
State Water Resources Control Board

PUBLIC MEETING ON POTENTIAL DROUGHT ACTIONS FOR SHASTA RIVER AND SCOTT RIVER WATERSHEDS

On May 10, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom extended the drought State of Emergency to cover 41 counties of California, citing the critical low flows in locations such as the Klamath Basin. In response to emergency drought conditions persisting throughout the Shasta River and Scott River watersheds, and insufficient water supply to meet the needs of all water uses, on June 25, 2021, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) submitted a letter to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) providing drought emergency minimum instream flows for these watersheds. The State Water Board is assessing a number of actions that may be taken to address water shortages in the watersheds, including funding for water conservation or efficiency projects, temporary urgency changes, use of instream flow dedications under Water Code section 1707, forbearance, a drought emergency regulation, and increased enforcement.

State Water Board staff will hold a public meeting to provide information and solicit input from the community on potential drought actions that could be implemented in the Scott River and Shasta River watersheds during the ongoing drought. Details of the public meeting are as follows:

**Thursday, July 1, 2021
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

Zoom Link:

<https://waterboards.zoom.us/j/93924831232?pwd=b09iL29qbGg1ZU5BWWhZHVDB2NjFjQT09>

Meeting ID: 939 2483 1232
Passcode: 571112

It is possible that one or more members of the State Water Board will attend the meeting. A quorum of the State Water Board may be present at the meeting. However, no State Water Board action will be taken.

BACKGROUND

Water year 2021 is another very dry year, following on the similarly dry water year 2020. Precipitation levels are half of normal across much of the Klamath Basin. The Scott River and Shasta River watersheds are experiencing one of the most severe droughts on record. The Scott River is experiencing one of the four driest years on record, with flows in the lowest five percent of the historical record. The current water year is the driest on record for the Shasta River, with flows in the lowest one percent of the historical record.

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To ensure critical instream flows for species protection, the May 2021 Proclamation directs the State Water Board and CDFW to evaluate minimum instream flows and other actions to protect salmon, steelhead, and other native fishes in critical systems in the state and work with water users and other parties on voluntary measures to implement those actions. To the extent voluntary actions are not sufficient, the State Water Board, in coordination with CDFW, is to consider emergency regulations to establish minimum drought instream flows.

Under California’s priority-based water rights system, if there is insufficient water to support all water rights, junior water right holders are ordered to limit or stop their water diversions first, based on their water right priority, to satisfy the rights of those more senior to them. On June 1, 2021, the State Water Board issued Notices of Water Unavailability to 102 diverters in the Scott River watershed.

On June 15, 2021, CDFW sent a letter to the State Water Board that provided recommended drought minimum instream flows for the Scott River and Shasta River (see Table 1 and Table 2 below), and requested that the State Water Board adopt emergency regulations.

Table 1. CDFW Recommended Daily Emergency Instream Flow Requirements (in cubic feet per second) for Scott River at Fort Jones Gage

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
200	200	200	150	150	125	50	30	33	40	60	150

Table 2. CDFW Recommended Daily Emergency Instream Flow Requirements (in cubic feet per second) for Shasta River at Yreka Gage

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
135	135	135	70	50	50	50	50	50	125	150	150

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information on drought-related activities, please visit the State Water Board’s [Drought webpage](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought) (www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought). This website will be updated with related materials and information as available.

HOW TO RECEIVE UPDATES

If you would like to receive email updates about the Shasta River and Scott River watersheds drought effort, please [sign up](#) for the State Water Board’s “Scott Shasta Drought” email subscription list under “Water Rights” at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/

QUESTIONS

Please email questions regarding this notice and related efforts to:

ScottShastaDrought@waterboards.ca.gov.