

APRIL 2015 WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA INTERIOR

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Much cooler temperatures than what were observed in March prevailed for the first few days of the month; temperatures were near to below average. Windy conditions prevailed in the Kern County mountain and desert areas for the first couple of days. Gusts reached around 55-60 mph in some of the passes and canyons in the Kern County mountains facing the desert areas on the 1st and 2nd.

Above average temperatures briefly returned on the 4th and 5th but were only about a few degrees above average. Temperatures fell a little on the 6th ahead of the low pressure system that brought a return of unsettled weather on the 7th. Due to the unstable airmass in place, showers and thunderstorms were observed in much of the central California interior. A couple of severe thunderstorm warnings were issued for the San Joaquin Valley. Only about a couple of inches of snow fell in a few spots in the Sierra Nevada. Measurable rain fell in much of the San Joaquin Valley and adjacent foothills; Fresno received 0.56 inch with this system.

Cooler than average temperatures prevailed in the region until the 8th. However, high pressure began to build over the region on the 9th and for the next few days; this brought yet another warming trend. Temperatures were well above average on the 13th and 14th and almost as warm as the record warm temperatures that occurred in March. A low pressure system arrived later in the day on the 14th and moved east of the forecast area by the 15th. This system brought mainly cooler temperatures to the area and some wind gusts to around 50-55 mph in the Kern County mountains and desert. Temperatures were about several degrees below average on the 14th and 15th before warming back to slightly above normal levels on the 16th and 17th as high pressure began to build along the U.S. West Coast.

On the 18th and through the 20th, well above normal temperatures prevailed and remained well below record highs. The temperatures during this time were similar to the ones that occurred in March, or upper 80s to lower 90s in the San Joaquin Valley and the Kern County desert. Showers and thunderstorms developed over the Sierra Nevada crest as the air was sufficiently unstable, mainly due to daytime solar heating, during this period.

A series of upper-level low pressure systems impacted the region during the 20th-25th. Mainly average to above average temperatures prevailed during this period. Showers and thunderstorms developed mainly over the higher elevations of the southern Sierra Nevada, primarily due to diurnal instability, or daytime solar heating, during the afternoon and early evening of the 20th.

On the next day, a low pressure circulation edged toward the coast of southern California on the 21st and brought more showers and thunderstorms to the mountain areas, including the southern Sierra Nevada and Tehachapi Mountains during the afternoon and evening hours. There were also some showers towards the Grapevine and the mountain areas to the west. Similar conditions occurred on the 22nd, and the desert areas also received showers and thunderstorms. On the 23rd, there was more widespread coverage, including over parts of the San Joaquin Valley. Instability was higher on this day from the afternoon and into the overnight hours due to better atmospheric dynamics.

On the 24th, a low pressure system approached the region during the evening and into the following day. Several inches of snow fell in the highest elevations of the Sierra Nevada. Even a couple of inches fell in Yosemite Valley, so the snow level was as low as 4,000 feet. Temperatures were well below normal on the 25th since rain fell over much of the San Joaquin Valley until at least the late morning hours. Rainfall amounts ranged from a few hundredths of an inch to near three quarters of an inch in the San Joaquin Valley, and even higher amounts fell in the Sierra Nevada and foothills. Temperatures were warmer on the 26th behind the low pressure system; however, they were still a little below average. Gusty winds also prevailed in the Kern County mountains and desert during the 25th-26th, although not quite as strong as what occurred early in the month (gusts reached mainly around 50 mph).

High pressure began to build over the region on the 27th and continued through the end of the month. Well above average temperatures prevailed once again during this time; high temperatures were around 10-15 degrees above average in much of the central California interior. Temperatures reached as warm as the mid-90s in the San Joaquin Valley during this period.

Overall, April was below average for precipitation for most of the area, although some areas were above average (see Figure 1 on the next page). Temperatures were generally warmer than average by about a couple of degrees but well below record levels, unlike in recent months (see Figure 2 on the next page). Precipitation ranged from below average (such as Bakersfield, where 0.08 inch of rain was received for the entire month, or 0.44 inch below average) to slightly above (such as at Fresno, where the rainfall for the month totaled 1.25 inches, or 0.30 inch above average) for the month across the region.

Fig 1 - Percent of normal precipitation for April 2015:

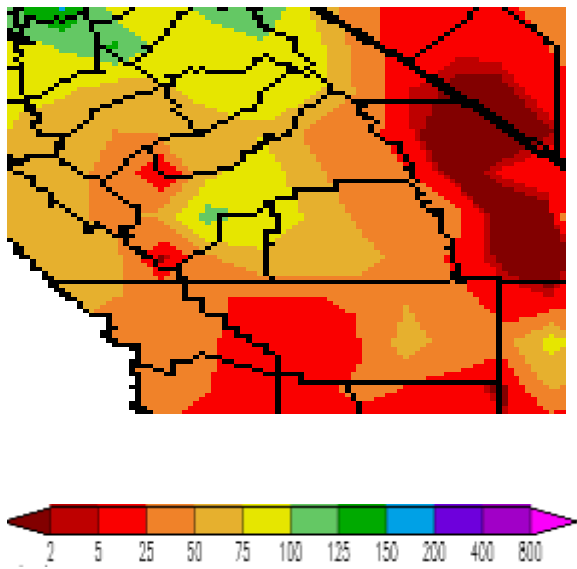


Fig 2 - Departure from average temperature for April 2015:

