Government Code section 8625(c), I find that local authority is inadequate to cope with the drought conditions; and

**WHEREAS** to protect public health and safety, it is critical the State take certain immediate actions without undue delay to prepare for and mitigate the effects of, the drought conditions within the Russian River Watershed, and under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this Proclamation would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the drought conditions of the Russian River Watershed, located within Mendocino and Sonoma counties.

**NOW THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM**, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, section 8625, **HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist in Mendocino and Sonoma counties due to drought conditions in the Russian River Watershed.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

1. To further the success of California's water conservation efforts and increase our drought preparedness, state agencies shall partner with local water districts and utilities to make all Californians aware of drought, and encourage actions to reduce water usage by promoting the Department of Water Resources' Save Our Water campaign (<https://saveourwater.com>) and other water conservation programs.
2. To continue coordination with partners across the State for the potential of prolonged drought impacts, the Department of Water Resources, the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board), the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Food and Agriculture shall work with regional and local governments, including groundwater sustainability agencies, to identify watersheds, communities, public water systems, and ecosystems that may require coordinated state and local actions to address issues stemming from continued dry conditions, to ensure that we can respond to water shortages and protect people, natural resources and economic activity.
3. To continue partnership and coordination with Californian Native American tribes, state agencies shall engage in consultation, collaboration, and communication with California Native American tribes to assist them in necessary preparation and response to drought conditions on tribal lands and potential impacts to cultural and traditional resources within ancestral lands.
4. To prioritize drought response and preparedness resources, the Department of Water Resources, the Water Board, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with the Department of Finance, shall:
  - a. Accelerate funding for water supply enhancement, water conservation, or species conservation projects.
  - b. Identify unspent funds that can be repurposed to enable projects to address drought impacts to people, ecosystems, and economic activities.
  - c. Recommend additional financial support for water resilience infrastructure projects and actions for potential inclusion in the upcoming May Revision.

5. To increase resilience of our water supplies during drought conditions, the Department of Water Resources shall:
  - a. Work with counties to encourage reporting of household water shortages, such as dry residential wells, on the website the Department maintains for that purpose, to enable tracking of drought impacts.
  - b. Work with counties, and groundwater sustainability agencies as appropriate, to help ensure that well drillers submit required groundwater well logs for newly constructed and deepened wells in a timely manner.
  - c. Work with agricultural water suppliers and agricultural water users to provide technical assistance, including implementation of efficient water management practices and use of technology such as the California Irrigation Management Information System.
  - d. Work with urban and agricultural water suppliers to encourage timely submittal by water districts and public posting of urban water management and water shortage contingency plans and agricultural water management and drought plans.
  - e. Accelerate updating the land subsidence data it is providing to support implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.
6. To increase resilience of our water systems during drought conditions, the Water Board shall:
  - a. Use its authority, provide technical assistance, and where feasible provide financial assistance, to support regular reporting of drinking water supply well levels and reservoir water levels where the Water Board determines that there is risk of supply failure because of lowering groundwater levels or reservoir levels that may fall below public water system intakes.
  - b. Prioritize the permitting of public water systems that anticipate the need to activate additional supply wells where water quality is a concern and treatment installation needs to proceed to relieve a system's potential supply concerns.
  - c. Provide annual water demand data, information on water right priority, and other communications on water availability on its website.
  - d. Identify watersheds where current diversion data is insufficient to evaluate supply impacts caused by dry conditions, and take actions to ensure prompt submittal of missing data in those watersheds.
7. To address the acutely dry conditions in the Russian River Watershed, the Water Board shall consider:
  - a. Modifying requirements for reservoir releases or diversion limitations in that watershed to ensure adequate, minimal water supplies for critical purposes.
  - b. Adopting emergency regulations to curtail water diversions when water is not available at water rights holders' priority of right or to protect releases of stored water.

For purposes of carrying out this directive, Public Resources Code, Division 13 (commencing with section 21000) and regulations adopted pursuant to that Division are suspended in the counties of Mendocino and Sonoma to the extent necessary to address the impacts of the drought in the Russian River Watershed. The Water Board shall identify the projects

eligible for the suspensions pursuant to this paragraph and maintain on its websites a list of the activities or approvals for which these provisions are suspended.

8. To ensure that equipment and services necessary for drought response in the Russian River Watershed can be procured quickly, the provisions of the Government Code and the Public Contract Code applicable to procurement, state contracts, and fleet assets, including, but not limited to, advertising and competitive bidding requirements, are hereby suspended to the extent necessary to address the effects of the drought in the Russian River Watershed, located within Mendocino and Sonoma counties. Approval of the Department of Finance is required prior to the execution of any contract entered into pursuant to this provision.
9. To increase the resilience of our natural habitats to protect vulnerable species during drought conditions, the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall:
  - a. Evaluate and take actions to protect terrestrial and aquatic species and, wherever possible, work with water users and other parties on voluntary measures to protect species.
  - b. Work to improve State hatcheries and increase water use efficiency on State wildlife areas and ecological reserves to maintain habitat for vulnerable species.
  - c. Respond to human-wildlife interactions related to ongoing dry conditions and increase public messaging and awareness.
  - d. Work with commercial and recreational salmon fishing and tribal representatives to anticipate and develop strategies to mitigate and respond to salmon fishery impacts, with particular emphasis on addressing impacts to salmon fisheries in the Klamath Basin.
10. To support our agricultural economy and food security during drought conditions, the Department of Food and Agriculture shall:
  - a. Provide technical assistance to support conservation planning, on-farm water and energy conservation practices and technologies, including augmenting the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program.
  - b. Conduct an economic analysis of drought impacts to agriculture, including land use, jobs, and rural food economies, expanding on existing research done in the last drought to include thorough regional analysis especially in the Central Valley, and in the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and alternative land uses for fallowed land.
  - c. Maintain a web page with drought resources for farmers and ranchers, including the United States Department of Agriculture and other federal and state resources.
  - d. Work with federal agencies to assist Klamath Basin farmers and ranchers contending with reduced water supplies.
11. To ensure the potential impacts of drought on communities are anticipated and proactively addressed, the Department of Water Resources, in coordination with the Water Board, shall develop groundwater management principles and strategies to monitor, analyze, and minimize impacts to drinking water wells.
12. To provide critical information on the different drought conditions across the State, the Department of Water Resources, in consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Food and Agriculture,

and the Water Board, shall develop a California Drought Monitor by December 31, 2021, as recommended in the Administration's *Report to the Legislature on the 2012-2016 Drought*.

13. To prepare for potential salinity issues in the Delta, the Department of Water Resources, in consultation with the Water Board, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Delta Stewardship Council, and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, shall initiate actions necessary to prepare for and address potential Delta salinity issues during prolonged drought conditions.
14. To prepare for potential impacts of drought conditions on species, the Water Board and the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall work with federal agency partners to manage temperature conditions for the preservation of fish in the Sacramento River downstream of Shasta Dam while balancing water supply needs.

This Proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

**I FURTHER DIRECT** that as soon as hereafter possible, this Proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Proclamation.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 21st day of April 2021

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GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor of California

**ATTEST:**

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DR. SHIRLEY WEBER  
Secretary of State

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