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## CALENDAR ALERTS

- Feb 6 – SWRCB [workshop](#) on dredge and fill regulations, 1001-I St, Sacramento
- Feb 7 – Delta Science info [meeting](#) on McCormick-Williamson Project, 980-9<sup>th</sup> St, Sacramento
- Feb 8 – Deadline to complete [survey](#) on 5-yr review of Delta Plan
- Feb 12 - Deadline to submit application for [C.V. Tributaries](#) grant [program](#)
- Feb 18 – Deadline to [comment](#) on Delta Public Lands [Strategy](#)
- March 4 – Deadline to [comment](#) on Regional Flood Mngt. Assistance Program [Guidelines](#)
- March 5 – SWRCB vote on dredge and fill regulations amendments
- March 7 – Deadline to [comment](#) Sac Valley Conservation Strategy
- June 25 – CA Extreme Precipitation [Symposium](#), ARC Conf. Ctr, UC Davis

## KEEPING UP

*\*\*Check [CCVFCA Website](#) for more information on topics in Flood Flash*

### **Regional Flood Management Guidelines Released for Comment**

DWR is accepting [public comments](#) through Monday, March 4, 2019 on the [draft guidelines](#) for the new Regional Flood Management Assistance Program. The proposed guidelines outline the new structure and process for the six regional groups ([RFMPs](#)) to apply for State funding to improve regional governance and to support consolidation of LMAs. Funds can also be used to implement programs, studies, and activities described in the six Regional Flood Management Plans.

### **Conservation Strategy for Northern Sacramento Valley Released for Comment**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife released a draft strategy for regional conservation investment in Colusa and Sutter Counties, under a [new regional program](#) established by the department. A public meeting was hosted by RD 108 in March 2018 with a [presentation](#) on the strategy, including voluntary mitigation credit agreements. The [deadline](#) to submit comments is 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 7, 2019.

### **Categorical Permission for 408 Review Signed**

The Sacramento District [signed](#) the [Categorical Permission](#) to allow Section 408 requests that are similar in nature and have similar impacts to a USACE levees or channels and environment.

### **Flood Protection Money Could be Diverted to Border Wall**

The federal government was shut down over disagreement between the President and Congress about funding construction of a wall along the border of Mexico. To break the stalemate the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided the President a list of 13 flood protection projects, including raising of Folsom Dam, that funding could be [redirected](#) to wall construction.

### **Corps Releases Supplemental Document for Sacramento Levee Improvements**

A [Draft Supplemental](#) Environmental Assessment for the American River Common Features 2016 project was released by the USACE. Proposed levee improvements include installation of a stability berm on the landside of the east levee on the Sacramento River along Front Street in Sacramento, near the Pioneer Bridget.

### **Earthquakes Registered at Oroville Dam**

Just days after the collapse of the flood spillway at Oroville Dam in February 2017, two relatively small [earthquake tremors](#) were documented. A recent report by USGS seismologists investigating the matter found that the collapse likely caused the seismic events, not the other way around and speculate that smaller tremors have been occurring for years from leaks in the spillway.

Interestingly, a 5.7 earthquake was registered a few years after the 770-foot high Oroville Dam was built in the 1960s. Since

then, scientists have verified that a man-made lake can induce fault movement. However, until now, scientists had not considered that water releases could stimulate seismic activity below the water infrastructure. Although none larger than 1.0 magnitude, the researchers were surprised to find that nearly 20,000 small quakes had been registered near Oroville Dam since 1993 and concluded that these were caused by water pushing through cracks in the spillway and putting pressure on underlying rock. They now realize these small seismic events may be used to help identify leaks in the flood release facility. Not surprisingly, no tremors have occurred since water releases ceased in February 2017.

DWR released a new [flood operations manual](#) for Lake Oroville, [revising](#) the amount of space must be reserved to store rain during storm events.

### **Amendments to the Waters of the State Regulations Proposed**

The State Water Resources Control Board is proposing [amendments](#) to the State Wetlands Definitions and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material. The amendments are [intended](#) to strengthen protections for waters of the state that are no longer protected under the federal Clean Water Act, provide consistency between regional water boards for the regulation of dredged or fill materials, and to prevent losses in the quantity and quality of wetlands.

The regulatory [process](#) includes a public workshop will be held on February 6, a staff update to the board on February 19, and a vote on the adoption of the amendments on March 5. A coalition of organizations have expressed concerns with some of the changes and are requesting revisions to the proposed amendments.

### **Two More Studies Predict Snow May Become Rare**

Changes in [western hydrology](#) could jeopardize flood control, water supplies, fire management, and winter recreation according to Amato Evan, a professor of atmospheric and climate science with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

According to his findings we can expect autumn to become longer, spring to start earlier, leaving winter shorter and warmer with more rain than snow. His study evaluated snow accumulations and runoff by analyzing data between 1982 and 2017. With storms and snowmelt occurring at the same time, flood risks will increase.

A [study](#) by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory scientists claims the Sierra snowpack will [decline by 54%](#) in the next 20-40 years at the current rate that climate is warming. They also found that snow may melt four weeks earlier, increasing the time between when water is available and when it is most in demand.

### **Fun with Forecasting**

The National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has released a suite of eight [forecasting tools](#) to help track winter snowstorms, including predicting a range of potential [snowfall amounts](#) and an experimental index to estimate [potential severity](#) and damage.

### **SBFCA Manager Returning to DWR**

The Manager of SBFCA, Mike Inamine, announced he is [leaving](#) the agency to return to DWR. Mike's leadership, experience, and expertise was instrumental in the design and implementation of \$350 million in levee improvements.

### **New Waters of the U.S. Proposed**

In December 2018, the Trump Administration [proposed](#) new Waters of the United States rules to replace those adopted in the Obama Administration in 2015. Due to the federal government shutdown, a scheduled public hearing and publication in the Federal Register were [postponed](#). New dates will be announced once federal appropriations are approved.

### **Hurdle for Shasta Raise Project**

The State Water Resources Control Board sent a letter to Westlands Water District claiming the project proposing the [raising of Shasta Dam](#) would [violate state law](#) prohibiting state agencies from issuing permits for projects that could adversely affect the free-flowing condition of the McCloud River or on its wild trout fisheries. The letter also says the Bureau of Reclamation will need to get an extension of its right to divert and store water behind Shasta Dam and obtain permits under the Clean Water Act. In March 2018, then Secretary of Natural Resources John Laird apparently sent a similar letter to leaders in Congress.

### **Water District Election Decided by Dungeons and Dragons**

After director elections ended in a tie (51-51 votes), the Contra Costa County elections officials had each candidate roll a 20-sided Dungeons and Dragon die three times, with highest combined score determining the winner. Shown live on Facebook, the video of the [unusual tie-breaker](#) went viral.

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## **DELTA DOWNLOAD**

*\*\*Check [CCVFCA Website for](#) more information on topics in Flood Flash*

### **Steve Mello Featured in DPC Quarterly Newsletter**

The Winter Issue of the DPC [Delta Voice](#) newsletter features Steve Mello describing the history of his family farming on Tyler Island.

### **Input on Delta Plan Requested**

In accordance with the Delta Reform Act of 2009 (Water Code §85300), the Delta Stewardship Council is conducting a 5-year review of the Delta Plan and seeking public input through a [survey](#). Deadline to submit responses to the survey is February 8th.

### **McCormack-Williamson Habitat Project**

In 2018, DWR and its partners [broke ground](#) on McCormack-Williamson Tract 1,500 acre restoration project. This project is part of [EcoRestore](#) Initiative, which seeks to restore 30,000 acres of habitat in the Delta by 2020. The restoration of tidal freshwater marsh and floodplain habitat are intended to allow passage of flood flows through the Tract in a way that minimizes flood impacts to the ecosystem.

### **Largest Tidal Restoration Project in Delta Proposed at Lookout Slough**

In December the Department of Water Resources signed a [contract](#) with Ecosystem Investment Partners ([EIP](#)) to establish the Lookout Slough Tidal Restoration Project. Once the Yolo Bypass levees are breached, Lookout Slough would become the Delta's largest tidal restoration habitat, twice as large as Dutch Slough. Funding will be provided by State Water Project contractors for habitat benefits to be credited in Biological Opinions and from Prop. 1 for the flood protection benefits.

### **Winter Island Tidal Habitat Restoration Project**

DWR has [filed a certification](#) of consistency for a tidal restoration project on Winter Island, located in northern Contra Costa County at the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. DWR became the owner of the 589-acre site in 2016. This project is part of [EcoRestore](#) Initiative and is being pursued to comply with Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives (RPA) in Biological Opinions allowing continued operation of the State Water Project and Central Valley Project.

### **Two Guidance Documents for Delta Conservation Released**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife released the Delta Conservation [Framework](#), a document to guide conservation planning in the Delta through 2050. The Delta Conservancy [released](#) a final draft for public comment of the [Delta Public Lands Strategy – Guidance for Conservation and Sustainability Across the West, Central, and Northeast Delta](#). The deadline to [comment](#) on the Strategy is February 18, 2019.

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## **LEGISLATIVE LATEST**

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### **Flood Insurance for Farmers Act Proposed in Congress**

Congressmen John Garamendi (D-Davis) and Doug LaMalfa (R-Chico) [reintroduced](#) legislation, the bipartisan [Flood Insurance for Farmers Act of 2019 \(H.R.830\)](#), to allow affordable construction and repair of agricultural structures in high flood-risk areas designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and to allow farmers to pay more reasonable flood insurance rates that align with their true level of risk.

“Sacramento Valley families have been farming the floodplain for generations, and my bill with Congressman LaMalfa ensures that growers can get more affordable flood insurance that takes into account the levees they pay to maintain,” said Garamendi. “Currently, FEMA’s requirements for Flood Hazard Areas essentially prohibit farmers from expanding or improving operations on floodplains,” said LaMalfa.

“Agriculture is one of the most beneficial uses for land in a floodplain, and the bill reintroduced by Reps. Garamendi and LaMalfa would help family farmers and ranchers address some of the challenges they face,” said Jamie Johansson, President of the California Farm Bureau Federation.

### **Delta Representative Reintroduces Bill to Establish Delta Heritage Area**

Congressman John Garamendi (D-Ryde), reintroduced the Sacramento-San Joaquin [Delta National Heritage Act](#) legislation, authorizing \$10 million in federal funding over 15 years to local entities for cultural and historical preservation and environmental conservation projects developed locally under coordination with the Delta Protection Commission.

## **Governor Newsom Releases State Budget**

In December, Governor Newsom proposed \$144 billion [budget](#), which is \$6 billion more than budget approved last year, and \$3.7 billion to fund programs and 3,217 staff for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), of which \$168 million and 409 employees is for Public Safety and Prevention of Damage. The proposed budget will be updated in the Governor's May Revise and then further modified and approved by the Legislature by June 15, 2019. According to [budget overview](#) provided by the Legislative Analyst Office (LAO), additional funding is proposed for disaster-response, including \$165 million to improve the public radio system.

## **Appointments to New Administration Announced**

Governor Newsom has begun announcing his [cabinet](#) and [staff](#):

- *Secretary of Natural Resources* – Wade Crowfoot [appointed](#) as the new [Secretary](#) of Natural Resources. He previously worked for Newsom when he was Mayor of San Francisco and has worked in the [Brown Administration](#), for the [Environmental Defense](#) Fund and the [Water Foundation](#).
- *Secretary of CalEPA* – Jared Blumenfeld, former Regional Administrator of U.S. EPA and Dir. of S.F. Dept. of Environment.
- *Secretary of Food and Agriculture* – Karen Ross, reappointed from Brown Administration.
- *Chief of Staff* – Ann O'Leary, former top aide to Hilary Clinton.
- *Cabinet Secretary* – Ana Matosantos, former Dir. of Dept. of Finance for Gov. Schwarzenegger.
- *Chief Deputy Cabinet Secretary for Executive Branch Operations* – Jason Elliott.
- *Chief Deputy Cabinet Secretary for Policy Development* – Angie Wei.
- *Deputy Cabinet Secretary* – Jamie Callahan, served as Dir. of External and Int'l Affairs for Governor Brown.
- *Deputy Cabinet Secretary* – Richard Figuora, served in Brown and Schwarzenegger Administrations and Legis. Dir. for Insurance Commissioner Garamendi.
- *Deputy Cabinet Secretary* – Christine Hironaka, served as Dep. Sec. for Legislative Affairs at CalEPA for Gov. Brown.
- *Deputy Cabinet Secretary* – Sonya Logman, served at the Business, Consumer Affairs, and Housing Agency for Gov. Brown.
- *Deputy Cabinet Secretary* – Daniel Seeman, served as deputy legislative secretary (criminal justice issues) for Gov. Brown.
- *Special Advisor on Public Safety* – Nettie Sabelhaus, served as Appointments Secretary for Gov. Brown and Appointments for the Senate.
- *Director of Scheduling* – Emily Swide, served as scheduler for Gov.-Elect Newsom's transition.

At an [event](#) announcing actions to improve emergency preparedness and response Gov. Newsom also announced the following appointments:

- *Senior Advisor on Emergency Preparedness and Management*, Rhys D.J. Williams, to directly coordinate with Administration officials across agencies and departments, as well as federal, state, and local officials and public safety experts. He previously served as Lt. Gov. Newsom's Chief of Staff.
- *Director of Governor's Office of Emergency Services* (CalOES), Mark Ghilarducci, reappointment of current director.
- *Director Department of Forestry and Fire Protection* (CalFIRE), Thomas Porter, currently serving as acting director.

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## **IN THE NEWS**

(Clicking the links will take you to news organization websites, where you can read the full stories. CCVFCA is not responsible for content on these external sites.)

- [Winter is shrinking, Scripps study finds, posing new fire, water risks](#) - San Diego Union Tribune
  - [Flood/water district requests \\$100,000 from county or it would go broke](#) - Plumas News
  - [Let it flow](#) - News Review
  - [Flood protection project finished along Palo Alto creek](#) - KRON 4
  - [Report: Dam repair cost could threaten Interlake Tunnel project](#) - Monterey Herald
  - [El Niños to strengthen because of global warming, will cause 'more extreme weather', study says](#) - VC Star
  - [Our View: Sites proponents have years of advocacy ahead of them to get the 500,000 acre-foot lake finally under construction](#) -Appeal Democrat
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- [CA WATER COMMISSION: Climate change effects on the State Water Project and Central Valley Project](#) - Maven's Notebook
  - [Stormy pattern on California's doorstep: will help mitigate early-season rain & snow deficits](#) - California Weather Blog
  - [Rivers in the Sky: What You Need to Know About Atmospheric River Storms](#) - KQED
  - [Stretch of PCH in LA and Ventura counties closed by flooding and mudslides](#) - Press Telegram
  - [Supervisors approve contract for Ross Valley flood design work](#) - Marin Independent Journal
  - [Flash flood watch issued for 4 Southern California counties; evacuations urged for Inland Holy fire burn area](#) - The Press-Enterprise
  - [More flood control coming to Petaluma](#) - Petaluma 360
  - [Trump could divert money from Folsom Dam to fund a border wall; Democrats vow a fight](#) - Sacramento Bee
  - [White House considers diverting San Francisco Bay money to pay for Trump's wall](#) - SF Chronicle
  - [Border wall: Trump eyes taking money from California flood projects to pay costs](#) - Mercury News
  - [People will be saying 'atmospheric river' a lot on Wednesday. Here's what that means.](#) - SF Gate
  - [Flood Control Veteran to leave post—Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency director takes job at Department of Water Resources](#) - Appeal-Democrat
  - [Work Begins on \\$1.5B Shasta Dam Raising](#) - Construction Equipment Guide
  - [Local flood control agencies prepare all year for heavy rain in winter](#) - ABC 30
  - [Shasta dam raising project, run into legal congressional roadblocks](#) - Record Searchlight
  - [Critics slam WOTUS economics: 'In theory, pigs could fly'](#) - E&E News
  - [Nutria threat continues to grow in farm counties](#) - Daily Democrat
  - [The Corps approves major deviation for Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations effort](#) - DVIDS
  - [When the Levee Breaks](#) - Pacific Standard Magazine
  - [Engineer: Twin Tunnels project could endanger vital levees](#) - KCRA 3
  - [Reclamation completing Folsom Dam safety work; trail detours to begin](#) - Folsom Telegraph
  - [Bay Area Reservoirs At Normal Levels Despite Recent Droughts, Flooding](#) - CBS SF
  - [BAY DELTA SCIENCE CONFERENCE: Restoration Planning for the Sacramento –San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh: Considering the Implications of Climate Change](#) - Maven's Notebook
  - [Residents say flood control project damaged home in San Jose](#)—NBC Bay Area
  - [Survey shows areas of land subsidence in Sac Valley](#) - Sun Herald
  - [Oroville Recreation Advisory Committee hears big plans for reopening, lake area improvements](#) - Chico ER
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