Weather this week February 7, 2022

Hi Folks,

Over the past seven days, no precipitation has fallen in California as shown in the observed precipitation map from the National Weather Service California Nevada River Forecast Center (CNRFC) depicted in Figure 1. Over the next six days, no precipitation is forecast for California which is shown in Figure 2 per the CNRFC as well. While we have passed the climatological peak in atmospheric river activity, February is still part of the big three months (December-February) when, under average conditions, half our annual precipitation occurs.

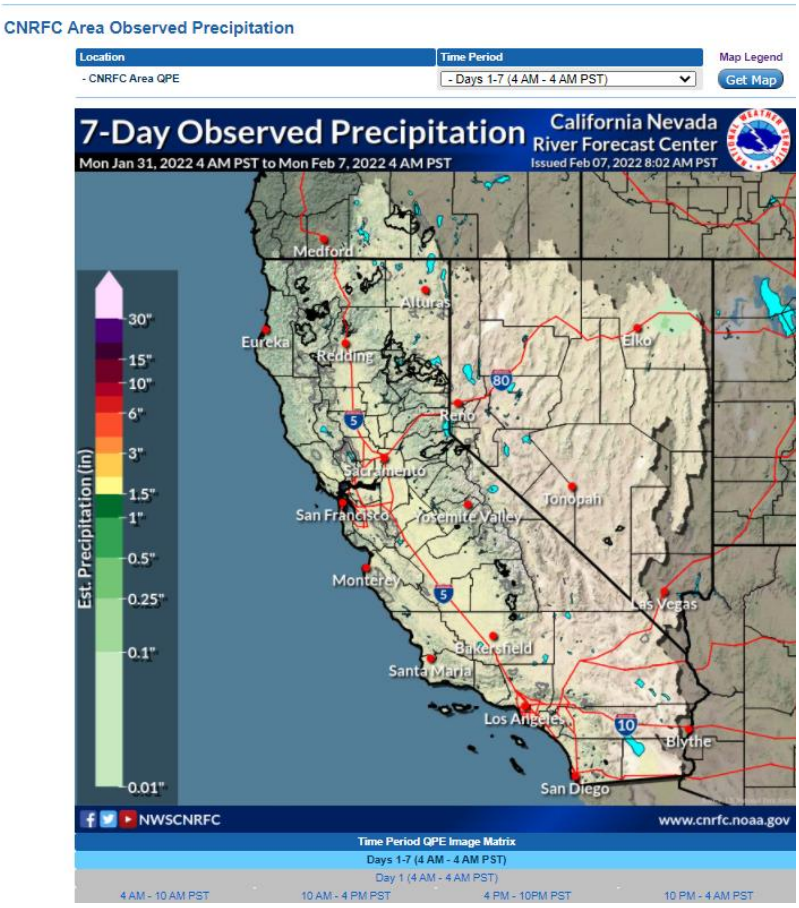

Figure `1. CNRFC map of observed precipitation from 1/31/22 to 2/7/22.

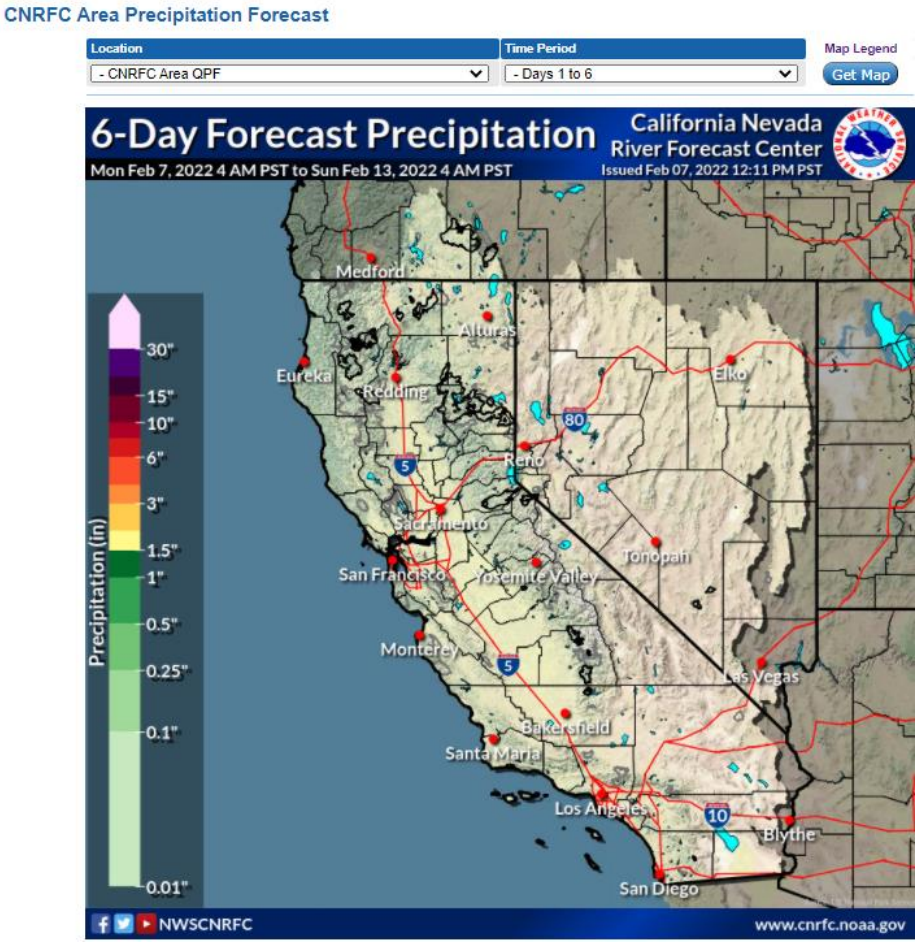

Figure 2. CNRFC map of forecast precipitation for the next six days. No rain is forecast.

Looking out at the second week of the forecast, the US global forecast model indicates movement of the high-pressure system to the northwest and weather systems sliding down the coast with rain potentially returning around the 20th of February. There is significant uncertainty as to if these systems come down the coast offshore which produces wet weather for California or if they come down over land which produces less precipitation and more drying winds. If the high-pressure system moves far enough north and west, storms can cut under the ridge which can lead to stronger atmospheric river events and potentially heavy rainfall events. An update will be provided next week.

Coming of a record to near record dry January, the water year to date precipitation has fallen to near or below average as shown in Figure 3 which is a map of water year to date precipitation from the Western Region Climate Center's California Climate Tracker (https://wrcc.dri.edu/my/climate/tracker/CA). The southeast deserts of California remain well above average as their annual average precipitation is so small, often less than five inches per year. The North Coast region on the other hand fared the best in January in terms of precipitation, but the amount that fell was well below what normally falls leading to the below annual average conditions there.

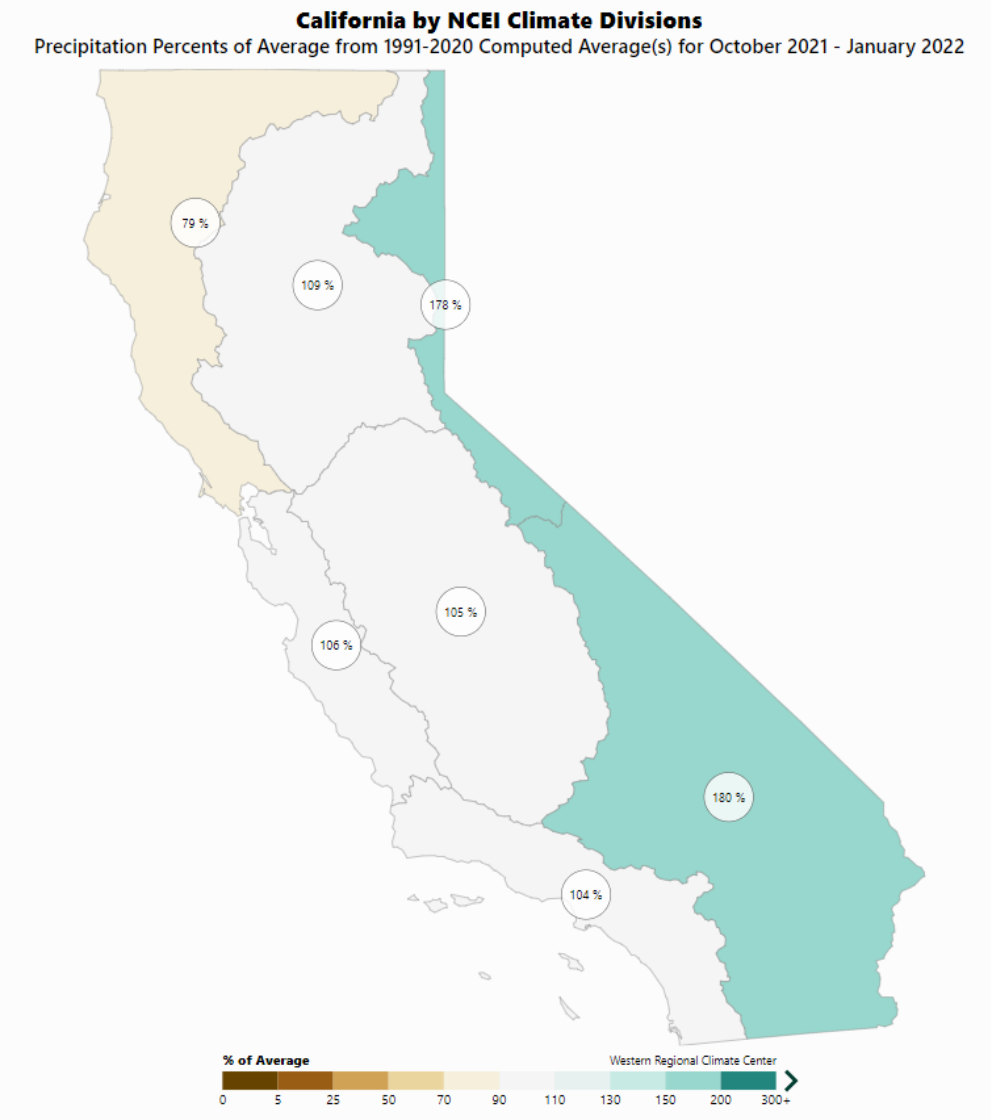

Figure 3. WRCC map of water year to date precipitation as a percent of average with California divided into its NOAA Climate Divisions.