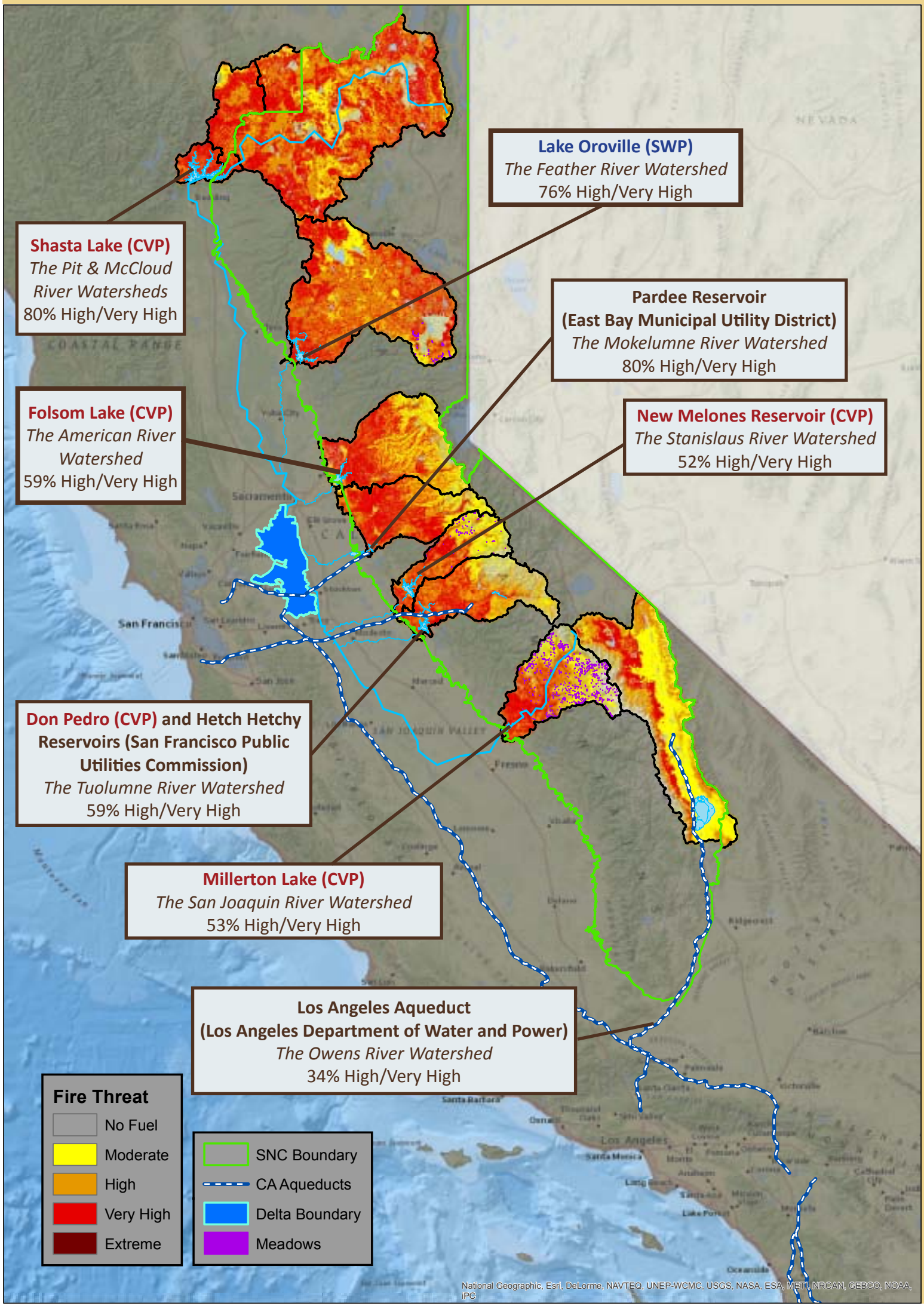
Fire Threat and California's Water System



The Sierra-Delta Connection

The Sierra Nevada Region is the source of up to half of the flows into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, providing water critical to the long term ecological health and stability of California's water "hub."

California State Water Project (SWP)

The Sierra Nevada Region is the primary source of water for the California State Water Project (SWP) – the system that delivers water to two-thirds of California's population and stores and distributes water to 29 urban and agricultural water suppliers in Northern California, the San Francisco Bay Area, the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast, and Southern California. Approximately 25 million Californians receive water from the SWP and about 750,000-acres of farmland receive irrigation water from the SWP.

Federal Central Valley Project (CVP)

The Sierra Nevada Region is a major contributor to the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) – the system that delivers water to farms, homes, and businesses in California`s Central Valley and major urban centers in the San Francisco Bay Area. Annually, the CVP provides irrigation water for about one-third of the agricultural land in California and drinking water for close to one million households. In addition to delivering water for consumption, the CVP produces electric power and provides flood protection, navigation, recreation, and water quality benefits.

More than 60% of CA's water originates in the forests of the Sierra Nevada

Each of the watersheds highlighted above are **major contributors to the state's water system** via the **California State Water Project (SWP)** and/or the **Federal Central Valley Project (CVP)**. The call-out boxes highlight the **percentage of acres in a particular watershed** that have conditions placing them in the high or very high fire threat category. **Fire Threat** is the **likelihood of a fire to start** combined with the **potential damage a fire might have on the landscape** based on the history of fire occurring in a particular area and current conditions (terrain, vegetation type, weather, etc.).

Recent snowpack surveys and dwindling reservoir levels indicate that California may be experiencing drought conditions that could result in a myriad of challenges for the State's primary water supply, including an increase in the frequency and intensity of wildfires. Investment in projects that make the upper watersheds of the Sierra Nevada more resilient to drought, such as meadow restoration, forest thinning and biomass utilization, is essential to ensuring California's water supply remains healthy in the face of a changing climate.

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