

Basin is expected to have a runoff of less than half of normal. The basin is the heart of the entire state water grid.

In June, the San Francisco Water Department implemented a 25% cut (on an annual basis) in the amount of water it subcontracts to 30 suburban cities in San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda counties. The decrease is based on 1987 water use patterns. Cities that don't cut back will be forced to pay penalties, starting July 20. The cost could be as high as 10 times the current water price rate.

For example, Palo Alto will be required to cut back its water use by 26.7%, compared to 1987 levels. The Palo Alto water system serves about 57,000 people, who were already using 15% less water than in 1987. To make the additional use reductions, city officials released a plan on May 10 that called for a new rationing system, and for strict enforcement. The 14,800 single-family residences will have to cut indoor water use by 15%, and outdoor water use by 50%. Businesses will have to cut water use indoors by 10% and outdoor use by 50%.

The users of the San Jose Water Co. are likewise rationing. On April 1, a plan took effect to cut water use by 20% in the area, including most of San Jose, and all of Los Gatos and Saratoga.

The federal Central Valley Project, along with the State's California Water Project, the backbone of California's water delivery system, has cut water deliveries to many agricultural, municipal and industrial contractors to 50%. Some will get zero.

On the central coast, running from the San Francisco Bay through Santa Barbara, severe rationing is in effect for all citizens. Emergency state supplies of water may be supplied through pipelines normally used to carry oil! Another proposal is to build a multimillion-dollar desalination plant. Salt water intrusion is polluting the aquifers in Monterey County, an official agricultural disaster area as a result of the drought. Santa Barbara's primary reservoirs hold less than 100 acre-feet of water, down from a capacity of 10,000 acre-feet.

Santa Barbara is the site of a recent fire that destroyed 500 homes. The fire was apparently set by arsonists, but it was the drought that created a disaster "waiting to happen."

Environmentalists on the local Santa Barbara government board have refused for years to join in water projects, bringing the full force of the drought down on their constituents.

In Los Angeles, the giant Metropolitan Water District is offering cash rebates to conservers. The MWD supplies 15 million residents.

With varying stringency, such plans are in effect in almost all localities throughout the state. Some people are painting their lawns green. Sales of bottled drinking water have skyrocketed. But no matter what conservation steps are taken, these adaptations to water shortages will not solve the problem of how to supply more.

Water is life itself to California agriculture

Irrigation is not supplemental to farming in California; it is life itself. California irrigates 95% of its 10 million farmed acres; without water, farmland would revert to scrubland. Therefore, the drought, combined with the inadequacy of the State Water System, is wreaking catastrophe.

The state's 5,000 cattle ranchers are sending animals to slaughter early, as food costs have jumped 50-100%. Other farmers are walking away from already planted crops. Unfamiliar disease are spreading, taking hold of drought-stressed trees, vines, and plants. One billion board feet of lumber will be lost to infestations. Dry grasslands and forests also mean loss to fire.

Apart from agriculture being the centerpiece of California's \$800 billion economy, California's agricultural output is the mainstay for millions of tons of U.S. food. The following is just a selection of the foods in which California's output ranks high.

Animal protein. California is the top state in egg production, and the third largest producer of turkeys. California and Wisconsin are the top two milk-producing states, far exceeding any others. California is the sixth largest beef producer, ranking only after "cattle country" plains states of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska. California and Texas are the leading producers of sheep and lambs.

High quality fruits and vegetables. California produces over 90% of the tomatoes for processing into sauces, prepared foods, and frozen and canned uses. The state produces over 90% of U.S. apricots, and over 90% of commercially utilized grapes. California and Florida account for most of the nation's citrus fruits. The state accounts for half of the commercially utilized production of peaches, and in that, accounts for 90% of the canned peaches, and all of the dried peaches.

Basic grains. The state produces 20% of the rice in the country.

Nuts and specialty foods. California produces practically all the almonds in the country, and most of the other nuts, as well as olives, avocados, figs, and other Mediterranean-climate crops, and dozens of spices.

Fiber. California accounts for over 20% of the cotton produced in the nation.