

FEBRUARY 2021



# WestFAST News

682 East Vine Street / Suite 7 / Murray, UT 84107 / (801) 685-2555/ [www.westernstateswater.org/westfast](http://www.westernstateswater.org/westfast)

Chair – Patrick Lambert; Federal Liaison Officer – Heather Hofman

## Reclamation investing \$15.4 million to help communities mitigate drought and climate change impacts in Western United States

USBR 2/11/21



The American River in California. The El Dorado Water Agency will upgrade two sensors in a 12-sensor American River Hydrologic Observatory network

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Reclamation is awarding \$15.4 million for projects in the West to prepare for and respond to drought. The WaterSMART Drought Program funding will leverage \$54.9 million in non-federal cost-share to complete projects in seven Western states.

"More than 50 percent of the Western United States is in a severe drought or worse," said Chief Engineer David Raff. "The projects selected will

help communities prepare for the increased risk of a drought by increasing the reliability of water supplies and improving water management."

Reclamation's Drought Response Program is part of WaterSMART. It supports a proactive approach to drought by providing water managers assistance to develop and update comprehensive drought plans. It also implements projects that will build long-term resiliency to drought and supports President Biden's new [Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad](#) as it increases resilience to the impacts of climate change.

"This successful program provides critical climate change adaptation tools for municipal, industrial, and agricultural water resource entities," continued Raff.

The 18 selected projects are:

- City of Scottsdale (Arizona), \$1,500,000
- Navajo Nation (Arizona), \$947,750
- Arvin-Edison Water Storage District (California), \$500,000
- City of Folsom (California), \$750,000
- City of Long Beach (California), \$1,500,000
- City of Sacramento (California), \$1,500,000
- City of Santa Barbara (California), \$1,500,000
- East Orange County Water District (California), \$500,000

- El Dorado Water Agency (California), \$300,000
- Merced Irrigation District (California), \$957,824
- Shafter-Wasco Irrigation District (California), \$500,000
- Southern San Joaquin Municipal Utility District (California), \$1,500,000
- City of Aspen (Colorado), \$59,447
- Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3 (Kansas), \$92,026
- Las Vegas Valley Water District (Nevada), \$848,372
- Southern Nevada Water Authority (Nevada), \$189,351
- East Central Regional Water District (North Dakota), \$733,081
- Provo City (Utah), \$1,500,000

For project descriptions and information on the program, please visit the [Drought Response Program website](#).

In its recent report, Water Reliability in the West - 2021 SECURE Water Act Report, Reclamation found that the duration, severity and frequency of droughts are projected to increase in the future and further strain the many competing demands for water in the West.

"Collaboration with our customers and stakeholders is key as Reclamation seeks to address water management challenges as climate change causes more frequent and severe droughts," added Raff.

Reclamation's Drought Response Program supports science-based decision-making in drought planning, and connects recipients with resources across Federal agencies, including NOAA's National Integrated Drought Information System. "Drought resilience planning, guided by the best science, is critical to moving the nation from a reactive to a proactive approach to drought risk management," said NIDIS Executive Director Veva Deheza. For

more information on NIDIS and its Drought Early Warning Systems, please visit [drought.gov](http://drought.gov).

Media Contact: Peter Soeth,  
303.445.3615, [psoeth@usbr.gov](mailto:psoeth@usbr.gov)

## **Earth just had its 7th-warmest January on record**

NOAA 2/12/21



### **Polar sea ice coverage was below average for the month**

True to trend, Mother Earth kicked off 2021 with a balmy January that ranked 7th-warmest in the temperature record, according to scientists with [NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information](#).

Warmth took its toll on sea ice as well, with below-average ice coverage observed at both ends of the planet.

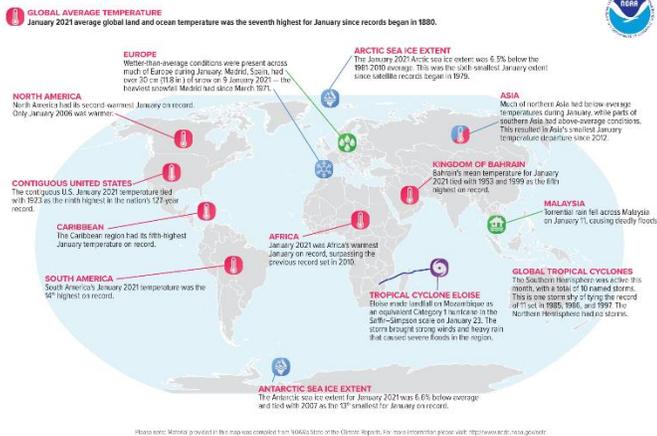
Here's more from NOAA's latest monthly global climate report:

Climate by the numbers | January 2021

The January global land and ocean surface temperature was 1.44 degrees F (0.80 of a degree C) above the 20th-century average, making it the 7th warmest January in the 142-year climate record.

Last month was the 45th-consecutive January and the 433rd-consecutive month with temperatures, at least nominally, above the 20th-century average.

## Selected Significant Climate Anomalies and Events: January 2021



An annotated map of the world plotted with some of the most significant climate events that occurred during January 2021. Please see the story below as well as the report summary from NOAA NCEI at <http://bit.ly/Global202101>. (NOAA NCEI)

### More noteworthy findings

- Near-record warmth for some continents. Africa and North America had their warmest and second-warmest January, respectively, since regional records began in 1910. Meanwhile, much of northern Asia was at least 3.6 degrees F (2.0 degrees C) below average, in stark contrast to most of 2020, when the region was well above average.
- Polar sea ice coverage was quite small. Arctic sea ice extent (coverage) during January was 6.5% below the 1981–2010 average, making it the sixth-smallest January extent in the 43-year record. Antarctic sea ice coverage was 6.6% below the average and tied with January 2007 as the 13th smallest. January 2021 marked the sixth-consecutive January with below-average Antarctic sea ice.
- Snow cover was near normal. The Northern Hemisphere's snow extent for January 2021 was close to normal for this time of year. For North America, snow cover was slightly above average, while Eurasia had slightly below-average cover.

[Access NOAA's latest climate report and download the images.](#)

Media contact: John Bateman  
(202) 424-0929

## Upcoming Meetings

[Western States Water Council Spring 2021 \(195<sup>th</sup>\) Meetings](#), March 23-25, 2021

Hosted Virtually via Zoom by State of Texas

## Upcoming Events

[WestFAST Webinar: The Southwest Oklahoma Water Supply Action Plan](#)

## Other Federal News

USBR 2/4/21. [New prize competition seeks to improve reliability of water deliveries for America's crops by reducing water seeping from canals](#)

NRCS 2/4/21. [Updates to Conservation Easements Strengthens Protection for Farmlands, Grasslands and Wetlands](#)

NOAA 2/8/21. [January 2021 was among the top-10 warmest for U.S.](#)

USGS 2/9/21. [Groundwater Field Visit Data on Monitoring Location Pages](#)

EPA 2/9/21. [EPA Takes Action to Protect Scientific Integrity](#)

DOI 2/11/21. [Interior Announces Plans to Strengthen LWCF](#)

BLM 2/17/21. [Official statement: Department of the Interior will revoke the BLM's comment period on proposed amendment to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan](#)

EPA 2/22/21. [EPA Takes Action to Address PFAS in Drinking Water](#)

USFWS 2/24/21. [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Awards More Than \\$27 Million to Help Coastal Wetland Ecosystems Become More Resilient, Boost Economy and Support Conservation](#)

NOAA 2/26/21. [NOAA begins transition exclusively to electronic navigation charts](#)

USFWS 2/26/21. [States Receive \\$55 Million to Protect Vulnerable Wildlife](#)

## People

USBR 2/1/21. [Statement on the passing of former Imperial Irrigation District General Manager Kevin Kelley](#)

EPA 2/2/21. [EPA Announces Additional Biden-Harris Appointees](#)

DOI 2/3/21. [Interior Department Announces Additional Members of Leadership Team](#)

NRCS 2/18/21. [Statement on Passing of Former NRCS Chief Paul Johnson](#)

DOI 2/22/21. [Interior Department Welcomes Newest Members of Leadership Team](#)

USBR 2/25/21. [Jerzy Salamon is Reclamation's Engineer of the Year](#)

**The WESTERN STATES FEDERAL AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West, including: BLM, DOD, EPA, FWS, NASA, NOAA, NPS, NRCS, Reclamation, USACE, USFS, and USGS. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council and the Western Governors' Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.**