



LA NADA

YET ANOTHER DRY YEAR

Expectations for a wet water year officially ended on September 30. The promise of El Nino bringing a dramatic end to four straight years of drought and the driest year on record (2015) in the golden state went unfulfilled.

Where does that leave California heading into the new water year that began on October 1? According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, **about 62 percent of the state remains in a severe, extreme or exceptional drought.** The state's major water supply **reservoirs are also at just 80 percent of normal** for this time of year, meaning the state is already behind and in desperate need of catching up.

Adding to the lack of precipitation in 2016 were severe water supply restrictions imposed by state and federal regulators for salinity management and species protection. All total, those restrictions accounted for the loss of more than 1 million acre-feet of water supply—enough water for at least 9 million California residents for an entire year.

The new hydrologic cycle is already shaping up as another scarce water year as regulators seek ever higher environmental “flow” requirements in major river systems. Regulators continue to push for additional flows despite a lack of scientific evidence that the restrictions are benefitting endangered fish. In fact, as water supply restrictions have increased, fish populations have continued to decline. The cumulative impacts are taking an increasing toll on local communities, farms and businesses. It also means less water available to replenish groundwater reserves that are already strained after five consecutive years of drought.

Bottom-line: California's water situation is bad and state and federal regulators are making it far worse!

If you had to put a one-word descriptor on this water year, it would be dry.”

*- Doug Carlson
California Department of Water Resources*