

# SIERRA NEVADA WATER FACTS

## More than 60% of California's developed water supply originates in the Sierra Nevada

- Sierra Nevada watersheds provide all or part of the **drinking water** for **23 million people**.
- Up to **half of the water flowing into the Delta** starts its journey in the Sierra's forested watersheds.
- Snowpack in the **Sierra region provides a natural form of water storage**, and Sierra forests and meadows play a role in ensuring water quality, yield and reliability.

## Sierra forest and watershed health is declining

- Average **temperatures** in the Sierra Nevada **are rising**. This may result in **drier summer conditions**, more precipitation as rain than snow, **earlier snowmelt**, more **large damaging fires**, and **longer fire seasons**.
- The Sierra Nevada contains thousands of abandoned mines. **Toxic substances** associated with legacy mining, **such as mercury**, are **carried downstream** to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta and the San Francisco Bay.

Investment in the state's primary watershed - the Sierra Nevada - is needed to ensure water reliability and improve water quality. Investing to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire, restore meadows, address legacy toxins like mercury, and protect natural lands from conversion to other uses, will preserve Sierra benefits that are shared statewide.



### The Sierra Nevada: California's Primary Water Source

Other  
Sources

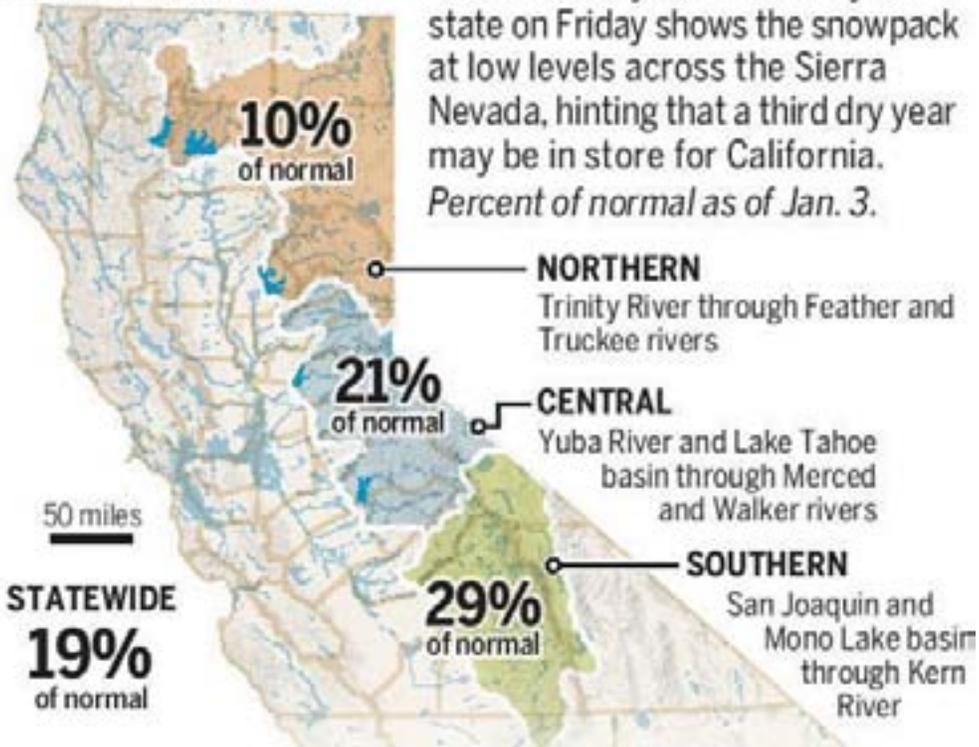


Sierra  
Nevada  
Water



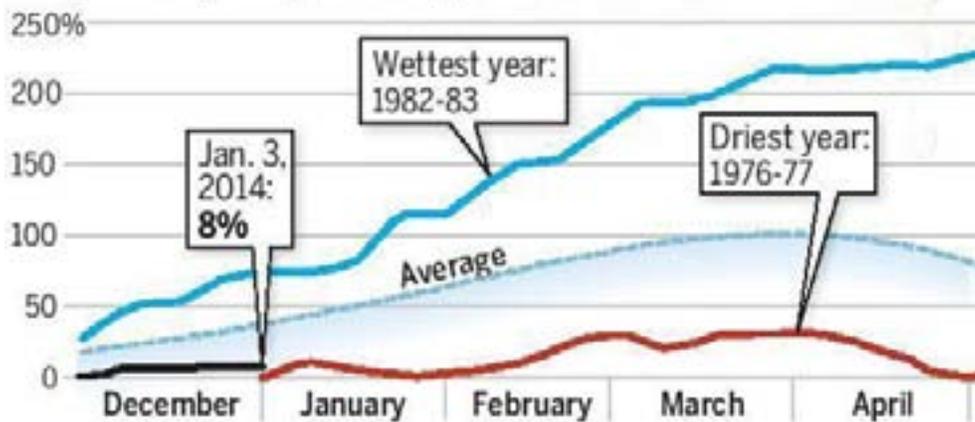
## STATE SNOWPACK

A snow survey conducted by the state on Friday shows the snowpack at low levels across the Sierra Nevada, hinting that a third dry year may be in store for California. *Percent of normal as of Jan. 3.*



## CENTRAL REGION SNOW WATER CONTENT

*As a percentage of April 1 average*



Source: California Department of Water Resources

The Sacramento Bee

*The image above is courtesy of the Sacramento Bee's article titled "Sierra snow survey points to dry year ahead," published January 3, 2014.*

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is a state agency that carries out a mission of protecting the environment and economy in a complementary fashion across 25 million acres, one-quarter of the state. To learn more, please visit the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Web site.



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