

Water, water everywhere

[By Ashley Gebb/Appeal-Democrat](#)

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A recent series of storms in the Mid-Valley boosted area rainfall and snowpack but has not lifted the state from its drought quite yet.

After raising some reservoir water levels and causing boat ramp closures and power outages, rain will leave for a few days. The forecast is for partly cloudy and eventual clear skies today and a mostly sunny Thursday with a high of 62.

"We have no rain forecast until the weekend," said Jim Mathews, meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

Yuba City received 2.4 inches of precipitation since the first storm arrived Feb. 10, which brings the area total to 60 percent of its average rainfall.

"We are far from normal," Mathews said. "But the month of February is looking pretty good and we've got half the month to go yet."

The rain was enough to cause a much-needed boost to some area reservoirs.

The Oroville Dam reservoir level was up to 674.35 feet, up almost 4 feet since Feb. 10. That amounts to about 26,300-acre-feet, or almost 8.6 billion gallons of water.

The Sacramento River also rose, closing the Tisdale Boat Ramp south of Meridian in Sutter County. The ramp will reopen when the water level returns to at least 5 feet below the top of it for five days, in accordance with Sutter County Public Works' policy.

Curt Aikens, general manager of the Yuba County Water Agency, said the storm series was good news as a weather generator but did not make too much of an impact.

Year-to-date rainfall increased by about 20 percent and represented 7 percent of the seasonal average at the district's Colgate Power House, he said. The snowpack increased by 46 percent and is at 14 percent of its seasonal average.

"It just makes it go from a statewide perspective from a critical situation to maybe a bad situation," Aikens said. "But it's still not good."

The drought situation will not be clear until April 1 but to reach average rainfall at the Colgate Power House, the area would need 10 more similar storms, he said. Five more similar storms are needed to reach average snowpack.

Power outages were minor in the Yuba-Sutter area but a larger outage in Colusa took out power at 814 homes and businesses near Main and Bridge streets Tuesday. PG&E is not sure what caused the outage, but power was restored at 1:07 p.m., less than half an hour after it went out, said spokesman Paul Moreno.

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