

APRIL 2017 WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA INTERIOR

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A relatively cool beginning to the month occurred, at least for the first day. On the 2nd, temperatures in the region rose by a few degrees, or around average, and the weather was generally quiet. By the 3rd, temperatures lowered slightly but continued near average; a cold front brought a return of windy conditions to the passes and canyons in eastern Kern County. Gusts reached around 45-50 mph in these locations, although some isolated locations recorded stronger gusts for a brief period in the morning. The west side of the San Joaquin Valley was generally breezy, although gusts reached around 30-35 mph near the passes that lead to the coastal areas.

On the 4th-5th, high pressure briefly regained control over the area and brought warmer than average temperatures and dry conditions. However, the next storm arrived on the 6th, and cool, unsettled weather continued for the next couple of days. Isolated thunderstorms developed on the 7th and 8th across the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Nevada. Over an inch of rain fell in some parts of the San Joaquin Valley during this period; for example, Fresno received 1.04 inches of rain during the 6th-8th.

Near or below average temperatures prevailed during the 9th-11th as no strong high pressure had developed, although conditions were generally dry during this period. Afterward, there was one day when temperatures rose above average, although this was due to southerly flow ahead of the next low pressure system that arrived on the 13th.

On the afternoon of the 13th, some thunderstorms developed over the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Nevada. One thunderstorm that was nearly stationary persisted over Fresno Yosemite International Airport and nearby sections of Fresno and Clovis. This storm produced very heavy rain in a relatively localized area. Some areas reported around 0.50 inch of rain or more, while Fresno Yosemite International Airport recorded much higher amounts because of the nearly stationary thunderstorm. This particular location reported almost two inches (1.96 inches) of rain that afternoon in about 90 minutes! Some rain had fallen that morning in Fresno (0.08 inch), so the total for the date was 2.04 inches. This amount of 2.04 inches set a new record high rainfall for the date. Another interesting item of note is this is now the highest amount since records began in the 1880's for a single calendar day in the month of April. This day's rainfall combined with rainfall from previous days was enough to push Fresno above three inches for the month already. Elsewhere in the San Joaquin Valley, most locations reported around a tenth of an inch of rain or less that day.

On the 14th-15th, generally quiet weather prevailed, along with seasonal temperatures. High pressure once again had little time to develop, so no significant warming occurred. Yet another low pressure system arrived by the afternoon of the 16th. Unsettled weather prevailed until the 18th, as the system had stalled during the 17th while it remained around Merced, Yosemite, and locations to the north that day. On the 18th, some thunderstorms did develop as the cold front moved over central California, such as over Sequoia National Park. Otherwise, light rain showers fell in the San Joaquin Valley and the Kern County desert areas, while more significant rain occurred in the Sierra Nevada below 8,000 feet and into the foothills. Some locations in the Sierra Nevada and adjacent foothills received from around one to three inches of rain, as wind flow was most favorable over this area for producing precipitation.

After the passage of the low pressure system on the 18th, cooler than average temperatures continued for the next couple of days. A slight warmup occurred on the 21st through the 22nd as weak high pressure set up. Afterward, another low pressure system brought increased winds by the evening of the 22nd, while temperatures prevailed at near to below average. This pattern prevailed for the next several days.

Windy conditions and cooler than average temperatures continued until the 28th due to episodes of northerly winds, while low pressure systems moved over northern California into the Great Basin. During this period, gusts at times reached as high as 65 to 80 mph in the wind-prone passes and canyons, as well as the ridgetops in the Kern County mountain and desert areas. Otherwise, gusts were mainly around 50 mph on the desert floor in eastern Kern County. In addition, gusts reached about 35-40 mph in much of the San Joaquin Valley.

Temperatures warmed up to several degrees above average for the last two days of the month, and dry conditions prevailed along with high pressure over the region.

April 2017 ended up with mainly near to above average temperatures (see Figure 1 below), while precipitation was widely variable in central California (Figure 2).

Table 1 - April 2017 Summary Statistics for ASOS locations				
Location	Monthly Average Temp (deg F)	Departure From Average (deg F)	Total Monthly Precipitation (inches)	Departure From Normal (inches)
Bakersfield	64.8	+2.2	0.35	-0.17
Fresno	62.1	+0.1	3.42	+2.47
Hanford	61.4	+0.7	1.03	+0.24
Madera	60.9	+1.3	0.47	-0.48
Merced	59.0	+0.0	1.15	+0.20

Temperature/Precipitation Rankings for April

Bakersfield – 29th warmest April on record; 46th driest April on record

Fresno – 49th warmest April on record; 5th wettest April on record

Figure 1 – Departure from Average Temperature for April 2017

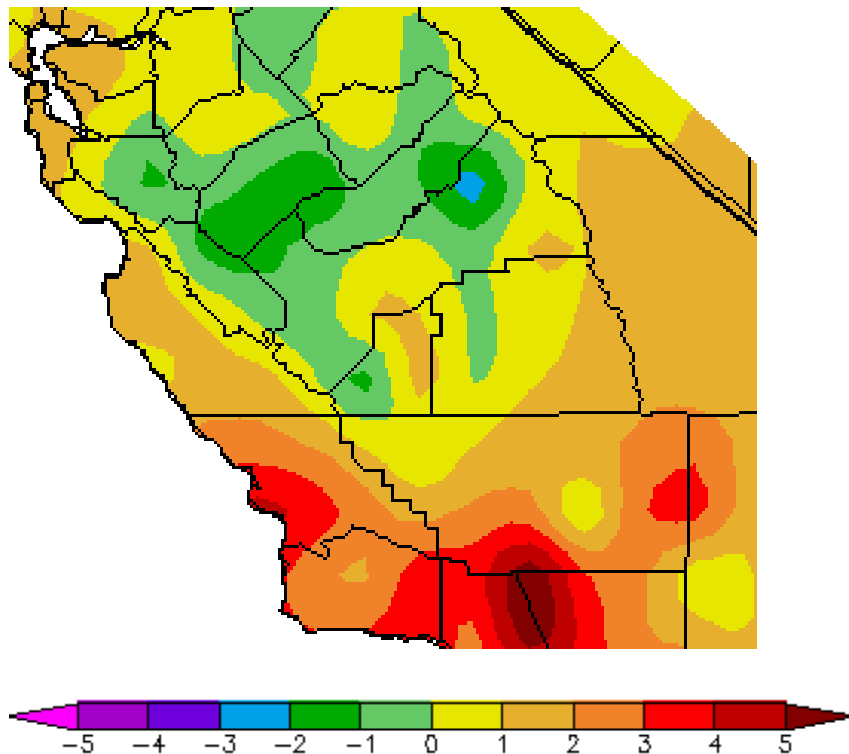
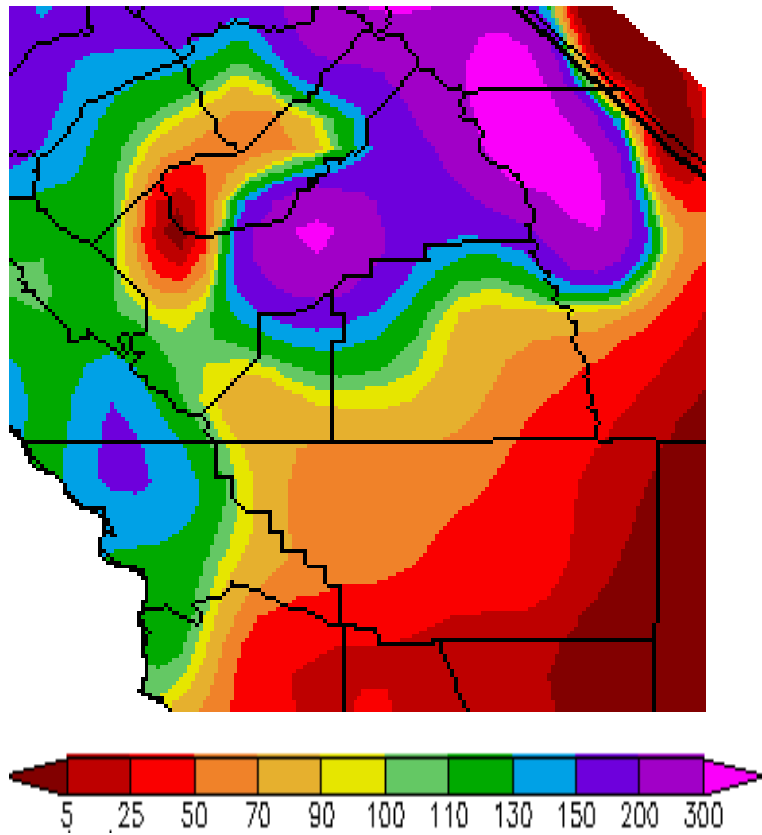


Figure 2 – Percent of Average Precipitation for April 2017



*Images above (i.e., Figures 1-2) courtesy of Western Region Climate Center