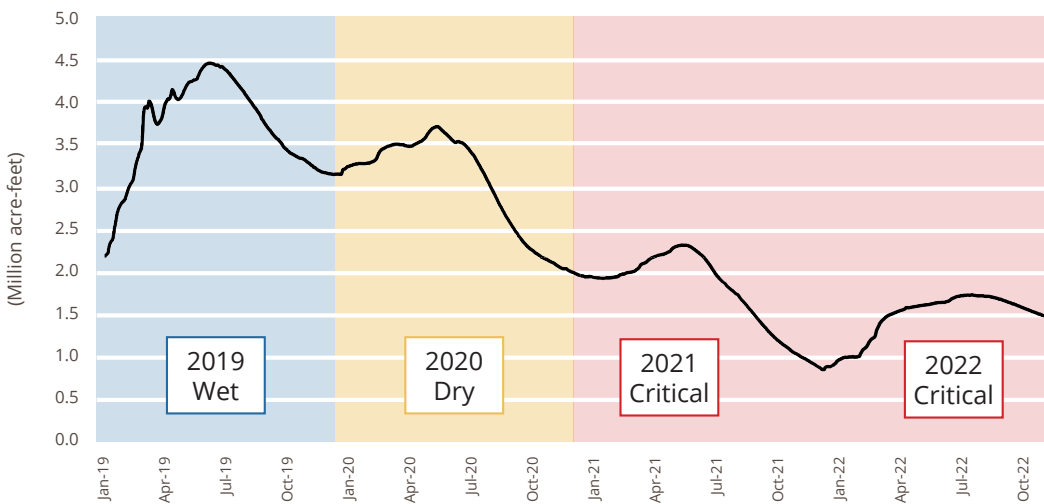


The Sacramento River Watershed Experienced an Unprecedented Dry Period from 2020-2022

California from 2020 to 2022 experienced one of the driest periods on record. In addition to the Colorado River, the Sacramento River watershed in Northern California experienced comparable levels of long-term drought and was especially impacted during this time, with storage in Lake Shasta at extremely low and unprecedented levels.

Shasta Storage






Source: MBK Engineers



This was most vivid in 2022 when the water suppliers on the Sacramento River (Sacramento River Settlement Contractors or SRSC) received between 0 to 18% of their supplies when their contract expressly provides for 75% of supplies in critically dry years. [See CalEPA Informational Statement.](#)

This lack of surface water was unprecedented and significantly impacted:

-  **Drinking water supplies** with only “health and safety” water available. To make up for this lack of surface water, groundwater pumping increased significantly, leading to dry wells throughout the region.
-  **Farmland**, with 600 square miles of farmland fallowed and brown (370,000 acres out of 450,000 acres in the SRSC service area). [See the map of rice acreage.](#)
-  **Communities and the economy**, which in addition to impacts on drinking water supplies, a report by UC Davis estimated that there was \$1.3 billion in lost economic value, 14,300 jobs lost, \$732 million in lost labor income, and devastated supply chains. [See the October 21, 2022 Congressional Record, Recognizing the University of California, Davis Report on “Drought Ravaging California’s Sacramento Valley.”](#)





Fish, with the lowest salmon survival in decades.



Birds and wildlife, with National Wildlife Refuges receiving 18% of their surface supplies and ricelands less than half of average production (valley-wide), significantly affecting the biodiversity in the region, including critical habitat and food energetics for migrating waterfowl, habitat for the threatened Giant Garter Snake, and the [230 wildlife species](#) that depend upon ricelands. See a [short video](#) highlighting these impacts.

These impacts were especially hard felt in six counties: Colusa, Glenn, Shasta, Sutter, Tehama, and Yolo.

For more details on the impacts of drought in the Sacramento Valley, please see the following:

- July 25, 2022 Congressional Briefing, with a [link to the video](#) from the briefing and a [summary](#) of the briefing.
- [Commentary](#) by Colusa County Supervisors Carter and Kalfsbeek-Smith, which refers and links to a [short film](#) on the impacts in Colusa County.
- The California Governor’s series of Executive Orders and drought proclamations, which specifically listed Colusa, Glenn, Shasta, Sutter, Tehama, and Yolo counties on the west-side of the Sacramento Valley.
- The June 14, 2022 [Statement of Camille Calimlim Touton](#), Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, highlighting on page 3 that “California’s Central Valley is experiencing its third consecutive critically dry year. Reclamation issued a zero percent allocation to federal Central Valley Project irrigation water service contractors and reduced allocations to the senior Sacramento River Settlement Contractors.”
- The [USDA designation](#) on April 27, 2022 for a Primary Natural Disaster Areas based on drought, including these six counties.
- Bryce Lundberg and Don Bransford’s [statement](#) supporting the Governor and Legislature providing Relief for Communities Affected by Drought in the Sacramento Valley.

