

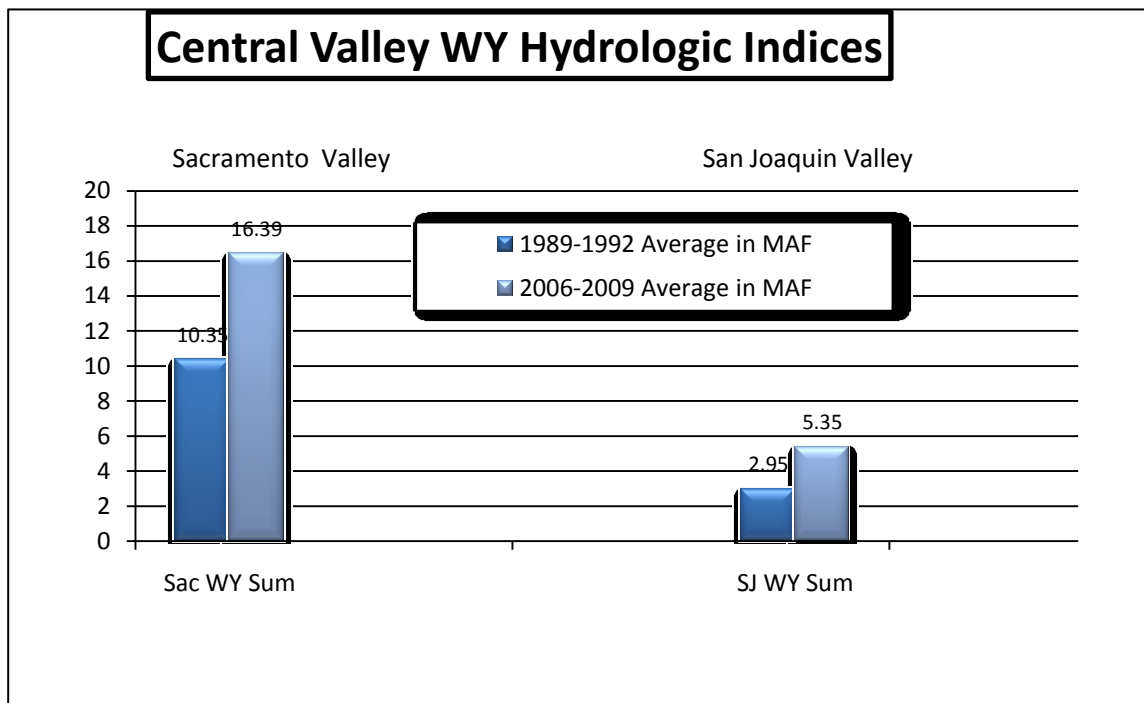
## NEW RELEASE 🌐 17 September 2010

### Wolf Cries – Howling About Drought – All Wet – No More Doubts Officials Exaggerated Severity of Drought

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Despite the fact that the federal and state officials are seemingly still at odds as to whether the drought is over, a review of the government's data indicates that contrary to the wolf cries of Fox, CBS, the Governor and water officials, the recent California "drought" was very mild at best in comparison to historical droughts. This finding is prefaced on extrapolating data from the four-year period, 2006 through 2009 - within which a three-year "drought" purportedly occurred - with the drought which occurred from 1987 through 1992, using the last four years of that drought.

Figure 1 is in Million Acre-Feet (MAF); Water Year (WY) Summary



Data in Figure 1, extrapolated from Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 120 series – *Water Conditions in California*, illustrates the difference in water conditions prevalent during the 1989 through 1992 and the 2006 through 2009 drought years (using four-year periods, which includes the year before the current drought started). During both periods, statewide water consumption remained relatively constant, supplemented by a significant increase in groundwater consumption. It is important to note, that groundwater provides about 40% of California's annual water supply. In dry years, that percentage can go as high as 60 percent. Major surface water projects were developed to augment surface and ground water depletions and to weather drought cycles.

Figure 1 also indicates that there was a significant increase in the state's water supply within this past "drought" period as compared to the 1989-1992 drought period. A 58 percent increase in the indices on the Sacramento Valley side and an 81percent increase on the San Joaquin Valley side. (Note: Spreadsheet data which includes the percentage

increase upon which these calculations were made can be viewed at [www.planetarysolutionaries.org](http://www.planetarysolutionaries.org) blog.) Based on the period of record (1906-2009), Sacramento Valley unimpaired runoff averages out at 18 million-acre-feet (MAF); the San Joaquin Valley unimpaired runoff averages out at about six MAF; in the 2006-2009 period in the Sacramento valley it was 16.39 MAF; San Joaquin Valley 5.35 MAF.

### **Hydrologic and Water Supply Conditions and Precipitation in California:**

The 2009 Water Year (October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009) was the third consecutive year of below average precipitation for the state. In DWR Bulletin 120 series, Summary of Water Conditions, average statewide precipitation totaled 80 percent, 85 percent, and 65 percent of average for Water Years 2009, 2008, and 2007, respectively. According to DWR's Bulletin 120, water year 2006 was 140 percent above average. Ironically the average of that four years is 92 percent of normal precipitation; reservoir storage for that same period would have averaged out to 96 percent. Furthermore, at the end of 2009 statewide reservoir storage was averaging 80 percent of capacity. In addition, according to DWR's Bulletin 120-4-10, in May 2010, statewide reservoir storage was at 95 percent, and statewide precipitation was just at 110 percent.

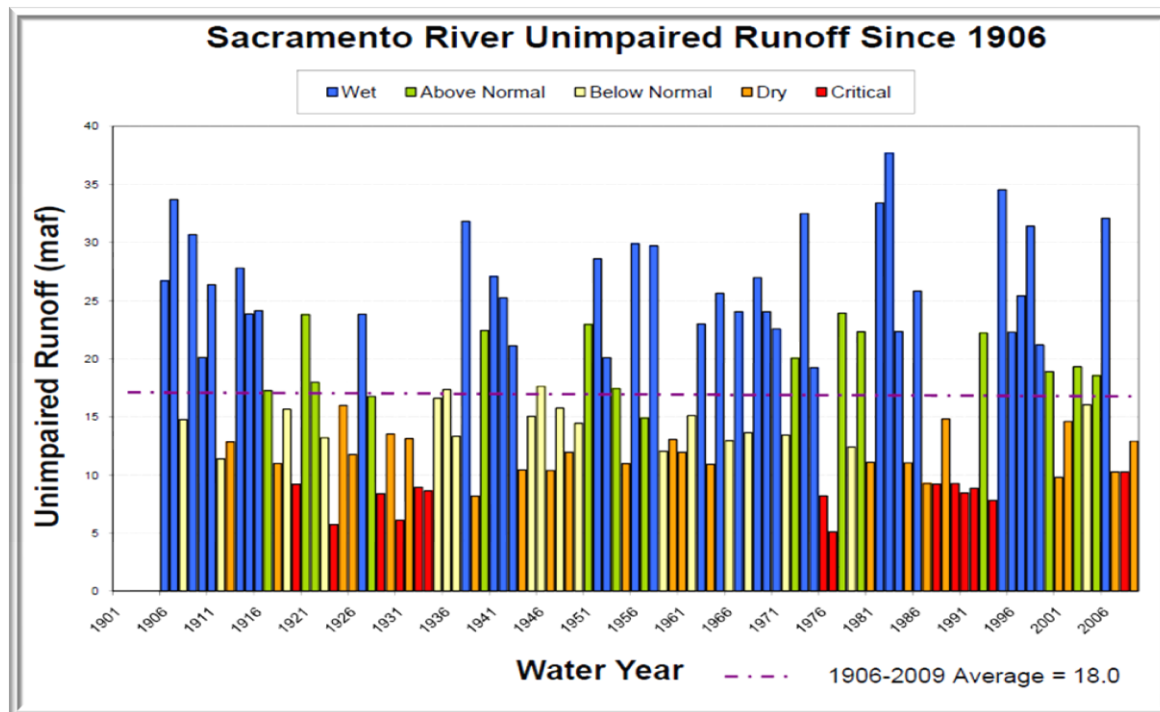
Conversely, during the previous drought, reservoir storage capacity statewide in 1992, the last year of that drought, was at 70 percent; average for the 1989-1992 period would have been 75 percent. Those numbers indicate that the 1989-1992 period were much more drastic than the recent "drought". Yet, the 1989-1992 drought was not compared to the "Dust Bowl" or the Armageddon of California agriculture.

**Wet and dry cycles are a part of California's climate, as is indicated by water runoff, which is illustrated in Figure 2.** Precipitation varies widely from year to year. In average years, close to 200 million acre-feet (MAF) of water falls in the form of rain or snow in California. That is enough water to flood the entire state two feet deep in water.

- ◆ Over half of that water soaks into the ground, evaporates or is used by native vegetation. That leaves somewhere around 82 million-acre feet of usable surface water in average years.
- ◆ About 75 percent of California's available water occurs north of Sacramento, while about 80 percent of the demand occurs in the southern two-thirds of the state.
- ◆ There have been about 30 years out of 92 (since 1918) or about one in every three years that the state includes as part of a drought period.

The North Coast Hydrological Region produces the largest volume of runoff; however, it has limited storage capacity. The Sacramento River Basin is the second-richest water producing area, and has the largest volume of water storage capacity in California. The average annual runoff in the basin is around 18 million acre-feet of water, as is indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Sacramento River Unimpaired Runoff Since 1906 – Source, DWR



As indicated on the *Sacramento River Unimpaired Runoff Since 1906*, California has experienced eight-notable drought cycles, four of which occurred in: 1928-1934 (pre-government water project development); 1976-1977 (post SWP and CVP); 1987-1992; 2007-2009). A similar request for unimpaired runoff for the San Joaquin River watershed and a statewide graph was also requested; however, according to DWR official, this information does not appear to exist. Water year types for the Sacramento Valley and the San Joaquin Valley can be viewed at [http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water\\_supply.html](http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water_supply.html).

**MOTIVE FOR THE DROUGHT:** Why then did Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger issue a drought proclamation at the onset of the below average conditions, and opt not to declared the drought as being over in 2010? Simply stated, his proclamation opened up the floodgate to release hundreds of millions of dollars of public money used to fund so-called drought relief programs to a host of local water agencies and agricultural recipients. <http://www.water.ca.gov/lgagrnt/docs/120309grant.pdf> Also, when a state-of-emergency is proclaimed it essentially sets aside many regulatory and environmental safeguards.

Critics contend that the Governor and his supporters exacerbated the extent of the drought and used it as the platform to promote the passage of the \$11 billion General Obligation Bond “Water Package” purportedly designed to increase the state’s water supply reliability, improve its aging infrastructure, and “fix” the broken Bay-Delta Estuary. The \$11 billion bond act was taken off this November’s ballot for reasons yet fully divulged and is now scheduled for the November 2012 election. The public is paying for the drought relief programs, with borrowed money repaid from the \$20 billion deficit-ridden General Fund. 🌐

Next in the series: *Harvesting Windfall Profits from the so-called Drought – While Funds for Public Safety-Net Programs and Jobs Dry Up*