

## Recent Calif. storms won't overcome drought

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SACRAMENTO (KABC) -- Between 8 and 10 feet of snow fell in the High Sierra during last week's storms in Northern California. But it won't help the drought situation very much -- especially in the southern half of the state.

Water experts agree the string of recent storms is helping California slowly climb back from a three-year drought. But the head of the [California Department of Water Resources](#) told the state's Agricultural Board today several days of wet weather can't make up for three dry years.

"One-hundred-fourteen, 115 percent of normal -- but for the year, if this is the last that we got, that's only about 64 percent. So we're still in a hole," said Lester Snow, director of Calif. Dept. of Water Resources.

At this point, though, the lack of storms isn't the problem for the lower half of California. Even if the state got all the water it needed to catch up, there's still the problem of getting it to Central and Southern California.

A federal order to save endangered fish is still severely restricting how much water can be pumped from the fragile Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Twenty-five million Californians depend on the delta for drinking water; 19 million in Southern California alone.

"We're not one, two, three or a dozen storms away from solving all of our problems," said Metropolitan Water District of Southern California spokesman Bob Muir. "Our problems will be solved once the problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta are finally addressed."

Central Valley farmers are frustrated too. One local water district estimates 40,000 jobs were lost there last year because with water so scarce, fewer farmers decided to plant their crops.

"We're going to have to do something because we cannot survive this way," said almond farmer Marvin Meyers. "My neighbors are dying, tearing out trees. They're just going under."

The [National Academy of Sciences](#) is currently reviewing the validity of the research behind the imperiled fish, which could later influence changes in how much water flows out of the Delta.

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