

**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY - HANFORD , CA**

REPORT FOR:

MONTHLY REPORT OF RIVER AND  
FLOOD CONDITIONS

MONTH: **APRIL** YEAR: **2014**

**TO:** Hydrometeorological Information Center, W/OH12x1  
National Weather Service/Office of Hydrology  
1325 East-West Highway #7116  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**SIGNATURE:**  
Kevin Durfee  
(In Charge of Hydrologic Service Area)

DATE: May 7, 2014

When no flooding occurs, include miscellaneous river conditions, such as significant rises, record low stages, ice conditions, snow cover, droughts and hydrologic products issued (WSOM E-41).

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| **X** | An **X** inside this box indicates that no flooding occurred for the month  
+---+ within this hydrologic service area.

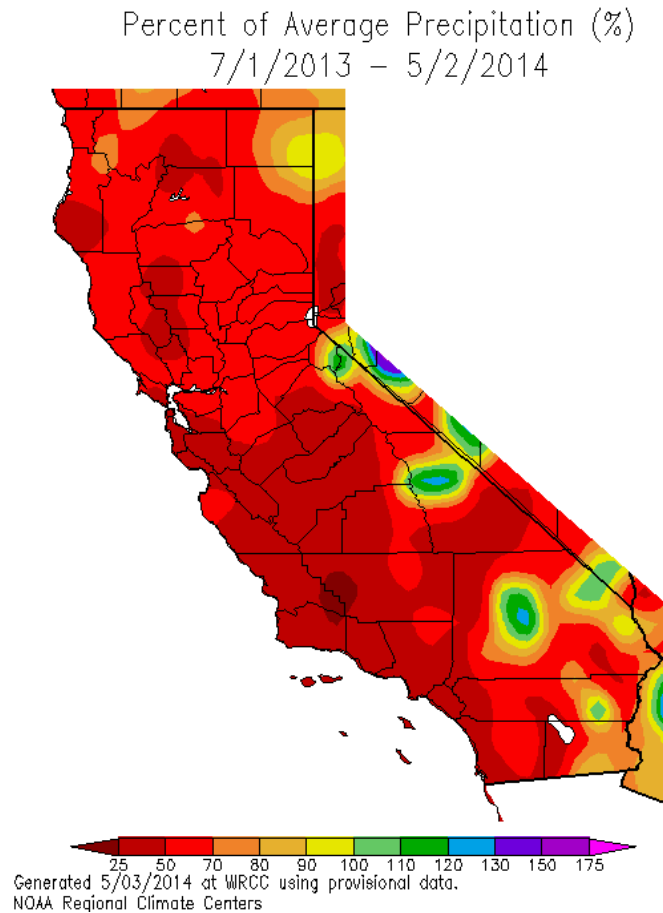
If April, 2014 could be remembered for one thing, it would be its abundance of unseasonably warm days. At least 15 of them registered high temperatures in the 80s in the San Joaquin Valley and at least 4 of those were at or above 90 degrees in Bakersfield and Fresno. The month averaged a good 4 degrees above normal in most locations and ended up being the 5<sup>th</sup> warmest April in Fresno where records date back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Despite two moisture laden storms, one during the first few days of April and the other around the 25<sup>th</sup>, precipitation ended up below normal for the month and further exacerbated central California's extreme drought status. It was unfortunate that these very wet storms occurred so far apart in time. Had they been back to back, the storms would've brought appreciable water recharge to the HSA. As central California nears the end of its climatological rain year, it appears likely that the 2013-2014 season will finish out as one of the top 3 driest seasons on record and not far behind the 1933-1934 season which holds first place as the driest ever in central California. The map on the following page is a depiction of how much of a precipitation deficit exists this season compared to normal throughout California. Of noteworthiness, the water in most every lake and reservoir within the HSA ended the month at historically low levels. As of May 1<sup>st</sup>, water capacities at the major reservoirs ranged from only 9 percent at Buchanan and Hensley Dams to 47 percent at San Luis Reservoir, a mere 1 percent increase on average in a 30-day period and one of the smallest increases ever for the month of April. The snowpack over the southern Sierra was just as abysmal, averaging only 18 percent of normal as of May 1<sup>st</sup>.

As referenced above, there were only two storms that produced appreciable hydrologic impact in the central California interior. The storm during the first couple of days of the month brought a wetting rain to the San Joaquin Valley on the 1st followed by isolated afternoon thunderstorms in the post frontal environment on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Rainfall ranged from just a few hundredths of an inch in the Kern County desert, a tenth to a third of an inch in the San Joaquin Valley and a third of an inch to an inch in the mountains. Precipitation fell in the frozen form above 2500 feet with snow accumulations of up to 7 inches in the Sierra foothills and as much as a foot over the highest elevations. In the Kern County mountains, snow fell as low as 3500 feet and a light dusting at pass level on the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> slowed travel over the Grapevine. The storm on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> was stronger and wetter by comparison and certainly a welcome bit of goodness to drought stricken California. Isolated strong thunderstorms with small hail developed on the storm's warm side in the San Joaquin Valley and adjacent foothills during the afternoon hours of the 25<sup>th</sup> and continued well into the evening hours. Meanwhile, the storm brought generous rain and heavy snow to the higher terrain. The storm dumped up to 2 feet of new snow in the highest elevations of the Sierra and left a 3 to 6 inch blanket of snow in the Kern County mountains above 5000 feet as the system exited east of California on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Lower elevations received a good soaking. Rain amounts of 1 to 3 inches were common in the foothills. In the San Joaquin Valley, rainfall from the storm ranged from two tenths of an inch to three quarters of an inch.

Precipitation fell over the higher terrain a few other times during the month, specifically during the 11<sup>th</sup> and

12 and again on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> and on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. In the first two cases, mid level moisture that was pulled into the HSA by low pressure systems well offshore spawned showers over the mountains. In the last case, it was a weak upper level trough that generated light precipitation in the Sierra north of Kings Canyon on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**NO HYDROLOGIC PRODUCTS WERE ISSUED THIS MONTH.**



cc:

W/OH12x1  
W/WR2  
CNRFC  
WFO HNX  
WFO STO