NWS FORM E-5 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE HYDROLOGIC SERVICE AREA:
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE **SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY - HANFORD , CA**

REPORT FOR:

MONTHLY REPORT OF RIVER AND FLOOD CONDITIONS

MONTH: **FEBRUARY** YEAR: **2016**

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: March 1, 2016

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).

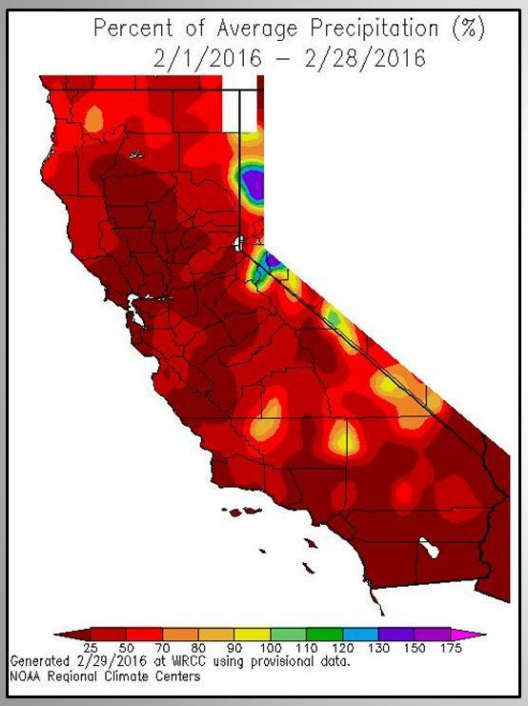
X	An **X** inside this box indicates that no flooding occurred for the month within this hydrologic service area.

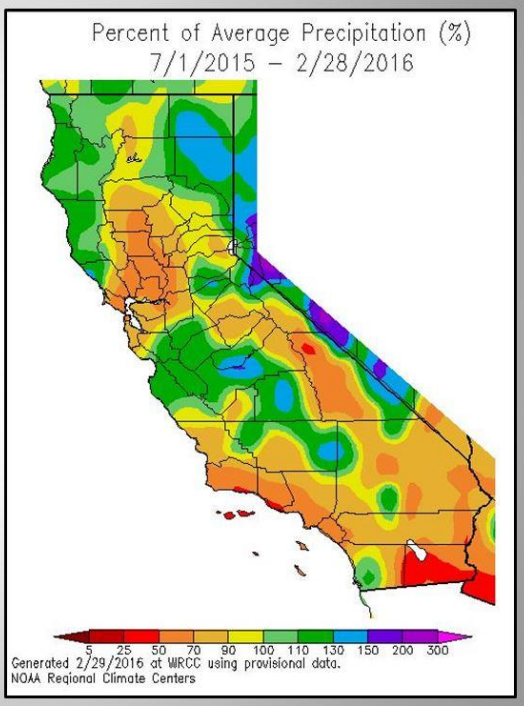
February, 2016 proved to be a major hydrologic setback for the central California interior. Precipitation was well below normal across most of the HSA and certainly did little to reverse impacts of the prolonged drought. In actuality, February, 2016 was one of the Top 20 driest Februarys on record. It was the 12th driest February ever in Bakersfield and the 18th driest February in Fresno with rain totals of only 0.18 inches and 0.33 inches, respectively. Some locations of the San Joaquin Valley received little more than a trace of rain the entire month. The maps below show the percentage of normal precipitation over the Golden State this month compared to the Season which began July 1st, 2015. Northern areas of the state, which were closer to the storm track this month, fared a little better than central and southern California but still fell short of February normals. The excessive dryness this February was the result of a persistent upper level ridge of high pressure that spent much of the month parked over the Desert Southwest and effectively steered Pacific storms away from California and into the Pacific Northwest. Only one storm bucked that trend this February. Its eastward trek across central California from the evening of the 17th through the midday hours of the 18th brought beneficial precipitation to the higher terrain. Unfortunately the western half of the San Joaquin Valley was rain-shadowed by this storm which was accompanied by strong southwesterly winds aloft. Precipitation was orographically enhanced by upslope winds in the foothills and higher elevations of the Sierra where 1 to 2 inch rain amounts were common. The storm also dumped up to a foot of new snow in the Sierra above 6500 feet. Rain also drenched the Kern County mountains and desert where precipitation totals of three tenths of an inch to three quarters of an inch were common.

Temperature-wise, February averaged much warmer than normal throughout the central California interior. High temperatures of 70 degrees or warmer occurred during the 2nd week of February, on Presidents Day and the day after, and again from the 23rd through the 27th in the San Joaquin Valley, lower foothills and the Kern County desert. During these periods, the upper level ridge of high pressure strengthened over California. Although night and morning fog plagued the San Joaquin valley during these periods, it didn't interfere too much with the warming that followed each afternoon. Thermometer readings either fell just shy of or topped the 80 degree mark in some locations of the San Joaquin Valley on the 9th, 16th and the 24th. In fact, the high of 82 degrees in Bakersfield on the 24th set a new maximum temperature record for the date. The obvious downside of unseasonably warm weather for much of the month was the loss of snow over the high Sierra which was reduced to 74 percent of normal by March 1st. Melting snow, however, brought only minimal response in the water levels at most of the major reservoirs. The average water capacity in the reservoirs increased by about 6 percent since the start of the month to about 25 percent of normal as of March 1st.

NO HYDROLOGIC PRODUCTS WERE ISSUED THIS MONTH.

Percentage of normal precipitation in CA…February, 2016 versus the Season through Feb 28th





cc:

W/OH12x1
W/WR2
CNRFC
WFO HNX
WFO STO