MENDOCINO COUNTY
DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN

The Drought Resilience Plan (DRP) aims to facilitate water shortage preparedness for small water systems and domestic wells owners in drought events.

DROUGHT MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Over the past decade, several drought planning actions and mitigation efforts have been undertaken in the County in response to droughts, these include:

In Mendocino a total of 84% of domestic wells and 93% of state small water systems are at high risk of being impacted by drought and water shortages.

1. Monitoring Programs

The California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) Program and Ukiah Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (UVGSA) are initiatives that support data collection, long-term groundwater monitoring, sustainability planning, and assessment of droughts on water resources.

2. Creation of Water Authorities and Planning Frameworks

The Ukiah Valley Water Authority (UVWA), a Joint Powers Authority, was established through the consolidation of multiple water agencies to improve regional water management, optimize resource sharing, and enhance emergency water interconnections.

3. Emergency Regulations and Agreements

In response to severe drought conditions, the County adopted emergency water conservation rules in 2014 requiring a 20% reduction in water use and use of local water shortage contingency plans. In 2020–2022, the County and City of Ukiah undertook emergency water hauling to support the water shortages in Fort Bragg and Mendocino.

4. Water Education

Mendocino County collaborates with local agencies to develop Drought and Water Conservation Education initiatives, providing the public with essential resources on water conservation.

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Short-term Response Actions

Short-term response actions are designed to address the immediate impacts of dry events in response to drought triggers.

Drought response triggers are designed to address varying levels of water shortages and are structured into stages of increasing severity:

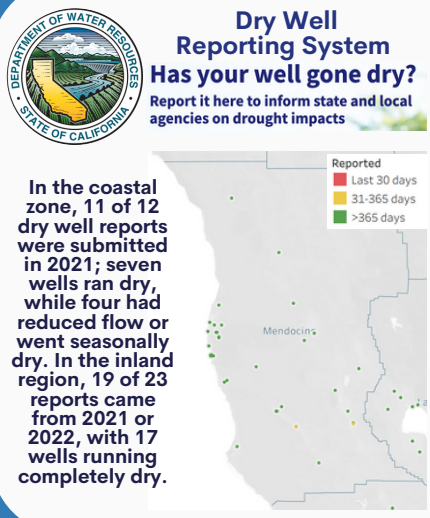
Stage 1) Water Shortage Monitoring, Stage 2) Water Shortage Warning, and Stage 3) Severe and Emergency Water Shortage

Response Triggers

Dry Well Reports

The Dry Well Reporting System collects data on well outages and connect well owners with drought aid resources.

Since reporting is voluntary, dry well report summaries likely underestimate the actual number of dry wells. Reporting a dry well helps improve data accuracy and response efforts.

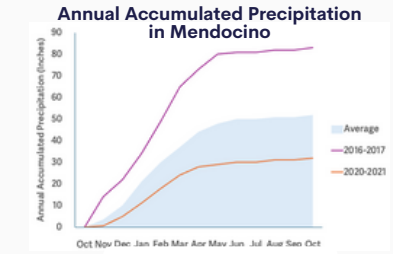


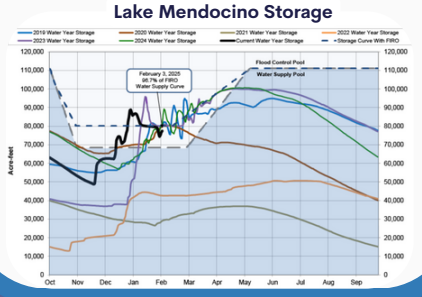
In the coastal zone, 11 of 12 dry well reports were submitted in 2021; seven wells ran dry, while four had reduced flow or went seasonally dry. In the inland region, 19 of 23 reports came from 2021 or 2022, with 17 wells running completely dry.

Water-Year

The current year's hydrology can serve as an indicator of potential or ongoing water shortage events across the County. Specifically, precipitation and reservoir levels can be used to assess the likelihood of shortages if these levels are below average.

Coastal indicator - Precipitation
Inland indicator - Reservoir Storage

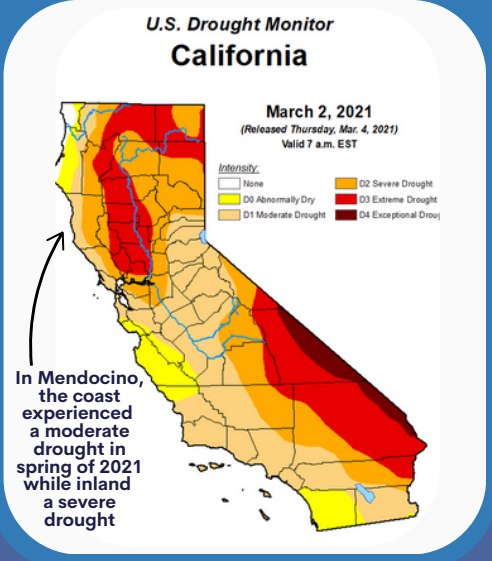




U.S. Drought Monitor

This indicator identifies regions experiencing drought conditions and is used to guide the declaration of drought emergencies in the country.

The Drought Monitor highlights areas in the state experiencing drought intensity: none, dry, moderate, severe, extreme, and exceptional.



In Mendocino, the coast experienced a moderate drought in spring of 2021 while inland a severe drought

Drought Stages and Short-term Actions

Drought Stage	COASTAL REGION		INLAND REGION		COUNTY	Actions
	Dry Well Reports	Current Year Hydrology	Dry Well Reports	Current Year Hydrology	U.S. Drought Monitor	
1) Water Shortage Monitoring	Less than 4 reports over any three-month period	Two-year precipitation total is 80% or more of average	Less than 4 reports over any three-month period	Lake Mendocino total storage is greater than 70% of total target water supply curve	None; OR D0 Abnormally Dry	Track drought response triggers;Convene meetings, coordination and partnership with County Drought Task Force, UVGSA, and Nongovernmental Organizations; Identification and pursuant of funding; Implementation of mutual aid agreements, outreach
2) Water Shortage Warning	4 – 12 reports over any three-month period	Two-year precipitation total is 50 – 80% of average	4 – 6 reports over any three-month period	Lake Mendocino total storage is 45 - 70% of total target water supply curve	D1 Moderate Drought; OR D2 Drought-Severe for less than 8 consecutive weeks	Community engagement and outreach; Identification and pursuant of additional funding; Voluntary water cutbacks; Temporary ordinances
3) Severe and Emergency Water Shortage	12 or more reports over any three-month period	Two-year precipitation total is less than 50% average	6 or more reports over any three-month period	Lake Mendocino total storage is less than 45% of total target water supply curve	D2 Severe Drought for 8 or more consecutive weeks; OR D3 Extreme; OR D4 Exceptional	County emergency proclamation; Seek state and federal emergency declarations; Emergency/Interim water supplies (filling stations, water hauling, bottled water

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