



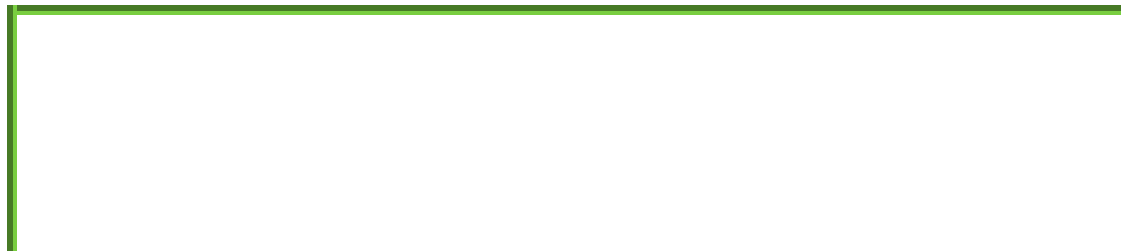
Protecting our rural environment by promoting citizen participation in sustainable land use planning since 2006

The Community Action Project (CAP) administers the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC), which is comprised of regional and local organizations, community groups, and concerned individuals who promote public participation in land use and resource planning to ensure a healthy human, natural, and economic environment now and in the future.

Learn more at www.calaverascap.com

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Join Us!

Get a glimpse into what CPC membership is like by attending a meeting. There is no commitment, just show up and listen in!

Next Calaveras Planning Coalition Meeting

November 1, 2021 3 P.M. - 5 P.M.

New Members Welcome at CPC Meetings

Organizations, groups, and individuals (known as associate members) may join the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC). Prospective members may attend two consecutive meetings before making a final decision on membership in the Coalition. The membership form is a pledge to support and advocate for the Coalition's eleven Land Use and Development Principles, which you will find on our website:

www.calaverascap.com.

There is no membership fee. However, members are encouraged to donate to the Community Action Project/Calaveras Planning Coalition. Visitors and prospective members will, by necessity, be excluded from attorney/client privileged discussions.

If you are interested in membership, please email CPC Facilitator Tom Infusino, tomi@volcano.net, to receive a membership form, agenda, and the Zoom meeting connection.

To help prevent the spread of Covid-19 in our county, all CAP and CPC meetings will be held online via Zoom until restrictions are lifted by the Public Health Department.

Board Of Supervisors October 19, 2021

[Agenda](#)

Planning Commission October 28, 2021

Agenda Upcoming

Redistricting Public Hearing Date Change

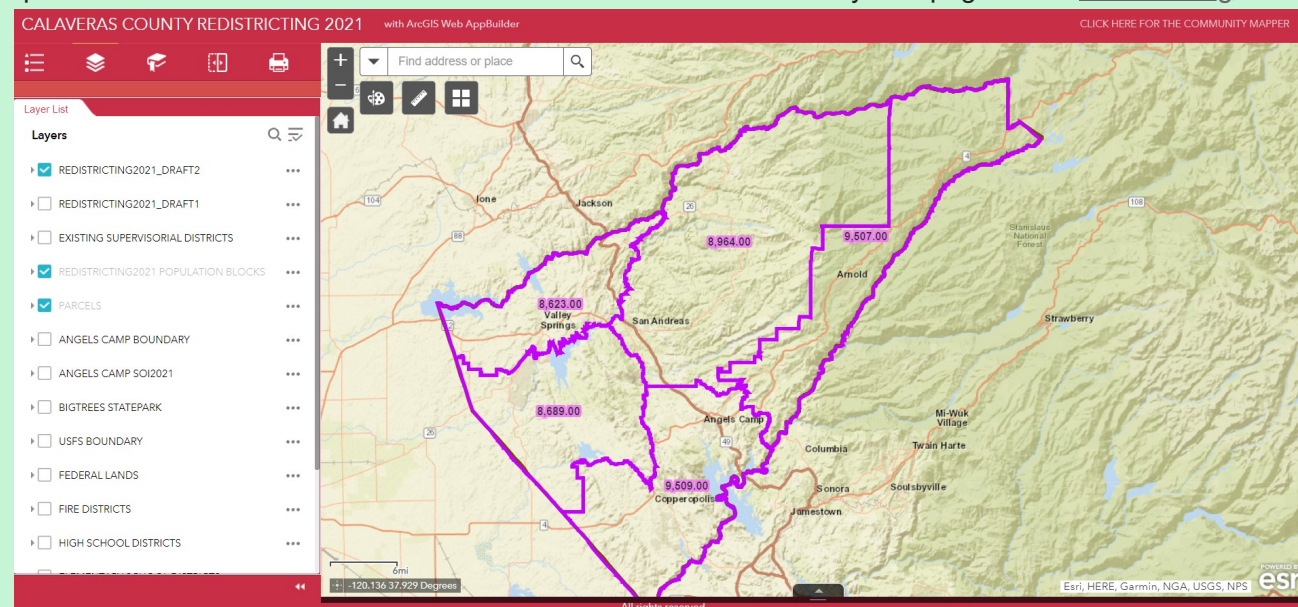
October 26, 2021

The next redistricting public hearing will be held on October 26, 2021, in the Board of Supervisors Chambers. The community is encouraged to attend the hearing and provide input on the draft map. The date of the public hearing was changed to provide the community with more time to draft their own maps and continue submitting public comment.

Alternative preliminary draft maps can be found on the [County's redistricting webpage](#) by clicking on "[draft maps](#)". The supervisorial districts must be drawn in a manner that evenly distributes the County's population between each district. In addition to population, the County must take into account geographic contiguity, integrity of local communities of interest and cities, consideration of natural and man-made barriers, and compactness.

The public may continue to utilize [community mapper](#) to submit community of interest maps and to make public comments. Written public comments and paper maps may also be submitted to the County Registrar of Voters Office, 891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas, CA 95249.

Please contact the County Clerk at redistricting@co.calaveras.ca.us, or call (209)754-6376 with any questions or comments. More information is available on the County Webpage under [Redistricting](#).



Local News

'Extreme year': Past 12 months among the driest ever in California history

Guy McCarthy/ Union Democrat / October 8, 2021

Don Pedro Reservoir on the Tuolumne River was 50% full Friday, according to the state Department of Water Resources, which issued a report summarizing the 2020-2021 water year that ended Thursday. Oct. 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2021 "was an extreme year in terms of temperature and precipitation," DWR staff said, and it followed the 2019-2020 water year that was likewise warm and dry. Statewide, the water year that just ended is the second-driest on record based on runoff, and the previous water year was the Golden State's fifth-driest on record.

The current ongoing two-year dry period in California, punctuated by the third-driest water year on record for the Central Sierra, is part of California's overall arid fate so far in the 21st century, according to the state Department of Water Resources.

The Golden State's hydrology now increasingly resembles conditions in the Colorado River Basin this century, where multiple, consecutive, drier-than-average years are mixed with an occasional wet year. California's last wet water year was 2016-2017, the second-wettest on record.

The 2020-2021 water year that ended Thursday was an extreme 12 months in terms of warm temperatures and lack of precipitation, leading to the second-driest water year on record based on statewide runoff, the California Department of Water Resources said in a 12-page report titled "Water Year 2021: An Extreme Year."

Precipitation monitors showed the Central Sierra ended the water year, which began Oct. 1, 2020, with 18.8 inches. That's the third-driest on record for the region, Craig Shoemaker, climate program manager for the National Weather Service in Sacramento, said Friday. Central Sierra precipitation over the past water year — which began Oct. 1, 2020 and ended Thursday, Sept. 30 — was 46.7% of average.

The past 12 months were so dry that Sonora received just 15.73 inches of precipitation, 47.9% of normal, and it ranked as the fourth-driest water year on record for Sonora, Shoemaker said.

The 2020-2021 water year total is less than the 19 inches precipitation the Central Sierra received in 2014-15, the second-driest water year for the region on record.

State emergency proclamations for drought came out in April, May, and July, with 50 of the state's 58 counties, including Calaveras and Tuolumne counties, declaring drought emergencies.

Also in Tuolumne County, 35 wells on about 15 properties had dried up or were failing as of Friday, another indicator of how the dry water year and the current drought's effects are being felt in the Mother Lode. Fifteen of those wells are completely dry or failed, and the remaining 20 wells are described as "struggling" or not producing adequately, Dore Bietz, the county Office of Emergency Services coordinator, said Friday. Eight families have requested emergency assistance, and four families are currently receiving bottled water, Bietz said Friday.

Major reservoirs in the Mother Lode were also showing signs Friday of the drier than average water year that just ended. New Melones, the state's fourth-largest capacity reservoir, was 35% full with dirt bathtub rings reaching high above the impounded Stanislaus River. Don Pedro, the state's sixth-largest capacity reservoir, was 50% full, with a few powerboats in the low-lying waters of the Tuolumne River.

Tuolumne Utilities District staff said Pinecrest was holding 70% of capacity Friday, Lyons was holding 26% of capacity, and TUD was working with PG&E to bring more water from Pinecrest to Lyons.

"The start of the new water year, October 1st, is indicating a change in weather patterns," Lisa Westbrook with TUD public affairs said Friday. "The National Weather Service is predicting above normal precipitation in the six-to-10 day outlook starting October 6th."

Beginning this Sunday, TUD is asking all water customers to conserve during the annual, week-long Tuolumne Main Canal outage. Pacific Gas and Electric Co. owns the Main Canal ditches and flumes that convey 95% of TUD's drinking water supply. The Main Canal shutdown is Oct. 3 to Oct. 10.

Most of Calaveras and Tuolumne counties remained in exceptional drought on Friday, the most dire category used by U.S. Drought Monitor scientists. More than four-fifths of the Golden State, including the entire north, central, and southern Sierra Nevada range, was in severe drought.

"Sonora and much of the surrounding area is currently in D4 or exceptional drought," Shoemaker said Friday. "These conditions are likely to persist until significant precipitation occurs."

The Central Sierra and the rest of California are currently forecast to have a second consecutive La Niña this winter, on the heels of last winter's La Niña for 2020-2021. Shoemaker said the La Niña pattern "brings a slight tendency for drier conditions over the winter for the Sonora area and the forecast from the Climate Prediction Center leans towards a slight trend for another dry winter."

Contact Guy McCarthy at gmccarthy@uniondemocrat.net or 770-0405.

Annual crop report cites uncertainty of wildfires, COVID-19 as factors in decreased commodity values for 2020

Marie-Elana Schembri / Calaveras Enterprise / October 12, 2021

The Calaveras County Department of Food and Agriculture has released the Crop Production Report for 2020, with most crop and agricultural commodities showing decreased production yield and values, some by as much as 48%.

The opening letter from Agricultural Commissioner Jessica Fowler addresses crop production in 2020 by applauding the agricultural industry's efforts during the pandemic.

Fowler writes, "As with the rest of the nation, our agricultural industry strived to provide food for our communities through the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic. We thank them for their heroic efforts."

The commissioner's letter also states that despite the flooded wine grape market in 2019, "some local vineyards left fruit on the vine due to uncertainties of wildfire smoke in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on farm labor availability and industry sales."

According to the report, wine grape crops suffered a 48% decrease from approximate values of \$4.5 million in 2019 to \$2.3 million in 2020.

While other industries reported decreased values, cattle and calves were the leading commodities, with an increase of 6% from 2019's values of \$7.2 million to almost \$7.7 million in 2020.

The report states that "overall livestock values remained flat in 2020 due to lower livestock numbers harvested being offset by increased cattle values; reflecting the strong prices in the local beef market."

Sheep and lamb values significantly decreased from around \$68,000 in 2019 to nearly \$35,000 in 2020.

Values for poultry production were down from \$3.1 million in 2019 to \$2.7 million in 2020.

Livestock and poultry products, including wool, mohair, and eggs were also down in value, from \$45,000 to just \$6,800.

The total livestock value for 2020 was \$10.4 million while 2019 was slightly higher at \$10.6 million.

The report noted a 24% decrease in gross crop values, at roughly \$22 million, whereas 2019's gross crop value was \$28.5 million.

Nursery products had a slight increase, as did walnuts, while almonds had a drop in value per ton from \$5,000 in 2019 to just under \$2,000 in 2020. The value of olives and olive oil increased by more than half, while miscellaneous fruit and nut crops took a dive from \$134,000 in 2019 to a mere \$42,000 in 2020.

Organic operations also reported increases, with organic grapes leading followed by organic nut production, with total values of \$410,000 versus 2019's \$370,000.

Vegetable products reported significant decreases, from \$130,000 to just under \$12,000.

Apiary (bee yard) values were down as well, at \$65,000 in 2020 from \$274,000 in 2019.

The total value of timber in 2020 was about \$4 million while it was reported as \$6.4 million in 2019.

Leading agricultural commodities in order of value were cattle and calves, timber, poultry, field crops, wine grapes, walnuts, nursery products, apiary, almonds, sheep and lambs, and miscellaneous crops which include fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

Total values for agricultural commodities for the year were \$21.8 million, versus \$28.5 million in 2019.

Work begins soon on Gillam Bridge

The Valley Springs News / October 13, 2021

Calaveras Public Works beginning on Monday, Oct. 18, will be replacing the timber decking on the Gillam Road Bridge over Youngs Creek.

The goal is to replace the existing decaying deck with new non-treated timber decking to provide safe passage for vehicles. This is a one-lane bridge and the timber decking is designed to accommodate 7-ton vehicles. The deck will also include timber planks along the wheel lines as protective wearing surfaces.

Public Works has contracted with Cole Tiscornia Construction to complete this work. Crews will be working in the area between the hours of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Oct. 18 to 22. The bridge will closed from Oct. 18 to 22. The traveling public must utilize detours during construction, public works advised.

"We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause," the department said.

All work for this project will be confined to the bridge deck, with no ground disturbance within the streambed. Measures will be taken to ensure that no material enters the streambed below, which has been identified as California red-legged frog habitat

The frog is a threatened species.

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Regional News

[California built its way into extreme wildfire danger. Now it needs to build its way out.](#)

Brian Hanlon / Guest Opinion SF Chronicle / October 14, 2021

On Monday, the Alisal Fire in Southern California burned through more than 13,000 acres in a 24-hour period, forcing the evacuation of thousands of residents. Along with it came power shutoffs for tens of thousands of Californians in 23 counties across the state — a disruptive but increasingly unavoidable tactic to reduce the risk of additional fires from downed power lines.

As fire season extends later into the year, a growing share of Californians are being forced to reckon with its brutal effects. These events are not random freaks of nature. They are the consequence of decades of dissonance surrounding the scientific realities of living in fire country in California and the mushrooming threats from our rapidly changing climate.

While the devastation from wildfires may seem like the inevitable byproduct of climate change, state and local land-use decisions have a significant impact on the damage and losses incurred.

The intersection of suburban development and increasingly dry wildlands have created a hazardous confluence, for both humans and nature. We have unwittingly put millions of Californians at risk through land use regulations that encourage sprawl-style development farther into rural and remote areas that our own state fire experts warn are at extreme risk of wildfires.

From 1990 to 2010, half of all new housing development in California took place at the boundary of wildland areas, known formally as the “wildland-urban interface.” The result: California has over 1.4 million homes in areas at high risk of burning in a wildfire.

The widespread destruction of homes — and in the worst cases, entire communities like Paradise — will occur with growing frequency as long as we make it easier to build in the areas most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and harder to build needed infill housing in our urban areas.

California’s most-affluent coastal neighborhoods have long dictated housing policy in our state’s largest cities, effectively prohibiting new housing growth in the same areas that are most protected from wildfire encroachment. This, in turn, created a perverse incentive for developers, for whom the slow and costly process of building homes in our cities can be avoided by building faster and more cheaply in some of the most fire-prone rural areas in the state.

Even as wildfires in these rural communities grow more frequent and destructive, more Californians are moving there. Counties that still bear the scars of previous wildfires — like Butte County (home to Paradise) — are seeing their populations increase, driven in part by the housing shortage and unaffordability of other cities in the region.

The result? We’re increasing sprawl that forces Californians farther away from job centers, and the longer commutes that result are causing more toxic air and climate pollution.

In essence, California’s housing policies are simultaneously suffering from — and exacerbating — climate change.

Over 11 million Californians, 30% of the state's population, live in areas of extreme wildfire risk. But rather than proactively mitigating this risk, local governments continue to locate significant new housing developments in fire danger zones. Research has found that 14 of the 20 most fire-vulnerable communities in the United States are in California. And while most of the census tracts in fire country are white and socioeconomically secure, many are retirees and lower-income service workers who are often just one missed paycheck — or one bad fire — from being homeless.

Climate vulnerability in the United States, whether from floods, storms or extreme heat, disproportionately punishes areas with larger populations of Black people, Latinos and Native Americans. Wildfire is no exception: Communities of color are 50% more vulnerable to the long-term destructive impacts of wildfires, due to disinvestment, segregation and exclusion.

California must do more to keep all communities safe from climate destruction, including wildfires, while also addressing the state's acute housing crisis. Smart, thoughtful planning should locate new homes with the intent of increasing community resilience and reducing vulnerability to catastrophe.

The alternative is an accelerating treadmill of building homes that are subsequently destroyed — with possibly deadly consequences.

The convergence of our state's housing and climate crises has stripped the veneer from many long-standing and untenable land use policies that prioritize the aesthetic, social and economic preferences of wealthier residents over existing, higher-resourced, lower-risk communities.

The solution set, while not novel or mysterious, will require political leadership — and courage: Our city and state leaders must act urgently to allow the construction of more affordable, climate-resilient, multifamily housing near good jobs, schools and transportation systems. Cities must find ways to reduce the red tape and excessive fees that make infill housing too expensive to build or too costly to rent on a median salary. They must prioritize housing in walkable areas that reduce pollution from cars. And they should defer to science-based fire boundaries as a land use planning tool in high-risk areas.

Land use policies that drive families into wildfire-prone areas aren't just a failure of local governance, they're ethically dubious, at best. California's cities have more than enough room to accommodate current and future residents without placing families and workers needlessly in harm's way and without forcing a growing share of their workforce into long, polluting car commutes.

The fact that we know what needs to be done implies we have an affirmative obligation to do it. It's time for our elected officials to step into their leadership roles and make it happen.

Brian Hanlon is president and CEO of California YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard), which is a community of neighbors who welcome more neighbors. We say "Yes In My Back Yard"—yes to affordable housing, yes to inclusive, equitable communities, yes to opportunity, and yes to more neighbors!

[Home - California YIMBY \(cayimby.org\)](https://cayimby.org)

The last few months have been the driest summer on record for California, allowing wildfires to explode quickly and consume bone-dry vegetation. More than 7,800 wildfires have sparked in California in 2021, charring 2.5 million acres across the state. Drought-stricken hillsides are parched for water after a summer of relentless heat and little relief.

It's possible 2021 will see more conflagrations, bringing it closer to 2020's destructive season, when 4 million acres burned. So far, both 2020 and 2021 exceeded the acreage destroyed in the previous five years, more than doubling the average of 1.2 million acres burned.

Read more here on how this year's fire season has compared to others in destructiveness.

A handful of brush fires ignited up and down the state earlier this week after furious winds whipped embers into a frenzy. The Alisal Fire continues to rage through Santa Barbara County, charring more than 14,000 acres along the Central Coast. A fire whirl spawned as flames licked hillsides.

But there's a chance above-normal rainfall will hit the region this month, and it could be enough to put an end to Northern California's wildfire season. Weather forecasters estimate two inches of precipitation will come in from a storm hovering in the Pacific Ocean next week, affecting a swath stretching from the Bay Area to Redding. The coming storm could bring near-record rainfall to replenish water resources in the state.

Drought-Stricken Western Towns Say No to Developers

Alex Brown / Stateline - Pew Charitable Trust / October 12, 2021

In the small city of Oakley, Utah, the drought conditions parching much of the West have depleted the natural springs that supply water to the community. During each of the past several summers, local leaders worried that quenching any major fire might empty the city's water tanks.

The city issued water-use restrictions this past April and residents cut back, but officials heard a consistent message from their constituents, said Mayor Wade Woolstenhulme.

"If you guys are so low on water, why do you keep giving out building permits?"

In May, Oakley's city council voted to pause new development and to prohibit any new landscaping needing irrigation, including private lawns. The 180-day ban was a drastic measure that city leaders were reluctant to take. Woolstenhulme said they had no choice.

“We can only allow [development] that we can provide water for,” he said. “We need to protect the people who live here before we let more people come in.”

A rainy autumn has helped replenish Oakley’s water, and the city plans to drill a new well later this year. That should allow the city to double its water capacity and rescind the building moratorium. But even as Oakley’s fortunes improve, communities throughout the West are facing difficult questions about water scarcity and what it means for future growth—especially because climate change is expected to make such droughts more frequent and intense.

‘We Need to Do This Differently’

The nation’s five fastest-growing states are all in the Southwest or Mountain West, regions of the country that already face severe drought.

“Our growth has been one of our greatest economic benefits as a state, and it’s one of our biggest challenges going into the future,” said Candice Hasenyager, director of the Utah Division of Water Resources. “There’s been this assumption that water will always be there, and we can grow however we want, but if we don’t get water-wise, it could limit our ability to grow in the future.”

Hasenyager’s agency doesn’t regulate development, and she emphasized that local leaders must make growth decisions. Her efforts focus on boosting water conservation and encouraging reuse. The initiatives include promoting landscaping that requires less water, metering untreated water to help reduce usage and helping farmers optimize their water use.

While many communities have begun drilling wells or building piping projects to bolster their supply, Hasenyager said there also has to be a reduction in demand.

“Can we continue to use water like we do today as long as we diversify our supplies?” she said. “The answer is no.”

In Colorado, state leaders are urging communities to change local codes to require more low-water landscaping. They’re also encouraging facilities that treat wastewater to recycle it as drinking water. The state has used grant money to speed up that effort, known as direct potable reuse, by working to establish a regulatory framework and funding demonstration projects.

“We’ve got to be cutting that demand side a lot harder than we have been,” said Kevin Reidy, a technical specialist with the Colorado Water Conservation Board. “If you can reuse some of your supply over again multiple times, then that’s taking one gallon of water and stretching it four or five times longer.

“We’re going to have a lot more drought with a lot more frequency,” he added. “If we’re going to keep on growing and building new things, we need to do this differently and try to make it stretch as far as we can.”

Temple McKinnon is the director of water supply planning at the Texas Water Development Board, which writes the state’s 50-year water plan. State leaders expect to meet about 30% of their water supply needs through demand reduction, including farming efficiencies and water reuse programs, McKinnon said.

Some regions of Texas are expected to see deficits of irrigated water, which could force farmers to change the crops they grow or convert land to different uses. A handful of municipalities are forecast to see shortages as well, and they’re looking to build new water supply infrastructure. In all, the total cost to implement the state’s water plan is about \$80 billion, and local governments and water districts say they’ll need about \$47 billion in state money to carry it out.

McKinnon thinks the plan will enable Texas to keep growing. But Larry McKinney, the chair for Gulf Strategies at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi’s Harte Research Institute, noted that agriculture, industry and municipal water use is degrading the ecosystems in Texas river systems and their estuaries in the Gulf of Mexico.

“As we take water away for agriculture or growth or industry, they can’t support the fish and wildlife they once did,” he said. “We’ve pushed it right up to the limits. Our people and our leaders are not used to having limits, but the water limit is upon us.”

McKinney thinks Texas can buy itself some time if it limits water-intensive agriculture, builds desalination plants and curtails landscaping. But “there will be a point at which we cannot sustain the growth we’re seeing now,” he said, “and climate change is stepping on the accelerator.”

‘It Could Be Dire’

Utah—one of the fastest-growing states as well as one of the driest—could offer a worrying preview.

In Henefer, not far from Oakley, some ranchers have had to sell livestock because there’s no longer enough grass for them to eat. The town of about 900 has banned new construction since 2018 because its springs are dwindling.

Henefer is seeking grant money from Utah’s portion of federal relief funds to pipe in water from a nearby reservoir, and it’s looking at increasing its water storage and drilling wells. Mayor Kay Richins said the moratorium is preventing young people from building homes and staying in the community, and he’s eager for the city to increase its water supply and lift the ban. But he’s also fearful of what will happen when building resumes.

“It scares me,” he said. “There may be a mad rush for people to hurry and build, and if we’re not careful, we’ll be out of water again. If [drought] just keeps coming and we see no change, it could lead to an unsustainable situation. It could be dire.”

As neighboring communities and cities throughout Utah grow at a rapid pace, Richins thinks such expansion is not sustainable.

“The state is trying to ask people to conserve water,” he said. “Well, for the love of Pete, why are you allowing all this building to go on?”

The Wolf Creek Water and Sewer Improvement District, which serves 1,500 customers in Utah’s Ogden Valley, decided to stop adding new connections earlier this year as its well declined, springs hit record lows and the flow of water in its irrigation system faltered. That angered developers, who had been building at a rapid pace during the pandemic.

“We saw so many houses being built in the valley that we just didn’t think we could support it,” said Miranda Menzies, who chairs the district’s board. “We looked at each other and said, ‘We cannot do this. We don’t have enough water for our existing active users.’”

In response to a call for conservation, residents have cut their water use by 40%, Menzies said. The district is likely to drill an additional well, in hopes of restarting development on the 85 lots where projects have been blocked by the moratorium.

Putting on the Brakes

Small, rural communities are the most vulnerable to water shortages. They often have limited water resources and can’t afford the infrastructure necessary to tap into new sources or recycle existing water. But some larger areas are dealing with challenges as well.

In Arizona’s Pinal County, home to nearly half a million people, state officials announced this summer that they would not allow any future development using groundwater sources within a 4,000-square-mile management area. Regulators will no longer issue the permits, known as a Certificate of Assured Water Supply, required for such construction.

Under Arizona’s Groundwater Management Act of 1980, development in certain regions of the state must prove an assured water supply that can sustain residents for 100 years—even in jurisdictions where development is governed by city and county officials. Most of those management areas must balance their groundwater extraction and recharge by 2025.

“They've been going along issuing these certificates and then one day decided to reconcile the checkbook,” said county Supervisor Steve Miller. “They went, ‘Whoa, the demand is higher than the availability,’ and they've put on the brakes.”

The state will not rescind the certificates it already has issued. Miller estimated that developers already have procured enough to keep building for another eight to 10 years. County leaders are considering other options to provide water, including a desalination project.

In California, the Marin Municipal Water District earlier this year considered halting new water hookups as its reservoirs dwindled to historically low levels. Leaders of the district, which serves nearly 200,000 customers, determined that a ban would yield only minimal water savings, while potentially thwarting important affordable housing projects. The district did pass a measure to limit landscaping irrigation at new buildings, and if drought conditions continue, the board may reconsider the hookup moratorium.

The district is exploring pipeline and desalination projects to bolster its supply. Those projects could cost tens of millions of dollars, said Emma Detwiler, the district's communications manager.

“If growth continues and climate change continues to limit supplies, we need to reduce the amount of water that is demanded by the population,” she said. “We have to diversify our water supply portfolio and make these demand reductions. It's not an either-or proposition.”

Kathryn Sorensen recently stepped down from her role as director of Phoenix Water Services, where she guided the city's efforts to build a resilient water supply. Sorensen, who's now the director of research at Arizona State University's Kyl Center for Water Policy at Morrison Institute, said Arizona has made great strides in conservation efforts such as the use of reclaimed water. That's allowed the state to grow by millions of people while using about the same amount of water as it did in the 1950s.

“There's a long tradition here in the West of people moving out here and then wanting to turn around and close the gate,” she said. “To the extent that can be avoided, it's important to make the investments to ensure everyone has access to safe, clean drinking water.”

But Hasenyager, the Utah water official, said it's unclear whether Utah can keep growing at its current rate.

“If I knew with good certainty that our supply would say the same, I would say yes,” she said. “But climate change is a big uncertainty.”

Sierra Nevada
Conservancy
Funding Opportunities
Newsletter
for September/October



This is an electronic newsletter published every two months containing information on upcoming grant and funding opportunities for the Sierra Nevada region. The newsletter includes federal, state, and private foundation funders as well as additional resources and information related to grant funding. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy provides the Funding Opportunities Newsletter as a free resource under its Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program.

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Northern harrier "marsh hawk" (c) yosemitenorthphotography.com

Abbotts Lagoon: October

by Robert Hass

The first thing that is apt to raise your eyes
Above the dove-grey and silvery thickets
Of lupine and coyote bush and artichoke thistle
On the sandy, winding path from the parking lot
To the beach at Abbotts Lagoon is the white flash
Of the marsh hawk's rump as it skims low
Over coastal scrub. The white-crowned sparrows
Loud in the lupine even in October, even
In a drizzly rain, startle and disappear.
The bush rabbits freeze, then bolt, and disappear,
And the burbling songs and clucks of the quail
That you may not even have noticed you were noticing
Go mute and you are there in October and the rain,
And the hawk soars past, first, hawk, then shadow
Of a hawk, not much shadow in the rain, low sun
Silvering through clouds a little to the west.
It's almost sundown. And this is that new weather,
In the beginning of the middle of the California fall
When a rain puts an end to the long sweet days
Of our September when the skies are clear, days mild,
And the roots of the plants have gripped down
Into the five or six month drought, have licked
All the moisture they are going to lick
From the summer fogs, and it is very good to be walking
Because you can almost hear the earth sigh
As it sucks up the rain, here where mid-October
Is the beginning of winter which is the beginning
Of a spring greening, as if the sound you are hearing
Is spring and winter lying down in one another's arms
Under the hawk's shadow among the coastal scrub,
Ocean in the distance and the faintest sound of surf
And a few egrets, bright white, working the reeds
At the water's edge in October in the rain.



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