FEBRUARY 2020 WEATHER SUMMARY
FOR THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA INTERIOR

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The first day was a relatively warm day, as high pressure was in control over the region. Light winds and patchy dense fog developed in the San Joaquin Valley. A pattern change ensued on the 2nd, although dense fog in the Central Valley was more widespread that morning. A cold front passed over Central California by the afternoon and evening hours. Winds increased throughout the area, and the strongest gusts were reported in the mountain and desert areas of eastern Kern County. A gust of 90 miles per hour occurred over some of the ridge tops in the mountains (including above Jawbone Canyon to the northeast of Tehachapi and to the west of Rosamond), and quite a few other locations in the mountains and desert of eastern Kern County reported gusts around 65 to 75 miles per hour. In addition, gusts around 35 to 45 miles per hour were measured in the hills along the west side of the Central Valley.

Relatively quiet weather prevailed afterward, or during the 3rd through the 5th, though with much cooler than average temperatures. Much of the San Joaquin Valley reported below freezing nighttime lows, including lows that reached as low as the mid-20s for that period. Later, or on the 6th and 7th, daytime highs rose around six to ten degrees above average by later in that period as a weak high pressure ridge set up over California, and morning lows also rose by several degrees.

Another low pressure system passed over the region on the 8th and 9th, and high pressure briefly shifted off the coast. This pattern change resulted mainly in gusty winds at times. Gusts in the Kern County mountain and desert areas reached near 60 miles per hour at Mojave, and a few other stations reported gusts around 50 to 60 miles per hour during the evening of the 8th. By the morning of the 9th, a few light showers materialized over the Sierra Nevada. In addition, the low pressure system was strong enough to produce gusty east to northeast winds over the Sierra Nevada and foothills, especially around North Fork and Bass Lake, as well as other nearby locations in the Sierra Nevada in Madera County. Gusts in the Sierra Nevada reached mainly around 35 to 45 miles per hour with some isolated spots reporting even higher gusts. One resident near North Fork reported a gust to 76 miles per hour with some property damage due to downed trees and branches. The desert areas in Kern County also remained pretty windy for much of the daytime hours of the 9th, and gusts reached around 45 to 50 miles per hour. This storm produced a small amount of precipitation that morning, especially to the south of Madera County. Snow amounts were around one to two inches (or 0.10 to 0.20 inch of liquid) near Shaver Lake and near Hume Lake and Grant Grove in Kings Canyon National Park on the

morning of the 9th. In addition, much cooler temperatures prevailed on the 9th and 10th, with daytime highs around 10 degrees below average.

After the storm moved to the east of the region, high pressure returned on the 11th through the 13th, along with a warming trend. Daytime highs were about eight to twelve degrees above average during this period, although nighttime lows remained relatively cold. A few locations around Hanford reported patchy dense fog during the morning of the 14th.

A period of relatively warm and dry weather continued until the 21st. Highs were mainly in the upper 60s to lower 70s at the warmest locations, including in the San Joaquin Valley and the Kern County desert during the 15th through the 19th. It was even warmer on the 20th, or when high temperatures reached around 80 degrees in the south end of the San Joaquin Valley.

The next round of precipitation occurred during the night of the 21st into the daytime of the 22nd as a low pressure system passed over Southern California. Up to 0.90 inch of precipitation fell in the Sierra Nevada in Tulare County, while about 4 inches of snow was reported in the higher elevations. Around 0.50 inch of rain fell in the mountains north of Lake Isabella in Kern County; otherwise most locations reported a tenth of an inch of rain or less. Temperatures were relatively cooler on the 22nd and 23rd, but afterward trended warmer due to the return of high pressure.

Daytime highs were once again above average on the 25th for the remainder of the month. Some record high daily maximum temperatures were reached on the 26th and again on the 28th through the 29th, as highs reached into the lower 80s in quite a few locations, especially in the San Joaquin Valley. A low pressure system approached Central California late on the 29th, and brought gusty winds (strongest gusts around 35 to 45 miles per hour in the hills along the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, as well as the Kern County mountains and desert) to the area by the evening. Daytime highs on the 29th were noticeably lower than during the previous day, but remained well above average.

Overall, warmer than average temperatures prevailed this month (Fig 1), and well below average precipitation accumulated (Fig 2). Bakersfield and Fresno both tied for second lowest precipitation on record for February. Only 0.01 inch fell at Bakersfield, while only a trace amount was reported at Fresno for the entire month.

Table 1 – February 2020 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	55.2	+2.6	0.01	-1.23
Fresno	55.0	+3.5	T	-2.03
Hanford	52.5	+2.2	T	-1.73
Madera	51.7	+1.2	T	-2.13
Merced	52.2	+2.5	T	-2.34

Table 2 – Seasonal Precipitation for ASOS locations (ending on February 29th)

Location	Since Jan 1st (inches)	Departure From Average (inches)	Since Jul 1st (inches)	Departure From Average (inches)	Since Oct 1st (inches)	Departure From Normal (inches)
Bakersfield	0.25	-2.15	2.86	-1.62	2.84	-1.52
Fresno	0.66	-3.56	3.54	-4.34	3.54	-4.15
Hanford	0.81	-2.96	3.12	-3.99	3.12	-3.78
Madera	0.64	-3.94	2.90	-5.70	2.90	-5.41
Merced	0.73	-4.22	5.69	-3.08	5.69	-2.77

Table 3 – Warmest High Temperatures and Coolest Low Temperatures of the Month for ASOS locations

Location	High	Date(s)	Low	Date(s)
Bakersfield	83	28th	29	4th
Fresno	83	28th	31	4th
Hanford	80	26th	26	4th
Madera	82	28th	24	4th
Merced	80	28th	28	4th

Temperature/Precipitation Rankings for February 2020

Bakersfield – 27th warmest February on record (tied with 1996); 2nd lowest precipitation on record for the month of February (tied with 1916).

Fresno – 12th warmest February on record; 2nd lowest precipitation on record for the month of February (tied with 1912 & 1964).

Daily Records Set During February 2020

Bakersfield –

26th – Record high maximum temperature of 82 degrees set; old record was 80 degrees which was last set for the date in 1992.

28th - Record high maximum temperature of 83 degrees set; old record was 81 degrees last which was set for the date in 1926.

Fresno –

28th - Record high maximum temperature of 83 degrees set; old record was 79 degrees which was last set for the date in 1926.

29th - Record high maximum temperature of 77 degrees set; old record was 76 degrees which was last set for the date in 2008.

Fig 1 – Departure from Average Temperature for February 2020

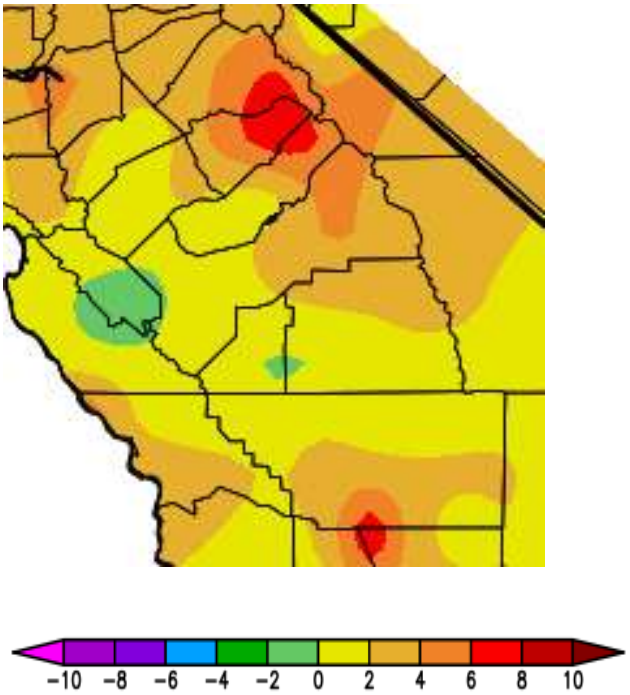
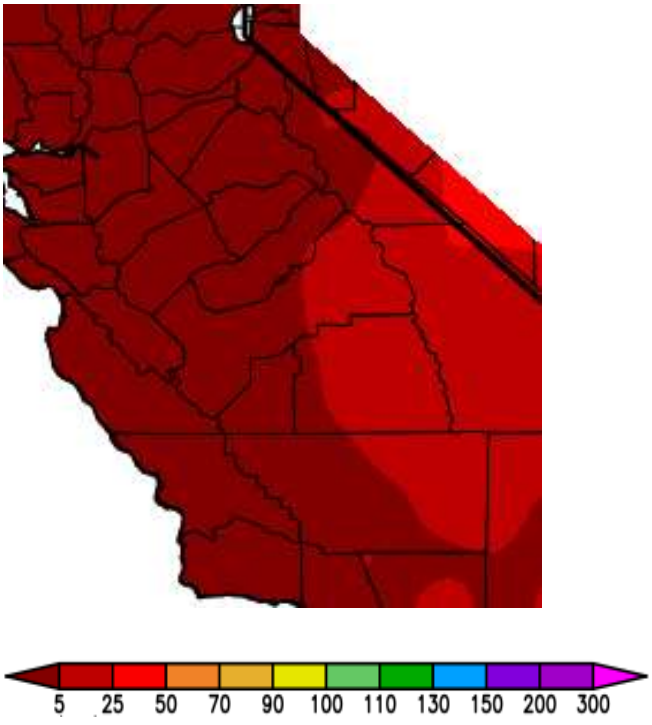


Fig 2 – Percent of Average Precipitation for February 2020



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