

Newsom Administration Boosts State Funding for Drought Emergency

March 22, 2022



After California recorded its driest January and February in more than 100 years of records in the Sierra Nevada, Governor Gavin Newsom's administration is spending an additional \$22.5 million to respond to the immediate drought emergency.

The additional \$22.5 million allocation includes more funding for the Department of Water Resources, State Water Resources Control Board and the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

More than a third of the money – \$8.25 million – will be used to increase outreach efforts to educate Californians on water conservation measures and practices.

"These investments continue to provide crucial drought support to communities impacted around the state," wrote Chief Deputy Finance Director Erika Li in a letter to legislative budget and appropriations leaders.

The funds requested are part of a comprehensive effort by the Newsom administration to increase water conservation. Earlier this month, the state launched new video ads to encourage Californians to reduce outdoor watering.

On March 1, the survey of the state's snowpack showed levels were dropping sharply after robust storms in December. Current snowpack readings are about one-third below average. The Department of Water

Resources is analyzing the latest snowpack data and has indicated it may revise its current forecast for State Water Project deliveries in 2022.

With the infusion of additional state budget funds, the Save Our Water campaign is gearing up to reach Californians with water-saving tips via social media and other digital advertising, geo-targeting counties with high water use. The campaign also is securing partnerships with retailers and other organizations to urge Californians to reduce water use in the immediate term and also make permanent changes to landscaping to build resilience in the long-term.