



Los Angeles Times

Water and Power

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Your guide to the California drought from the Los Angeles Times.

NEWS AND POLICY

Water savings: State water regulators are [willing to reduce conservation goals for municipalities](#) depending on their population, climate and investment in new local supplies. Last year, Gov. Jerry Brown called for a 25% overall drop in water use. Individual water agencies faced conservation targets ranging from 84% to 36%. “We always said we were open to ... some adjustments if we had a little bit of time,” said State Water Resources Control Board Chairwoman Felicia Marcus.

Dangerous conditions: Los Angeles is unprepared to protect its growing **homeless population** from the dangers of **El Niño**, [writes CityLab's Natalie Delgadillo](#). Floods threaten to wash away encampments near riverbeds and under bridges. Two weeks ago, a 60-year-old woman living on the city’s skid row [was found dead of exposure](#). Barbara Brown was found rain-soaked and wrapped in a wet blanket.

ON THE GROUND

Land war: A Modesto area **farmer** and the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** are locked in a legal fight over land that the federal government says was tilled too deeply. Rather than admit a mistake, federal officials have doubled down on a fight they are likely to lose, [writes columnist Robin Abcarian](#). “The federal judge hearing the case found the claim mind-boggling — like holding a gun to [farmer John] Duarte's head, he wrote, then claiming Duarte should have known the weapon wasn't loaded.”

Done yet: When will the **drought** be over? The answer depends on [where you live and how you get your water](#). “California’s diverse water supplies, varying weather and fluctuating demand mean there won’t be a single point when the state’s water problems come to an end. And there’s no uniform definition of what constitutes a drought.”

Making waves: Southern California started off the week with **high surf warnings**, which could bring rip currents and coastal flooding. Along the Central Coast, the [surf could reach 15 to 20 feet](#). Swimmers and inexperienced surfers should stay out of the water, according to forecasters.

OFFBEAT

Eat your veggies: In Canada, one byproduct of California's drought is rising **cauliflower prices**, and [a lot of people are upset](#). “I love cauliflower, you can do a lot of things with cauliflower.”

Treasure hunt: In Nevada County, one treasure hunter is [on the lookout for fruit and nut trees planted more than 100 years ago](#) at **homesteads and stagecoach stops**. Many are still productive and that could be a good thing as California struggles through the drought. “If we can figure out how to take those characteristics and meld them into modern agriculture, we’re going to have a more sustainable agriculture,” said Amigo Bob Cantisano.

BIG IDEAS

“If we don’t have the project, the delta will fail, water will not be available and California will suffer devastating economic consequence.”

– Gov. Jerry Brown on [diverting water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta](#)

“Scott Slater has a plan. It is not a popular plan, but he wants to pump 814 billion gallons of water from under the Mojave desert to Los Angeles and other drought-stricken communities in southern California, and make more than \$2 billion.”

– [New Republic](#)

DROUGHT SNAPSHOT



David Volk of San Francisco watches the Ventura Pier get pounded by heavy surf Jan. 7 as El Niño storms move through Southern California. (Al Seib / Los Angeles Times)

DAILY TIP

With El Niño's rains on the way, now is a good time to brush up on your defensive driving skills. Here are [20 tips for driving in the rain](#), including:

- Slow down
- Pay attention
- Turn on your lights

LOOKING AHEAD

Tuesday: The state Water Resource Control Board will meet in Sacramento; the Los Angeles Board of Water and Power commissioners will meet.

Saturday: The West Basin Municipal Water District will offer rain barrels in Inglewood.

Please let us know what we can do to make this newsletter more useful to you. Send comments, complaints and ideas to [Alice Walton](#) or [Shelby Grad](#).



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