

California Water and Infrastructure Report

Formerly, the “California Drought (and Flood) Update”



For June 14, 2018

by Patrick Ruckert

Published weekly since July, 2014

An archive of all these weekly reports can be found at both links below:

<http://www.californiadroughtupdate.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaDroughtUpdate>

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I stand before you as an emissary of the American people to deliver a message of hope and vision and a message of peace.

Our unprecedented meeting, the first between an American president and a leader of North Korea, proves that real change is indeed possible.

The past does not have to define the future. Yesterday's conflict does not have to be tomorrow's war. And as history has proven over and over again, adversaries can indeed become friends. We can honor the sacrifice of our forefathers by replacing the horrors of battle with the blessings of peace, and that's what we're doing, and that's what we have done.

Our eyes are wide open, but peace is always worth the effort, especially in this case.

Anyone can make war, but only the most courageous can make peace. The current state of affairs cannot endure forever.

We dream of a future where all Koreans can live together in harmony, where families are reunited and hopes are reborn and where the light of peace chases away the darkness of war. This bright future is within, and this is what's happening. It is right there, it's within our reach. It's going to be there. It's going to happen.

It's a very great day. It's a very great moment in the history of the world.

President Donald Trump

Opening statement at his press conference in Singapore, June 12, 2018

A Note To Readers

Not since President John Kennedy has a U.S. President expressed so eloquently a vision of the future that must be the mission of this nation, and all nations.

The President, indeed, has set the bar very high, and it is in that spirit that all the barriers to not just world peace, but to real economic development, can be overcome.

What does this have to do with California's infrastructure and water? If you need to ask, you have not been paying attention. If so, perhaps you should really study the LaRouche PAC report:

Campaign to Win the Future-- A New Paradigm for Mankind: LaRouche's Four Laws for Economic Recovery.

<http://media.larouchepac.com/larouche/documents/20180503-LPAC-2018-Campaign-web.pdf>

In This Week's Report

Drought is spreading and intensifying throughout the Western States, and even western Canada. The U.S. Drought Monitor for California continues to show a very slow intensification of drought, but the other states surrounding us see a much more rapid process of growing serious drought. And it is creating the potential for a very dangerous fire season.

The Oroville Dam Update this week only has a construction update video.

That is followed by an article on the changes in global water availability, which presents an interesting picture of the recent shifts in the amount of water available region by region. The article by a serious scientist, Jay Famiglietti, to be warned, does take as a given climate change as a driving factor, though he does not say that it is man-caused.

The Poseidon desalination plant project for Huntington Beach continues to move toward permit approval and it could be built and pumping fresh water into Orange County in 2020.

The 12 Northern California wildfires last year that killed 41 people, and were the largest fires in California history, investigators have concluded, were sparked by PG&E power lines. PG&E, of course is attempting to deflect the blame. My headline for the section is, "Now the Lawyers Will Have Their Day."

The Delta Tunnels, or as the formal name calls the project, CaliforniaFix, has been charged by opponents of using political maneuvers to fix the game for approval to go ahead. There is something to that charge, but what else is new? What is of interest is that legislation introduced to Congress this week, perhaps provides a means of stopping the incessant environmentalist blocking of infrastructure projects for years, or even decades. See the section titled, "How To Defeat Environmentalist Blocking of Infrastructure Projects."

That is followed by the report on the initiative that will be on the California ballot in November on whether to split the state into three states. This one is sponsored by a billionaire Silicon Valley liberal and thus we have the phenomenon of Confederates disguised as liberals.

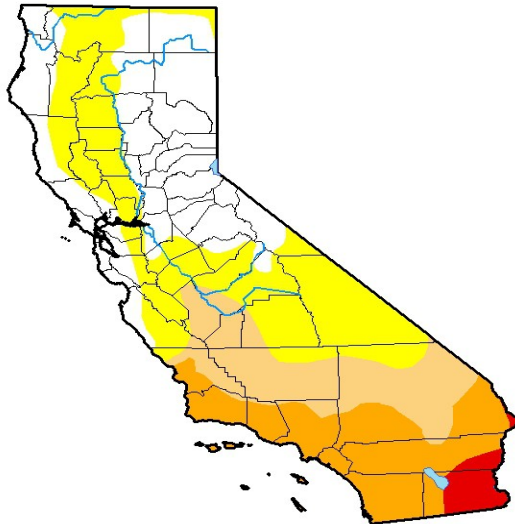
The last section is simply "Infrastructure Developments," and contains a variety of items. Among them is a report on my friend and colleague Kesha Rogers, who is an independent candidate for the U.S. Congress from Houston, Texas.

Drought Spreading in Western States

U.S. Drought Monitor

U.S. Drought Monitor California

June 12, 2018
(Released Thursday, Jun. 14, 2018)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	30.39	69.61	37.07	20.75	2.77	0.00
Last Week 06-05-2018	30.39	69.61	37.08	20.75	2.78	0.00
3 Months Ago 03-13-2018	11.08	88.92	47.68	22.31	0.43	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-02-2018	55.70	44.30	12.69	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-26-2017	77.88	22.12	8.24	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 06-13-2017	76.47	23.53	8.24	1.06	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:

Brian Fuchs
National Drought Mitigation Center

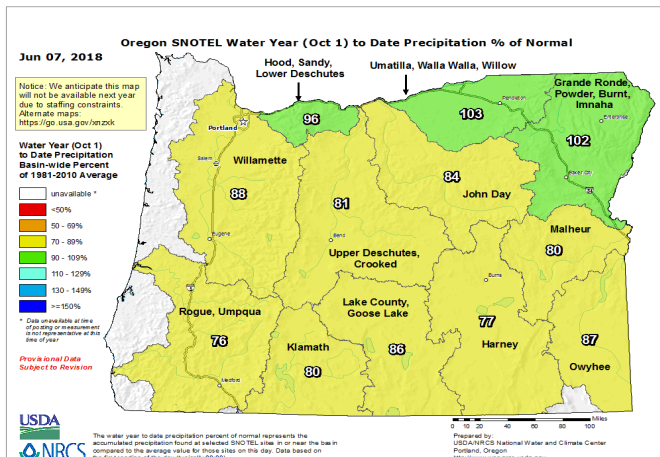


<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Oregon

Rapid snowmelt, dry spring indicate critically low summer water supply

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1404219>



PORTLAND, Ore., June 7, 2018 — The [June Water Supply Outlook Report](#) from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service predicts water shortages across much of Oregon this summer. Unseasonably warm temperatures in May combined with a drier than normal snow season will mean significantly low streams in many areas.

OREGON DROUGHT: Water shortages, fire danger intensifies

- *The News Guard*
- *Jun 7, 2018*

https://www.thenewsguard.com/news/oregon-drought-water-shortages-fire-danger-intensifies/article_578ed58c-6a9f-11e8-a623-07f9c0003ce6.html

Drought intensifies

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center is calling for a warmer and drier than normal summer and the Drought Monitor recently added a severe drought designation for parts of central and southeastern Oregon.

Governor Kate Brown has officially declared a drought state of emergency in Grant, Harney, Lake, and Klamath Counties. Water users are advised to plan for water shortages in these regions, especially those without access to reservoir storage.

Western Canada

Okanagan snowpack decreases dramatically as threat of drought looms

- *Andrea Peacock*
- *June 7, 2018*

http://www.kelownadailycourier.ca/news/article_6772089a-6aa7-11e8-bf8e-db46c43b7a05.html

Snowpack in the Okanagan has decreased dramatically since mid-May, as officials predict increased risks of a drought.

Snowpack in the Okanagan was at 51 per cent of normal on June 1, according to the River Forecast Centre's latest report released Thursday.

This is down from 126 per cent of normal on May 15 and 206 per cent of normal on May 1.

Last year on June 1, the snowpack in the Okanagan was at 228 per cent of normal.

Environment Canada is predicting a warmer and drier than normal summer, increasing the risks for low flows and drought, the River Forecast Centre stated in its report.

Western Fire Season May Be Very Serious

Busy peak fire season likely in Northwest, Intermountain regions

By Brad Carlson

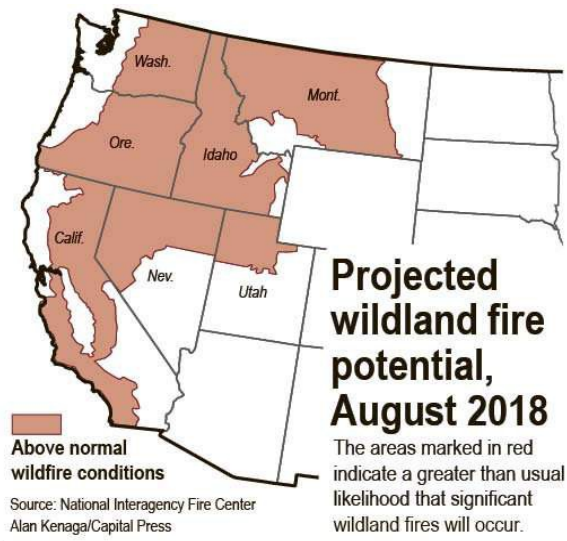
Capital Press

June 11, 2018 11:20AM

<http://www.capitalpress.com/State/20180611/busy-peak-fire-season-likely-in-northwest-intermountain-regions>

NIFC's forecast said parts of California, Washington and Oregon received less than half the normal precipitation in May, jump-starting the fuel-drying process. A dry spring may offset Washington's near-normal snowpack, allowing mountain fuels to become critically dry by July, the forecast said. Later in July, Northern Rockies fuels that grew strongly during the region's wet spring and follow a snowy winter should be dried out at lower and middle elevations.

The healthy fine-fuel crop elevates fire potential through August and early September across many lower and middle elevations from the central Great Basin and California north to Canada, NIFC said.



Higher mountain elevations also may see greater fire potential should warmer and drier than average conditions develop as expected.

Drier-than-average conditions are expected to develop across much of the West starting this month and lasting through September, the NIFC forecast said.

Wildfires continue to burn as West hit with near-record heat

- *By Max Golembo*

Jun 11, 2018

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/wildfires-continue-burn-west-hit-record-heat/story?id=55801163>

Eleven large [wildfires](#) are burning in the U.S., with most of them centered in the Southwest. The largest, the 416 [fire](#) in Durango, Colorado, has grown to almost 17,000 acres.

CA Firefighters: 'There's Nowhere Else in the Nation That Burns Like California'



06-14-2018

Heather Sells

<http://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2018/june/ca-firefighters-theres-nowhere-else-in-the-nation-that-burns-like-california>

California firefighters no longer gear up for the "fire season." They gear up to fight fires year-round and they want the public to get into that mindset as well.

The [insurance industry numbers](#) show California has become the leading state for wildfires with 9,560 in 2017 that consumed 1.3 million acres. Georgia had the second-highest number of fires but lagged far behind with just 3,929, and Idaho had the second-highest number of acres burned but again, lagged far behind with 686,262 acres burned.

In California, the costs in 2017 were severe: 44 people dead and more than \$10 billion in damage.

Mike Mohler, deputy director of communications for [Cal Fire](#), says there's particular concern for people living in urban areas who think they're not at risk. He cites last year's Santa Rosa fire as an example. "Walmart burned in the middle of the city. It jumped a six-lane freeway. It burned down Starbucks. Those are the kind of conditions that we're seeing," he told CBN News.

Oroville Dam Update

Only a new video from the Department of Water Resources is our update this week.

Oroville Spillway Flyover June 12, 2018

California DWR



Published on Jun 13, 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqYU9080rcs>

Climate Change Once Again

I think I have made clear in writing this report for the last four years that I dismiss the idea that climate change is primarily caused by mankind's activities. But that does not mean that perhaps the planet is now undergoing perhaps a more rapid change in its climate than experienced in previous decades. That remains to be seen. Of course, climate changes. It always has and always will. The more important question is mankind's reaction to that natural phenomenon. Act like King Canute and attempt to stop the tide from coming in? Or, mobilize and do what we do best: Change ourselves and the world around us by the most aggressive policy of scientific discovery and the development of the technologies that continue to improve the conditions of life all human beings.

That said, the following article by one who does have some serious credentials, Jay Famiglietti, underlines what I have said. The entire article is worth the read.

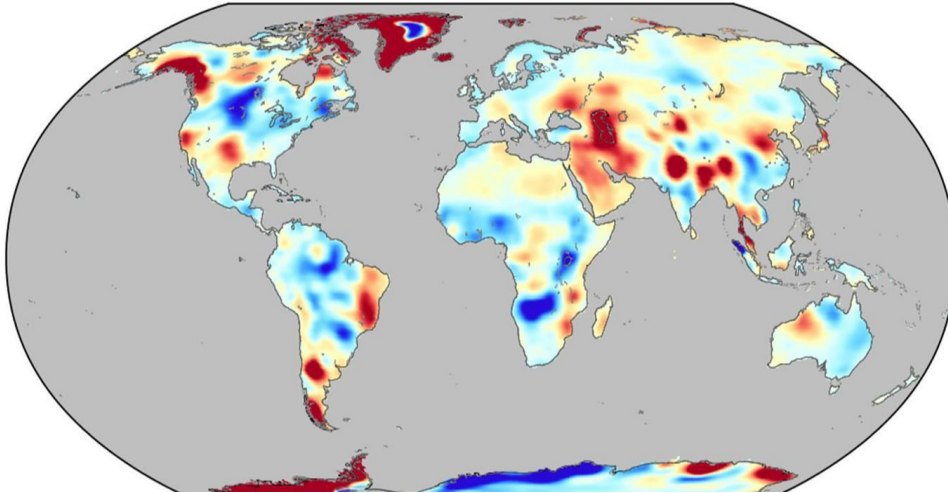
Earth's dismal water future, mapped

By [Jay Famiglietti](#)

Jun 10, 2018 | 4:05 AM

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-famiglietti-shifting-water-sources-20180610-story.html>

Emerging trends in global freshwater availability from GRACE (2002-2016)



The Earth's fresh water distribution has changed rapidly since 2002. Progressively deeper hues represent the greatest and most problematic rates of change. (Jay Famiglietti / Special to The Times)

Satellite data and images are provocative, even disturbing. They confront us with a global view that can be at once breathtaking, like a piece of art, and yet, in this era of rapidly changing climate, they paint a picture of the demise of the environment. How and if we will respond to what we see is uncertain. That uncertainty lies at the root of our perilous future.

The water future the map portends is daunting.

In California's Central Valley, parts of which are dark red on our map, mid-latitude drying, persistent drought and falling water tables are already driving the cost of drilling deeper wells far beyond what any average family can afford. And declining groundwater quality and subsiding land are signals that the aquifers are being pushed past their tipping point, losing more water than can be replenished in a year.

Hydrologist Jay Famiglietti is a professor and incoming director of the Global Institute for Water Security at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. He is senior author of the article "Emerging Trends in Global Freshwater Availability," published in Nature in May.

Desalination

Headlines are often deceptive. What the article describes is actually almost routine.

Water district delays tentative deal with Poseidon for desalination plant

By [Martin Wisckol](#)

Orange County Register

June 6, 2018

<https://www.ocregister.com/2018/06/06/water-district-delays-tentative-deal-with-poseidon-for-desalination-plant/>

Acknowledging opponents' concerns, the Orange County Water District board on Wednesday night postponed a vote on updated terms for buying water from the [desalination plant proposed for Huntington Beach](#) by Poseidon Resources.



Poseidon is pursuing its final two permits for a proposed desalination operation adjacent to the AES power plant in Huntington Beach. Above is an artist's rendering of the desalination facilities, in the bottom right-hand corner, at the power plant. (Courtesy of Poseidon Water.)

The non-binding term sheet, which will be considered again July 18, would revise the groundwork for an eventual contract if Poseidon gets the final [two regulatory permits needed](#) for construction and the district decides to proceed.

Some 18 residents, environmental activists and representatives from other water districts leveled criticism at the project, questioning the need, the cost and the track record of Poseidon's 2 1/2-year-old desalter plant in Carlsbad. Numerous opponents also complained that they'd had insufficient time to study the revised term sheet, which was released to the public on Friday.

Several of the 10 water board members also raised questions and while others on the panel said they were ready to support the updated document, the vote was unanimous to hold off on a decision.

"I think it would improve the public's trust and I see little harm in delaying this," said board member Bruce Whitaker, who also sits on the Fullerton City Council.

The board's willingness to slow down the process — which has already been on the drawing board for nearly two decades — caught some off guard, as many expected swift approval.

"I'm stunned," said Ray Hiemstra, associate director for Orange County Coastkeeper, a leading opponent of the project. "What this means is there's enough doubt, they don't want to ram it through."

However, Poseidon Vice President Scott Maloni appeared to take latest delay in stride.

"It's an appropriate action," he said. "It gives people more opportunity to comment."

Now the Lawyers Will Have Their Day

12 Northern California wildfires sparked by PG&E power lines, investigators say

By [Kurtis Alexander](#)

June 8, 2018

<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/12-Northern-California-fires-caused-by-PG-E-power-12979955.php>

At least a dozen wildfires that ripped through Northern California last October, including the deadly Atlas and Nuns fires in the North Bay, were caused by Pacific Gas and Electric Co. power lines, state officials said Friday.

The findings by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection are the first to lay out an official source of ignition for any of the Wine Country blazes, which killed 41 people and destroyed nearly 9,000 homes in a wind-driven inferno. The most destructive of the burns, the Tubbs Fire that hit Santa Rosa, remains under investigation.

The completed investigations show that downed electric lines or trees and branches coming into contact with power equipment sparked eight fires in Sonoma and Napa counties, which resulted in eight fatalities, as well as Mendocino County's Redwood Fire, which left nine dead. Three smaller blazes, in Lake, Humboldt and Butte counties, were also ignited by PG&E equipment, according to Cal Fire.

In eight of the 12 fires, Cal Fire officials said PG&E violated state law, though investigators did not cite what specific laws were broken.

Friday's announcement has major ramifications for the utility, which has warned of an unprecedented financial hit as victims take to the courts.

PG&E released a statement Friday saying the company was saddened by the losses from the wildfires, but distanced itself from responsibility.

"Based on the information we have so far, we continue to believe our overall programs met our state's high standards," the company said.

Cal Fire officials are forwarding the completed investigations of the eight fires in which PG&E is alleged to have violated state law to district attorneys in the counties that burned. These fires are the Atlas, Norrbom, Partrick, Pythian, Adobe and Pocket fires in Sonoma and Napa counties as well as the Sulphur Fire in Lake County and Blue Fire in Humboldt County.

District attorneys have the authority to pursue criminal charges or civil suits. The Sonoma County district attorney's office confirmed Friday that it had been in touch with Cal Fire about the investigations, as had district attorneys in Napa and Lake counties and state Attorney General Xavier Becerra.

Bill Brockley, Sonoma County assistant district attorney, said his office was reviewing Cal Fire's findings before deciding how to move forward.

The California Public Utilities Commission, which regulates state power companies, also can issue fines.

October's unprecedented blazes burned more than 245,000 acres across Northern California. Some 170 separate ignitions were counted, according to Cal Fire.

How To Defeat Environmentalist Blocking of Infrastructure

Projects

Those who oppose the Governor's Delta Tunnels plan exemplify how environmentalists can tie up projects for years or even decades. While the tunnels will not add one drop of water to the state's supply and are not a solution for what we require over the next 50 years, what the article describes as the potential for Federal action to break the obstruction of necessary infrastructure projects may be something we will see more of. Especially if and when the President is freed up from the coup attempt against him and anti-government scum like Congressman Paul Ryan are gone.

In the article I highlighted one sentence. In the next section the liberal Confederates have an initiative to split the state into three sections. The complaint from the same environmentalists against Federal "interference" in our "states rights" is another Confederate argument.

Controversial California WaterFix bill on the table

- [Tony Kukulich](#)
- Jun 13, 2018

https://www.thepress.net/news/controversial-california-waterfix-bill-on-the-table/article_f9252418-6f6e-11e8-99e0-2b701a027fbe.html

A federal spending bill containing a provision that could spell disaster for opponents of the California WaterFix project passed an important hurdle when it was approved by the House Committee on Appropriations last week.

The Fiscal Year 2019 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, introduced by Congressman Ken Calvert (CA-42), includes a rider identified as Section 437. If approved, the rider on page 141 of a 142-page document will exempt the California WaterFix project from state and federal judicial review. Since the spending bill's introduction, another rider, authored by Congressman David Valadao (CA-21), was added that would also exempt the Central Valley Project and State Water Project from judicial review.

Upon its introduction, the bill drew sharp criticism from a variety of tunnel critics on the state and national levels.

Assemblymember Jim Frazier (D-Discovery Bay) expressed outrage at the proposed legislation and in a Facebook post called it an "attempted end run around states' rights." (emphasis added)

If the bill is passed in its current form, project opponents will be denied an important tool in their fight to prevent the construction of the tunnels.

In an email to The Press, Calvert said that the project has already undergone more than a decade of analysis and review. Further, he expressed concern that, given the volume of environmental documents, "environmental obstructionists" could keep the project tied up in the courts into the foreseeable future.

"Few infrastructure projects in the history of our nation have gone through as much scrutiny as the California WaterFix," said Calvert. "After more than a decade of studies and more than 50,000 pages of environmental documents, all of the project's stakeholders have had a plethora of opportunities to express their thoughts and concerns. The tough decisions about the California WaterFix have been made by Gov. Brown, democrat and republican legislators, and a host of water officials, and now we must move forward with the project. It's long past time to give Californians the reliable water system they deserve."

Meanwhile, Calvert fired back at critics in a letter to the editor of the Los Angeles Times.

“...the language in my bill is indeed intended to blow up the roadblocks built by radical environmentalists who desperately want to kill a project that will provide a clean, reliable water supply for 25 million Californians,” wrote Calvert in his letter.

Confederates disguised As Liberals

As reported widely on June 12, an initiative to bust up California into three states has probably qualified for the November ballot. Since its likelihood of passing is near zero all the hullabaloo about it is really overdone. And even if it passed by some devilish and obscene manner, since it then must be approved by the U.S. Congress, a less than zero possibility, we will just leave it here with one final comment. Since each of the three “states” will have one of the three major population centers-- San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles and San Diego, that would guarantee that the former state of California would have six liberal Democratic Senators. So, for all you “populists” out there, be careful for what you wish for.

Anyway, the last time someone tried to monkey around with borders, Abraham Lincoln took care of them.



This is really happening: Measure to split California into three states qualifies for November ballot

*by Casey Tolan Bay Area News Group
June 12, 2018*

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/06/12/ballot-measure-split-california-three-states/>

For the first time since before the Civil War, voters across California will decide in November on a proposal to split up the Golden State — potentially remaking it into three new states.

An initiative dividing California, pushed by Silicon Valley venture capital investor Tim Draper, received enough signatures to qualify it for the November ballot, the Secretary of State's office [confirmed](#) Tuesday afternoon.

While the effort has cleared a major hurdle by getting on the ballot, it will be a tough sell to voters and [would require Congressional approval](#).

The proposal would split America's most populous state into three: California would be reduced to a coastal strip running south from Monterey to just past Los Angeles. The Bay Area would be part of a new Northern California state with a border that starts north of Monterey, runs east and north to the Nevada state line, and includes everything north to the Oregon border. A new Southern California state would run south from the Northern California border, skirt around the coast from Monterey past Los Angeles, and include San Diego, Death Valley and the rest of the state east to Nevada and Arizona.

The effort faces strong headwinds. A [poll conducted in April](#) found that only 17 percent of registered California voters favored the proposal, while 72 percent opposed it.

Even if approved by state voters, splitting up the state still would require approval from Congress — no easy thing in a sharply divided country. Voters approved breaking California into two states in 1859, but Congress never acted on that request.

Creating two new states would add four new U.S. Senators, two for each of the additional Californias, while reshuffling electoral college math in presidential elections. [Initial analyses suggest](#) that Northern California and California would remain reliably Democratic, while Southern California would be a swing state.

Infrastructure Developments

Here is a video that presents at least a partial picture of the state of the U.S. Infrastructure. It is presented here not as an endorsement of its conclusions or specific "solutions," but to give you a visual picture of a nation falling apart.

Crumbling America Full Documentary

Produced in 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pducRLyDmiY>

Real Solutions

My friend and colleague Kesha Rogers is an Independent candidate for U.S. Congress in Houston, Texas. Hurricane Harvey was very personal for her, as both of her parents died as the vehicle they were driving was swept away by flood waters. She is one of the leaders of the LaRouche PAC and is challenging the Democratic incumbent in Houston, Al Green, who spends all his time these days in his futile attempt to impeach President Trump.

Here is a link to her campaign web site:

Kesha Rogers 2018

<https://www.kesharogers.com/>



And here is her warning that not only has the damage from the hurricanes of last year that destroyed Houston and Puerto Rico not be repaired, but virtually nothing in the building of the necessary infrastructure to prevent such disasters even begun.

By Kesha Rogers

June 12, 2018

How are officials talking about “be prepared for hurricane season” and “make sure you have your batteries and flashlights and bottled water” when people are still living in their tents in their own yard? When apartments and homes are still ripped out and praying for sheet rock? Hurricane Harvey was the biggest flood disaster in the history of the USA, but there is no mobilization of adequate response. Houston (and the entire Gulf Coast, and Caribbean, including Puerto Rico) need an immediate, top down, federal initiative in the spirit of the Tennessee Valley Authority, to rebuild the washed out homes, buy out the flood plains, establish flood-proof nuclear power grids, establish water diversion plans big enough to handle a “Harvey repeat”, and go beyond it. This isn’t a “local” or “pork barrel” spending program; Houston’s port and space center are crucial international hubs of logistics and scientific progress that cannot be held up by some mere 1,000 year storm. It is time to stop the hemming and hawing and build. Do it now! The Reconstruction Finance Corporation was a model that works. Not another life lost by preventable disasters.

Newborns in China can expect more healthy years of life than Americans

Jun 4, 2018

By Irina Ivanova / MoneyWatch

https://www.cbsnews.com/amp/news/newborns-in-china-can-expect-more-healthy-years-of-life-than-americans/?__twitter_impression=true

The Chinese economy has a ways to go before its size matches that of the U.S. But in other key metrics, the Chinese have already pulled ahead.

China's "healthy life expectancy"—a measure of how many years a person can expect to live independently—has surpassed that of the U.S. for the first time, according to the World Health

Organization. Healthy life expectancy in China was 68.7, compared with 68.5 for U.S. babies.

The WHO figures relate to 2016, the latest year for which data is available.

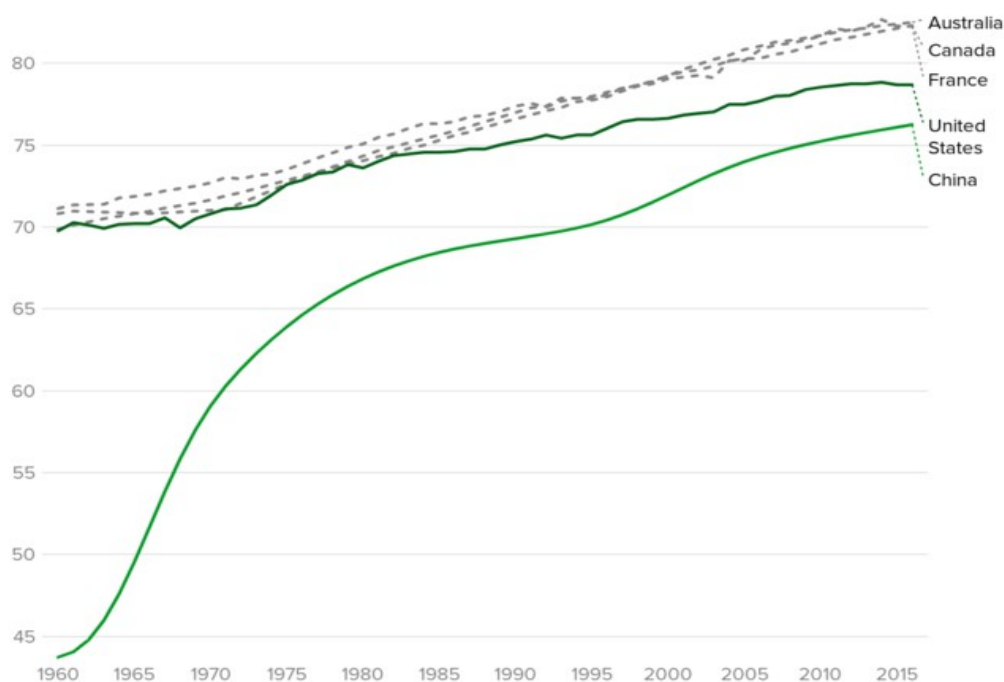
"A baby in the U.S. is still expected to live longer than a Chinese baby, but we have health problems in the U.S. ... that in China they don't have," Willis Sparks, Signal writer for GZero Media, told CBSN. "I think this should be a wake-up call for people in the U.S."

Americans' life expectancy has been dropping in the past several years, driven in large part by rising income inequality. In particular, early deaths among working-class men, as well as stagnating lifespans for lower earners, have pushed life expectancy to about 78 years — down from a peak of 79.

Put differently, despite medical advances and improving quality of life for the economic elites, lower earners have basically not seen any improvements in longevity since the 1980s.

Life expectancy at birth

China is projected to overtake the U.S. in average overall life expectancy by 2027



Source: World Bank

Today, 40-year-old man in the top 1 percent of U.S. earners can expect to live to 87, while the same man among the lowest 1 percent of earners has an expected lifespan 15 years shorter.

China is expected to surpass the U.S. in overall life expectancy within the next decade, according to Reuters.

While China also suffers from income inequality, some research indicates it's been improving in recent years, thanks to a strengthening social safety net.