

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - February 2015

Location	Date/Time	Deaths & Injuries	Property & Crop Dmg	Event Type and Details
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CALIFORNIA, South Central

(CA-Z089) W CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z090) E CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z091) SW S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z092) SE S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z093) S SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z094) TULARE CTY FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z095) KERN CTY MTNS, (CA-Z096) S SIERRA MTNS, (CA-Z097) TULARE CTY MTNS, (CA-Z098) INDIAN WELLS VLY, (CA-Z099) SE KERN CTY DESERT

02/01/15 00:00 PST	0	Drought
02/28/15 23:59 PST	0	

The California drought continued in full force during the month of February, 2015. Precipitation continued to be below normal for the month with well above normal temperatures. Snowfall in the Sierra Nevada was limited to the highest elevations until the end of the month when a storm on February 28 brought snow levels down to about 5000 feet.

The U.S. Drought Monitor continued to report exceptional drought conditions across the entire Central California region. This extent of exceptional drought is extremely unusual for California. The 2013-2014 water year (July 1 - June 30) concluded with Fresno setting its second driest on record (4.81 inches) and Bakersfield setting its third driest (2.41 inches). For the calendar year, 2014 was the warmest year on record for Fresno and Bakersfield. The trend of below normal precipitation and above normal temperatures has continued into 2015.

There continues to be significant media coverage on the on-going drought conditions. These reports include discussion of significant re-allocation of water resources from the east to west side of the San Joaquin Valley, farmers forgoing planting of some crops, a decrease in the snow-related tourism activity in the Southern Sierra Nevada, reduction in air quality due to persistent stagnant air, loss or reduction of ground water, wells drying up in several communities leaving them with no water, and an unprecedented increase in fire danger across the Southern Sierra Nevada and Tehachapi Mountains.

(CA-Z091) SW S.J. VALLEY

02/06/15 13:30 PST	0	Dust Storm
02/06/15 16:00 PST	0	

MADERA COUNTY --- COARSEGOLD [37.27, -119.70], 7.0 SSE COARSEGOLD [37.18, -119.65]

02/06/15 23:00 PST	0	Heavy Rain
02/07/15 02:00 PST	0	Source: Mesonet

Rainfall of 1 to 1.5 inches resulted in roadway flooding along Highway 41 near Coarsegold and a small mudslide 7 miles SSE of Coarsegold.

(CA-Z089) W CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY

02/08/15 15:00 PST	0	High Wind (MAX 52 kt)
02/09/15 03:00 PST	0	

An atmospheric river event, with several embedded short waves, impacted much of California from Thursday 5 February 2015 through Monday 9 February 2015. Due to the subtropical nature of the storm, snow levels remained very high (8000'+) throughout the storm with only a few inches reported. Precipitation across the San Joaquin Valley ranged from a few hundredths near Bakersfield to around three-quarters of an inch near Merced. In the Sierra Nevada and foothills, rainfall amounts were generally 2 to 4 inches with the highest amount observed being 5.16" at Nature Point (west of Oakhurst). Fresno received a storm total rain amount of 0.47" and Bakersfield 0.07".

At 1130 PM on Friday 6 February 2015, a mudslide was reported by CHP east of Coarsegold resulting in a one-car accident (no injuries). Law enforcement also reported flooding on Highway 41 near Coarsegold at the same time.

This system also brought gusty winds to the west side of the San Joaquin Valley where gusts were generally 35 to 45 mph on February 6. These winds resulted in blowing dust that severely reduced visibility along Highway 41 in Kings County, closing part of the road for several hours. Wind gusts of 35 to 45 mph also occurred on February 8 into the early morning of February 9, 2015 with a few gusts to near 60 mph through the Pacheco Pass and at the Panoche Road RAWS. Winds were also gusty across the Kern County mountains and over the high elevations of the Sierra in Tulare County with gusts 40 to 50 mph.

(CA-Z089) W CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z090) E CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z091) SW S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z092) SE S.J. VALLEY

02/11/15 00:55 PST	0	Dense Fog
02/14/15 09:45 PST	0	

After the rain that occurred in the San Joaquin Valley on February 5-8, 2015, stable conditions developed under a ridge of high pressure resulting in dense fog development. The fog developed after 1 am on February 11, 2015 and became dense with visibility less than 1000 feet, especially along parts of Highway 41 and Highway 99 in Kings and Fresno counties. The fog lifted after 10 am on February 11, but

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redeveloped shortly after midnight in February 12. The densest fog occurred around sunrise, and impacted the areas from Corcoran to Fresno, along Highways 41, 43, and 99, with numerous schools reporting bus delays due to the fog. There was also dense fog in the Merced area on the morning of February 12. As stable conditions continued, dense fog once again developed during the early morning hours of Friday, February 13, 2015. On this morning, the dense fog was more widespread, but was farther west than previous nights, generally staying west of Highway 99, but extending from west of Merced southward through the center of the San Joaquin Valley to Hanford and Corcoran. The densest fog occurred west of Fresno with several traffic accidents with unknown injuries reported. This fog pattern repeated on the morning of Saturday, February 14, 2015.

(CA-Z089) W CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z090) E CENTRAL S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z091) SW S.J. VALLEY, (CA-Z092) SE S.J. VALLEY

02/18/15 21:55 PST	0	Dense Fog
02/20/15 08:56 PST	0	

High pressure over the west coast brought stable conditions and areas of dense fog over the San Joaquin Valley on February 19-20, 2015. Dense fog began developing around midnight on February 19, becoming widespread by early morning particularly in from Merced to Madera and in the Hanford, Lemoore, and Visalia areas along Highway 198. Several school districts reported bus delays. Several injury traffic accidents were also reported. There was also one fatality as a car collided with a pole in Visalia. The dense fog lifted around 1030 PST. Areas of dense fog redeveloped after 2300 PST on February 19 and persisted through 0900 PST on February 20. The fog was particularly dense in the Fresno and Lemoore areas where visibility was less than 1/8 mile, as well as in Kern county along Highway 99 where visibility less than 200 feet resulted in CHP pacing traffic along Highway 99 through and just north of Bakersfield. By mid morning of February 20, the dense fog lifted into a low stratus deck which persisted over the San Joaquin Valley through day and into the Saturday, February 21, 2015.

KERN COUNTY --- 11.0 NNW MC KITTRICK [35.45, -119.70]

02/22/15 14:00 PST	0	Heavy Rain
02/22/15 15:00 PST	0	Source: Public

Heavy rain estimated between 0.3 to 0.6 inches resulted in water flowing across State Route 33 near Twisselman Road in the vicinity of Belridge. Water was estimated to be 6 inches deep.

KERN COUNTY --- 4.1 WNW KECKS CORNER [35.70, -120.14], 0.2 SE KECKS CORNER [35.67, -120.08]

02/22/15 16:30 PST	0	Heavy Rain
02/22/15 19:00 PST	0	Source: Law Enforcement

Heavy rain resulted in flooding of Highway 46 between Annette Road and Kecks Road.

KERN COUNTY --- BAKERSFIELD [35.37, -119.00]

02/22/15 16:45 PST	0	Heavy Rain
02/22/15 23:00 PST	0	Source: Mesonet

Rainfall amounts of 0.4 to 0.85 inches reported across the City of Bakersfield, including 0.52 inches at Meadows Field Airport. Rainfall resulted in ponding of water on roadways.

KERN COUNTY --- RIDGECREST [35.63, -117.68]

02/22/15 17:12 PST	0	Heavy Rain
02/22/15 23:00 PST	0	Source: Public

Rainfall amounts of 0.75 to 1 inch in the Ridgecrest area with public reports of ponding of water on streets.

KERN COUNTY --- 10.7 SSE BLACKWELLS CORNER [35.48, -119.79]

02/23/15 11:40 PST	0	Tornado (EF0, L: 0.50 mi , W: 50 yd)
02/23/15 11:50 PST	0	Source: Public

Tornado spotted and photographed by the public. Estimated width 50 Yards with an estimated length of 1/2 mile. The duration of the tornado was estimated at 10 minutes.

The persistent high pressure over region began to break down on February 21, 2015, allowing a low pressure system to drop south into Central California on Sunday, February 22, directly over the San Joaquin Valley. The storm system lingered over the area through Monday, February 23. The storm brought showers and thunderstorms to the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Foothills. The showers and thunderstorms produced heavy rainfall across parts of Kern County where flood advisories were issued due to ponding of water on roadways. These advisories included the south end of the San Joaquin Valley as well as the Kern County mountain and desert areas.

The upper level-low persisted until the 23rd, and wrap-around moisture flowed from the northeast into the east side of the San Joaquin Valley. Snow levels were fairly constant around 5000 feet over Kern and Tulare Counties during the 22nd-23rd. Around 5 to 10 inches of

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snow fell over the mountains of Kern and Tulare Counties, mainly during the afternoon of the 22nd and into the morning of the 23rd, and mainly above 6000 feet. A few snow showers persisted over the Sierra Nevada into the afternoon of the 23rd with a few locations in the high Sierra receiving 12 to 20 inches of snow over the two days. In addition, some instability showers and isolated thunderstorms developed in western Kern County around midday on the 23rd. One of the thunderstorms produced a brief weak tornado to the southwest of Belridge, or northwest of Taft, in the hills of the Temblor Range facing the southwestern San Joaquin Valley. There were reports of small hail about 0.25 inch in diameter reported with these thunderstorms.

Storm total rainfall amounts during the 22nd-23rd were around 0.5 to one inch over the San Joaquin Valley from Fresno southward, up to one inch of rain fell in the desert areas, and around 1 to 1.5 inches (with some locally higher amounts) fell over the southern Sierra Nevada and adjacent foothills mainly below 5000 feet. The Tehachapi Mountains received around one quarter to one-half inch of rain, including a few inches of snow above 5000 feet.