



# Water Resources Update

Colusa County Department of Agriculture

## Water Resources

100 Sunrise Blvd., Ste. A, Colusa, CA 95932 | 530-458-7709

<http://countyofcolusa.org/index.aspx?nid=656>

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## The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

### Upcoming Colusa County SGMA Meetings:

**March 29, 2016**

**GSA Working Group Meeting #3**

**9:00 a.m. – noon**

**Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room**

**100 Sunrise Blvd., Colusa, CA 95932**

This is the third in a series of facilitated working meetings for GSA-eligible agencies to coordinate local governance planning. These meetings are open to the public.

### Important Dates related to SGMA:

- **March 31, 2016** – Deadline to submit a Basin Boundary Modification request
- **April 1, 2016** – Deadline to submit comments on the Draft Emergency GSP Regulations
- **June 30, 2017** – GSAs must be established for all high & medium priority basins
- **January 31, 2022** – GSPs due for high & medium priority basins not in overdraft

### Updates

- The **City of Williams** held a public hearing on March 16 to receive public testimony on whether the City should elect to become a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA). The City Council voted to file to be a GSA.
- **Yolo County** has submitted a request to DWR for a Basin Boundary Modification at their County lines. If successful, the southern boundary of the Colusa Subbasin will be adjusted to the Yolo-Colusa County line. Colusa County supports their request for a boundary adjustment.
- A new report, entitled “**Designing Effective Groundwater Sustainability Agencies: Criteria for Evaluation of Local Governance Options,**” is available. The report aims to empower local decision-makers and stakeholders to think critically about whether proposed GSAs will meet their needs now and in the future. The [full report](#) and [executive summary](#) are available at <http://www.law.berkeley.edu/groundwater-governance-criteria>

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- **Draft Emergency GSP Regulations** are available and open for public comment: The Department of Water Resources (DWR) Sustainable Groundwater Management Program will host three required public meetings and a statewide webinar to solicit comments on the Draft GSP Emergency Regulations. Local agencies and interested parties are encouraged to attend, listen, and provide comments. The deadline to submit written comments has been extended to April 1, 2016.

Public meetings regarding Draft GSP Regulations are scheduled as follows:

- **Monday, March 21st** in Visalia from 4:00pm to 6:00 pm at the Visalia Convention Center
- **Tuesday, March 22nd** in Santa Ana from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at the Delhi Community Center
- **Thursday, March 24th**, via webinar: Registration link at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2515354223176908292>
- **Friday, March 25th** in Sacramento from 9:00am to 11:00am at the Secretary of the State Building

Visit DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management Program website at <http://water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/index.cfm>

### **SGMA - How to Stay Informed:**

- ✓ Get on the Colusa County Water Resources email notification list for updates and meeting announcements - call or email Water Resources Staff
- ✓ Visit our website: [Water Resources](#)
- ✓ Visit DWR's Groundwater Information Center website: <http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/gwinfo/index.cfm>
- ✓ Do you have questions? Call or email Water Resources Staff



### **Colusa County Household Water Tank Program, Update**

This summer, the County of Colusa initiated a Household Water Tank program to temporarily provide water to residents whose domestic wells went dry, and who were unable to resolve their well problems. This program is partially funded by the County and partially funded by the California Office of Emergency Services Disaster Assistance Act program (CDAA). During the summer of 2015, five households received water tanks and weekly water deliveries were provided. To-date, two of these wells have come back online. Water deliveries continue to three households. For more information on the County Household Water Tank program, including eligibility, please see the Colusa County website: <http://countyofcolusa.org>

# Northern Sacramento Valley Integrated Regional Water Management (NSV IRWM)

The six counties of the Northern Sacramento Valley (Colusa, Butte, Glenn, Sutter, Tehama, Shasta) are working together to coordinate, communicate and address regional water-related issues.

The NSV IRWM Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meets monthly, and they regularly provide educational forums at their meetings. These forums feature expert speakers from throughout our region presenting information on current water-related issues. The next TAC meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at Willows City Hall. The agenda will be available in advance of the meeting.

NSV Board and Technical Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. See the website for more information: <http://nsvwaterplan.org>



## Sites Reservoir Update; Dam Train Initiative

The Northern California Water Association (NCWA) and the California Rice Industry Association (CRIIA) last week joined Senator Nielsen, Assemblyman Gallagher and many others in expressing concern about the so-called dam-train initiative that is being circulated for signatures throughout the Central Valley. They are asking that you do not sign the petitions and encourage your friends and colleagues not to be fooled by people saying this will help advance Sites Reservoir. See below from NCWA:

### **The Dam-Train Initiative is Misleading: Read How it Will Affect Water Rights and Delay New Water Supplies!**

A small group from the San Joaquin Valley is gathering signatures to place an initiative on the November 2016 ballot. See **1769 (15-0107A1), Water Bond. Reallocation of Bond Authority to Water Storage Projects at:**

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-and-referendum-status/initiatives-referenda-cleared-circulation/>

The proponents assert that the initiative will redirect money from the high speed rail to build water storage in California; yet, the initiative is misleading and in fact would change water rights law in the California Constitution and it will further delay efforts to build necessary new water storage in California, such as Sites Reservoir and Temperance Flat.

For these reasons the Northern California Water Association (NCWA) Board of Directors and water leaders throughout Northern California are **OPPOSED** to the initiative.

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## **Changes Water Rights Law**

A new provision (Section 1, Part 2.0) would be added to the California Constitution with respect to water rights. This would:

- Further complicate California water rights law and ultimately jeopardize water and supplies in Northern California and throughout the state.
- Re-prioritize water rights, which would only serve to de-stabilize water supplies throughout the state for both the economy and the environment.

Water rights and contracts are the foundation for serving water for multiple beneficial uses, including domestic deliveries to cities and rural communities and supplying water for farms and habitat for fish and birds. The water rights system is necessary to fully utilize our existing infrastructure and California needs the water rights system as a solid foundation upon which to build smart investments in new and improved water storage and other infrastructure.

## **Delays Water Storage in California**

The voters in November 2014 resoundingly approved Proposition 1 with 67% of the voters saying we need to invest in California's water supplies. The Proposition 1 legislation had nearly unanimous, bi-partisan support from the Legislature and the Governor. Conversely, the new proposed initiative would:

- Undermine the strong voice of the people and the Legislature's hard work in gaining approval of Proposition 1 by redirecting water storage funds away from Proposition 1 to an entirely new process.
- Create new and unnecessary bureaucracy by abandoning the current California Water Commission and then creating a new "State Water Storage and Groundwater Storage Facilities Authority." Abandoning this process and creating an entirely new bureaucracy will only serve to delay the funding in Proposition 1 for water storage, such as Sites Reservoir or Temperance Flat.

The California Water Commission is currently developing regulations for the water storage funding in Proposition 1. There is pressure already mounting for the Commission to develop sound regulations so that funding can be advanced quickly for water storage projects. California needs new water storage and infrastructure and it cannot afford to delay funding under Proposition 1.

If you have any further questions about this proposed initiative, please call NCWA: 916.442.8333. For more information, visit [www.StoptheWaterGrab.com](http://www.StoptheWaterGrab.com).



## Water Supply: The Times are Changing

After an ominously dry February, much needed storms in March have pushed our water supply system into flood control mode. This is welcome relief after four years of drought and eight years of generally dry conditions. Reservoirs in Northern California are filling rapidly and all signs are pointing to a water supply this year that will support agricultural needs, urban needs and healthy conditions for fish and waterfowl.

Drought conditions in 2014 and 2015 have taken their toll on many facets of our beautiful valley. Farmers have suffered, local economies and businesses that depend on agriculture have suffered, well owners have suffered, groundwater resources have suffered, and wildlife has suffered, most notably fish and waterfowl populations.

The good news is that these difficult water years have forced once-conflicting interests to come together to find solutions. Local agricultural water suppliers, farmers and environmental agencies have been working together on innovative projects to protect endangered salmon populations. Rice farmers have partnered with bird conservation organizations to provide post-harvest flooding of fields that supports migrating waterfowl populations. Agencies throughout the State are working together to implement new groundwater legislation to ensure long-term sustainability of our groundwater basins. And many folks have come together, including the voters in the State, to ensure that new water storage facilities become a reality, and the proposed Sites Reservoir is at the top of the list.

We don't know what future water years will look like, but 2016 is shaping up to be a winner for farms, cities, fish and waterfowl, while new partnerships and innovative thinking provide hope that future drought years will be less painful.

It is anticipated that final 2016 water allocations will be announced at the end of March.

Click on the links below for more information on the water outlook:

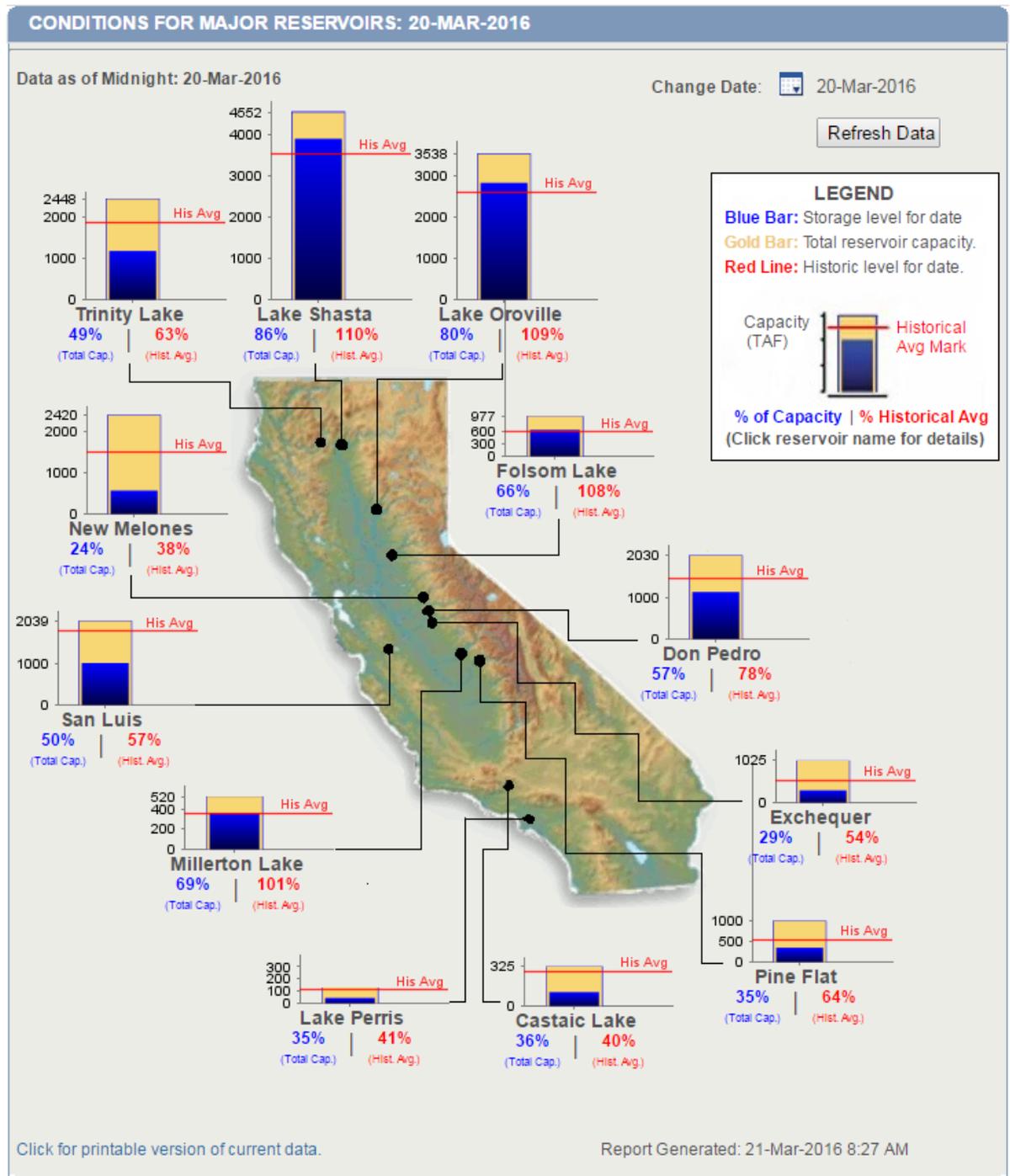
[Appeal-Democrat Article](#) | [Sacramento Bee Article](#)



*A bulging Sacramento River in Colusa (March 16, 2016)*

# Reservoir Conditions (3.20.2016)

Click [here](#) for daily reservoir conditions.



## Groundwater Levels

The Department of Water Resources is out in the Valley now taking groundwater level measurements. This information will become available on the Water Data Library website (<http://www.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary/>) and CASGEM website (<http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/casgem/>) in a few weeks. Early indications are showing little to no recovery in groundwater levels since last year. Adequate surface water allocations in the Northern Sacramento Valley this year would take some pressure off of local aquifers.

Roy Hull from the Department of Water Resources, Northern District, will give a report on current groundwater conditions at the **June 16 Colusa County Groundwater Commission meeting**.

### Upcoming Meetings & Events:

**March 29, 2016**

**Colusa County GSA Working Group Meeting #3**

9:00 a.m. – noon

Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room

100 Sunrise Blvd., Colusa, CA 95932

*Meeting materials are available on the [Water Resources](#) website.*

**April 11, 2016**

**Sites JPA Regular Meeting**

1:30 p.m. at Westside Water District

5005 HWY 20, Williams, CA 95987

*Meeting materials are available on the [Sites JPA](#) website.*

**April 20, 2016**

**NSV IRWM TAC Meeting**

9:00 a.m. at Willows City Hall

201 North Lassen, Willows, CA 95988

*Meeting materials are available on the [NSV IRWMP](#) website.*

**June 16, 2016**

**Colusa County Groundwater Commission Regular Meeting**

Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room

100 Sunrise Blvd., Colusa, CA 95932

*Meeting materials are available on the [Water Resources](#) website.*

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For more information, please contact staff, or visit the [Water Resources](#) section on the Colusa County website.

#### **Staff contact:**

Mary Fahey

100 Sunrise Boulevard, Suite A,

Colusa, CA 95932

email: [mfahey@countyofcolusa.org](mailto:mfahey@countyofcolusa.org); Phone: 530.458.7709 (office), 530.383.4625 (cell)