

California Water and Infrastructure Report

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



For August 9, 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>

patruckert@hotmail.com

For almost a quarter century, the people of North America have watched the value of their lives cheapened by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), while the speculators on Wall Street have built bubble after popped bubble off their labor. NAFTA (and CAFTA, etc.) is designed to drive down the margins of profits for the family farmer, the skilled machinist, and the manual laborer, while increasing the profits of cartel arrangements in agriculture, manufacturing, and derivatives trading. Bankrupting the middle class by underselling them with cheap goods imported from sweat shops has created an economic vacuum filled by illicit black markets in narcoterrorism and addiction, mass immigration and human trafficking (including of children) in forced labor and sexual exploitation, vapid consumerism, xenophobia and racism, and dirty money laundering enabled by “too big to fail/jail” banks.

Kesha Rogers

A New Paradigm of Economic Relations Calls for the North American Belt & Road Initiative, It's Time to Put NAFTA To Rest!

Independent Candidate for U.S. Congress (9th district Texas)

A Note To Readers

So before we get to the topic that is the most noisy this week in California-- President Trump's tweets about the California fires, we should focus our minds on what is most important. So the first item

below is a summary statement of the policy proposal by U.S. Congress Independent candidate Kesha Rogers in Texas that sets out what both President Trump and the nation must do. The quote above is the opening paragraph of her statement. For it is addressing the mission of the nation that she points to that will allow us to do and build what we require today.

Following that item, are a few articles on drought and the weather.

Then we get to the fires in California, of which I have limited coverage this week to a few summary articles and have some damage assessments to public infrastructure that usually do not make the headlines.

Then we get to the President's tweets that have some with their panties in a bunch. While President Trump in the few words of the tweets may have not been very precise in what he wrote, he does open up several areas of policy discussion that has been largely ignored for years, and brings to the forefront more fundamental questions.

Some may like to focus on what he said about making water available for dealing with the fires, but really, and seriously, what great historic meaning does a few words that may be off a little actually represent? What is important is not only the years of insane water management policy that has focused on “environment” at the expense of agriculture. And more importantly, yet, that for more than 40 years no water infrastructure has been built in the state. The population of the state has more than doubled in those 40 years, and what was an adequate water management system in the 1970s cannot even come close to what is required today. That is the serious issue at hand, and the President has given us an opportunity to finally seriously address it.

I shall remind you here that more than 50 years ago the last real Democratic President, John Kennedy, not only personally inaugurated more than one-half dozen water projects in the West, but his administration set out policies that were designed to provide water for the entire nation for a century to come. I have covered those plans often in these reports and thus will just mention them here. First was the *North American Water and Power Alliance* (NAWAPA) to bring water from Alaska and northern Canada down the Rocky Mountain trench to the southwest and the mid-west. Second, was the establishment of a commission to plan and build large-scale nuclear-powered desalination plants. Both policies died in the few years after the assassination of President Kennedy.

The other point the President raised in his tweets was the management of the forests, including thinning the trees, logging the millions of dead trees and prescribed burning of brush-- all conducive to alleviating the intensity of wildfires. That issue actually is now being addressed in multiple articles and actions set in motion by the President's words.

The Oroville Dam Update this week has three videos and an update from the Department of Water Resources.

Finally, due to the length of this report I limit the economic developments section to a few short items.

So, let us begin.

Texas Candidate Kesha Rogers Spells Out a ‘North American Belt and Road Initiative’

Aug. 6 (EIRNS)—Kesha Rogers, independent Congressional candidate in Texas’ 9th Congressional District, today proposed a “North American Belt and Road Initiative” for cooperation among President

Donald Trump, Mexican President-elect Andrés Manuel López Obrador, and President Xi Jinping of China, in bringing the Belt and Road to North America and Central and South America. Rogers proposed: “There are five specific areas of cooperation that the United States and Mexico can establish to transform the entire Western Hemisphere into an area free of the influence of narco-terrorists, their Wall Street and London drug banks, and looting by international cartel conglomerates. These areas of cooperation are:

“1. Establish a North American Infrastructure Investment Bank—Based on the same concept as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a new NAIIB would be a development bank contributed to by countries from all over the world for the purpose of seeing great projects all the way to completion. Unlike the IMF, World Bank, and vulture capitalists—which have strapped countries with usurious interest rates and unpayable debts, forcing them to privatize their social safety nets and sell off their sovereign resources and infrastructure—the NAIIB would offer low, fixed interest rates, to help nations fund great projects that alleviate poverty and increase trade.

“2. Build the 21st-Century North American Water and Power Alliance—Originally proposed in 1964, NAWAPA is a massive water transfer and hydropower generation project from the rain intensive northwest coast of North America all the way into the arid regions spanning from California through Texas and northern Mexico, for drought relief and agricultural revitalization. The plan was updated for the 21st Century in 2014 by the LaRouchePAC to emphasize nuclear power generation, new desalination technologies, and linking to other water projects in Mexico.

“3. The World Land-Bridge—The Belt and Road Initiative is connecting the nations of Asia, Africa, and Europe through rail and high-speed magnetically levitated rail. This has dramatically increased trade and exchange of ideas, both domestically and internationally for all nations involved. The natural link for this network of rail is the Bering Strait between Russia and Alaska, all the way through North America, bridging the Darién Gap, and down to the Strait of Magellan. These are envisioned ... as “development corridors” that incorporate large rural swaths into the jobs programs and benefits.

“4. Caribbean Basin Maritime Silk Road—The development of deep-water industrial ports in Mariel, Cuba and Ponce, Puerto Rico, will link cross-Atlantic cargo flows through the expanded Panama Canal and the planned Nicaraguan Grand Inter-Oceanic Canal, as well as the proposed Tehuantepec Isthmus “dry canal” in Mexico, for dramatically increased cargo flows to and from China and Asia. This will require the development of deep-water ports and related infrastructure on Mexico’s two coasts, as well as improvements to the Port of Houston....

“5. Space Science—Cooperation in the advancement of space exploration and scientific breakthroughs must play a critical role in the advancement of economic relations and trade.... The United States must join in with other nations for the advancement of the common aims of mankind, in new breakthroughs and discoveries in Space Science.... Through NABRI and joint space cooperation, it can work with Mexico’s small space agency to transform it into a major driver of the scientific and technological development. Satellites will help forecast both hurricanes and earthquakes, fight the drug cartels, and improve monitoring of agricultural health. The launching of *astronauts* to the Moon and the ISS will both inspire the youth and conduct important scientific experiments in space. Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean will all benefit from the widespread dissemination of thermonuclear fusion technology, promised by the massive helium-3 fuel supply to be mined from the Moon.”

Here is the link to the full statement:

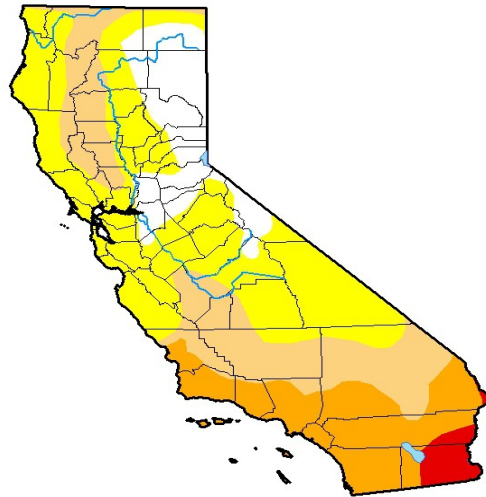
A New Paradigm of Economic Relations Calls for the North American Belt & Road Initiative, It’s Time to Put NAFTA To Rest!

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

Drought, Climate, Weather and Other Galactic Affects

U.S. Drought Monitor-- California

U.S. Drought Monitor California



August 7, 2018
(Released Thursday, Aug. 9, 2018)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	13.84	86.16	45.05	20.75	2.77	0.00
Last Week 07-31-2018	13.84	86.16	44.80	20.75	2.77	0.00
3 Months Ago 05-08-2018	34.19	65.81	37.10	13.99	2.80	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2018	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 08-08-2017	77.88	22.14	8.24	1.06	0.00	0.00

Intensity:
■ D0 Abnormally Dry ■ D3 Extreme Drought
■ D1 Moderate Drought ■ D4 Exceptional Drought
■ D2 Severe Drought

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

Author:
Richard Tinker
CPC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP



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

Demonstrating that serious long-term drought (mega-droughts) is not something new and the result of mankind's activities, paleoclimatologists have produced abundant documentation. Here is an interesting new story. The link to the entire article is one I suggest you click on.

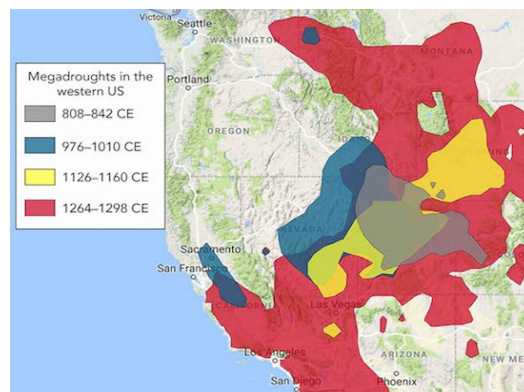
Four ways we know pre-Columbian America was plagued by megadroughts

Tree rings tell much but not all of the story of decades-long dry spells that transformed terrain and disrupted civilizations.

Ashley G. Smart

1 Aug 2018 in *Research & Technology*

<https://physicstoday.scitation.org/doi/10.1063/PT.6.1.20180801a/full/>



The western US was plagued by multiple decades-long droughts, data from tree rings reveal. Credit: Greg Stasiewicz. Data from the [North American Drought Atlas](#).

In the August issue of *Physics Today*, climate scientists Toby Ault and Scott St. George share a pair of [startling research findings](#). Between roughly 800 and 1500 CE, the American West suffered a

succession of decades-long droughts, much longer than anything we've endured in modern history. And statistical models suggest that, as the climate warms, such megadroughts are increasingly likely to return.

How can scientists be so sure about the duration and extent of droughts that happened long before the era of instrument-based precipitation records? As Ault and St. George explain, the annual growth rings of ancient trees contain a rich paleoclimatic record of precipitation and soil moisture patterns. The width of a tree ring gives clues as to how well nourished the tree was in a given year. The map shows four western US megadroughts predicted from tree-ring data.

Ring-width analyses provide the most complete set of data on past moisture levels. But researchers have other ways of determining those conditions. Here are four of them:

Underwater tree stumps

Archaeological artifacts

Sand-dune cores

Pollen-grain deposits

A vicious climate cycle: Droughts are becoming hotter, raising risk of wildfire, scientists say

<http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-dry-places-hotter-20180802-story.html>

By [Amina Khan](#)

Aug 03, 2018

Droughts don't just make a place drier. As new research shows, they also make it hotter.

A team from UC Irvine that compared temperature change across the U.S. found that temperatures rise faster in places under drought conditions than they do in places with average climates. This relationship could also raise the risk of concurrent heatwaves and wildfires, the researchers say.

The scientists found that drier periods went hand in hand with greater increases in average temperature in large parts of the United States. The observations showed that in the northeastern, midwestern, southeastern and southwestern United States, drought-struck regions warmed more than four times as much as those with average weather conditions. The models backed up the temperature spike in the South.

Southern California Water Temperatures About as Warm as They Get, And They're Making Things Miserable

By [Brian Donegan](#)

August 2, 2018

weather.com

<https://weather.com/news/weather/news/2018-08-02-july-warmth-boosted-southern-california-water-temperatures-warm-summer>

Meteorologist Ari Sarsalari says water temperatures are running up to 10 degrees above average along the Southern California Coast.

- Pacific Ocean temperatures off the Southern California coast are nearing record-warm levels.*
- A record-warm July in parts of the Golden State helped warm the sea-surface temperatures.*
- Southern California sea-surface temperatures have been running above average since 2014.*

A record-warm July in some Southern California cities vaulted Pacific Ocean temperatures to levels about as warm as they get off that coast, and some may be wondering if they're in Miami rather than San Diego.

Half of Oregon in 'severe drought' following record-setting July heat as wildfires rage

[Zach Urness](#), Salem Statesman Journal

Aug. 1, 2018

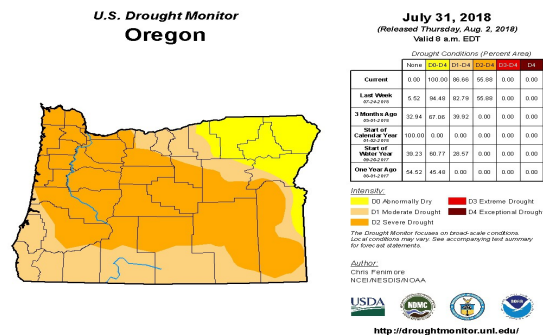
<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/2018/08/01/oregon-drought-wildfires-july-taylor-creek-fire-garner-complex/883522002/>

More than half of Oregon is now experiencing severe drought, according to a report by the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Fueled by one of the hottest and driest spring seasons on record, and made worse by one of the hottest months of July ever seen, Oregon has become a bone-dry tinderbox with wildfires popping up regularly across the state.

The current drought is the worst the state has seen since 2015, but has already brought considerably more wildfires.

Oregon wildfires have burned 291,000 acres as of July 31, more than double last year's record-setting fire season at the same time, according to data from Northwest Interagency Coordination Center.



Much of Oregon is in drought, according to the US Drought Monitor (Photo: US Drought Monitor)

Fire, Fire Everywhere

Battling 18 blazes, California may face worst fire season

Aug 8, 2018

By [The Associated Press](#)

https://www.oregonlive.com/today/index.ssf/2018/08/battling_18_blazes_california.html

LAKEPORT, Calif. (AP) -- The largest wildfire ever recorded in California needed just 11 days to blacken an area nearly the size of Los Angeles -- and it's only one of many enormous blazes that could make this the worst fire season in state history.

Some 14,000 firefighters from as far away as Florida and even New Zealand are struggling to curb 18

fires in the midst of a sweltering summer that has seen wind-whipped flames carve their way through national forest land and rural areas, threaten urban areas and incinerate neighborhoods.

"For whatever reason, fires are burning much more intensely, much more quickly than they were before," said Mark A. Hartwig, president of the California Fire Chiefs Association.

California is seeing earlier, longer and more destructive wildfire seasons because of drought, warmer weather attributed to climate change and home construction deeper into the forests.

Some of the largest fires have erupted just within the past few weeks as the state has seen record-setting temperatures -- and the historically worst months of wildfire season are still to come.

In Northern California, the record-setting Mendocino Complex -- twin fires being fought as a single conflagration -- gained ground Wednesday but more slowly because its own smoke covered the area and lowered the temperature, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The flames, which had burned 470 square miles (1,217 square kilometers), were raging in mostly remote areas but 116 homes were destroyed. Two firefighters have been injured.

Fire crews expect to gain control of the massive blaze in September, the state forestry and fire protection agency said.

The blaze that broke out July 27 initially spread quickly because of what officials said was a perfect combination of weather, rugged topography and abundant brush and timber turned to tinder by years of drought.

Resources also were thin at first because thousands of firefighters already were battling a fire hundreds of miles north. That fire, which spread into the city of Redding, killed six people and destroyed more than 1,000 homes. The so-called Carr Fire was less than half contained.

In becoming the biggest fire in California history, the Mendocino Complex fire broke a record set just eight months ago. A blaze in Southern California in December killed two people, burned 440 square miles (1,140 square kilometers) and destroyed more than 1,000 buildings.

California's firefighting costs have more than tripled from \$242 million in the 2013 fiscal year to \$773 million in the 2018 fiscal year that ended June 30, according to Cal Fire.

"We're in uncharted territory," Gov. Jerry Brown warned last week. "Since civilization emerged 10,000 years ago, we haven't had this kind of heat condition, and it's going to continue getting worse. That's the way it is."

Gov. Brown Asks Trump for Aid as State Battles 17 Wildfires

August 4, 2018

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2018/08/04/northern-california-wildfires-aug4-out-control/>

SAN FRANCISCO (CBS/AP/BCN) — Gov. Jerry Brown on Saturday called on President Donald Trump to help California fight and recover from another devastating wildfire season.

"The president has been pretty good on helping us in disasters so I'm hopeful," Brown said.

"Tragedies bring people together.

Trump declares Shasta County a disaster area

The letter was dated Aug. 4, Saturday, the same day that the Trump administration declared Shasta County the scene of a major disaster.

Public cost of fire almost \$100 million

The blaze has done an estimated \$98.3 million in damage to roads, bridges, utilities and other public facilities in Shasta County, according to Gov. Jerry Brown's request for federal aid.

Nearly \$71 million of the request is for removing debris left over after the Carr Fire, which the governor said poses a public health risk from the toxins in the ash left behind after the fire.

"Large amounts of wreckage and debris must be expeditiously removed to eliminate the immediate threat to lives, public health and safety," Brown said in his letter to Robert J. Fenton Jr., regional administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"Fire debris hazards, including asbestos, heavy metals, structural debris, ash, concrete foundations and metals pose public health and safety concerns and threaten the health of the environment," the letter says.

Roads, bridges and utilities slammed by Carr Fire

[Damon Arthur](#), Redding Record Searchlight Published

Aug. 1, 2018

<https://www.redding.com/story/news/2018/08/01/shasta-county-roads-bridges-and-utilities-slammed-carr-fire/885414002/>

Construction crews hired by the state Department of Transportation face possibly weeks of work repairing and replacing hazards along 23 miles of Highway 299 before the road reopens, an official said Wednesday.

The work along Highway 299 is just one of the many projects underway to repair roads, utility and water lines, bridges, culverts and rebuild public buildings destroyed by the fire.

In addition to damage to private property, officials estimate repairs to public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water lines, buildings and other facilities could cost tens of millions of dollars.

Mendocino fire becomes biggest in modern California history as weary firefighters brace for more



By [Alene Tchekmedyan](#) , [James Queally](#) and [Joseph Serna](#)

Aug 07, 2018

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-fires-mendocino-20180807-story.html>

To the south, the sprawling Mendocino Complex inferno on Monday [became the largest fire ever](#) recorded in California, burning more than 283,000 acres in just 11 days. The Ferguson fire has closed

parts of Yosemite National Park indefinitely. Large swaths of the Sacramento Valley have been choked by smoke for days.

'Fire tornado' reached 143 mph as it caused path of destruction in scorched California

By [Chris Irvine | Fox News](#)

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2018/08/03/fire-tornado-reached-143-mph-as-it-caused-path-destruction-in-scorched-california.html>

Fire tornado caught on camera amid California's Carr fire

Fire tornado caught on camera by firefighters amid California's Carr fire.

A fire whirl spawned by the Carr Fire generated wind speeds of up to 143 mph – the equivalent to an EF-3 tornado – causing a wave of destruction.

The rotating column of fire, induced by intense rising heat and turbulent winds, caused power line towers to collapse, uprooted several trees and removed tree bark.



The devastating fire whirl ripped through Redding last Thursday, reaching windspeeds of up to 143mph (PCP Fire)

And Now the Main Show This Week: President Trump Sucks Them In Once Again, the Poor Fools

One should never assume that the real content of an argument is what is in the headlines. And as I wrote in the introduction above, the President has created a new dialogue on the question of water infrastructure, how water should be managed and what is good forest practices.

That some cannot get beyond the surface is not a new problem, but one that does prevent many from actually thinking.

So, what follows is some of the of the “dialogue” that has ensued since the President's tweets on Sunday and Monday.

Here are the President's tweets:

“California wildfires are being magnified & made so much worse by the bad environmental laws

which aren't allowing massive amounts of readily available water to be properly utilized. It is being diverted into the Pacific Ocean. Must also tree clear to stop fire from spreading!"

"Governor Jerry Brown must allow the Free Flow of the vast amounts of water coming from the North and foolishly being diverted into the Pacific Ocean. Can be used for fires, farming and everything else. Think of California with plenty of Water - Nice! Fast Federal govt. approvals."

Trump says 'bad environmental laws' to blame for wildfires

Adam Aton and Anne C. Mulhern, E&E News reporters

Climatewire: Monday, August 6, 2018

<https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060092789>

President Trump in a tweet yesterday alleged that California law is causing the state to waste water that should be used for fighting wildfires.

President Trump blamed environmental laws yesterday for intensifying wildfires in California, in his first tweet about the ongoing disaster that has killed at least seven people.

"California wildfires are being magnified & made so much worse by the bad environmental laws which aren't allowing massive amount of readily available water to be properly utilized. It is being diverted into the Pacific Ocean," Trump wrote.

Trump's tweet went on: "Must also tree clear to stop fire spreading!"

More than 129 million trees have died since 2010 in California, a problem that state officials trace back to climate change.

AP FACT CHECK: Wildfire, water experts rebut Trump's claims

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

August 6, 2018

<http://www.startribune.com/ap-fact-check-wildfire-water-experts-rebut-trump-s-claims/490215111/>

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is claiming that California's water policy is shortchanging firefighters of water to battle the state's raging wildfires. That's not so, according to wildfire and water experts.

THE FACTS: Trump is raising an old dispute in California, the country's top farm state: the competition for water between agricultural and environmental groups, fishermen and others who want more water for wildlife and habitat. But the dispute has little to do with firefighting.

Republican lawmakers in California's agriculture-rich Central Valley complain the state and federal governments allow too much of the state's rainfall and snow melt to flow naturally through rivers and into the Pacific Ocean, instead of being diverted for irrigation.

Nunes Backs Trump's Critique of California Environmental Laws

By Ivan Pentchoukov

August 6, 2018

https://www.theepochtimes.com/california-lawmaker-thanks-trump-for-spotlighting-states-flawed-environmental-policies_2616717.html

Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) lauded President Donald Trump on Aug. 6 for bringing attention to California's dire water supply issues caused by years of "flawed environmental policies."

Nunes, who has been a critic of California's environmental laws for years, wrote a message on Twitter thanking Trump for bringing attention to the problem.

"Forests should be managed properly and water should be allowed for farmers to grow food to feed people," Nunes [wrote](#). "[Thanks] for supporting the people of San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Nevada mountains!"

Trump administration overrides endangered species protections to access water California's firefighters say they don't need

- *By STEPHANIE EBBS*

Aug 8, 2018

<https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-administration-overrides-endangered-species-protections-prioritize-water/story?id=57115350>

The Department of Commerce [announced a directive](#) on Wednesday that says the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is taking over management of water in California in areas affected by the ongoing fires.

The change announced Wednesday would allow federal agencies to expedite decisions about water under [an emergency provision of the Endangered Species Act](#).

The directive specifically says that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which includes the National Marine Fisheries Service, will take over management of water during the wildfire emergency in California. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross directed the Service to tell other federal agencies "the protection of life and property takes precedence over any current agreements regarding the use of water in the areas of California affected by wildfires."

"Today I directed the National Marine Fisheries Service to facilitate access to the water needed to fight the ongoing wildfires affecting the State of California. One of the fires, the Mendocino Complex Fire, has developed into the largest in the state's history, consuming nearly 300,000 acres in Northern California. American lives and property are at stake and swift action is needed," Ross said in a statement.

In addition to his claims about California's water, Trump's tweets amplified a debate about whether more trees should be removed from forests vulnerable to fires.

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke wrote in an opinion piece on Wednesday that called for the government to actively thin forests to prevent too much fuel from building up that could exacerbate fires.

"These fuels fill forests from the floor, where highly-combustible, dry pine needles act as kindling to jump-start the tiniest spot fire, all the way up to the crown where beetle-killed trees dot the mountains like matches. In between the floor and the crown, there are years' worth of dead logs, overgrown shrubs and snags, which many firefighters call "widow makers" because they are so deadly," Zinke wrote in an opinion piece [published by USA Today](#).

During last year's fire season, Zinke issued a directive to land managers that they should take a more "aggressive" approach to removing dead trees or brush that could become kindling for fires.

Firefighters often remove trees or brush to contain wildfires, but Zinke and other lawmakers argue that the government should more actively thin forests to remove potential kindling before a fire breaks out.

Interior Department spokeswoman Heather Swift said there are no policy changes expected on the issue this year.

Zinke blames ‘radical environmentalists’ for wildfires

By [Timothy Cama](#) - 08/08/18

<http://thehill.com/policy/400872-zinke-blames-radical-environmentalists-for-wildfires>

Interior Secretary [Ryan Zinke](#) is partially blaming “radical environmentalists” for the dozens of wildfires burning in California and elsewhere in the West.

In a USA Today [opinion piece](#) published Wednesday, Zinke said “active forest management” — including logging, prescribed burns and clearing brush — is the way to minimize wildfires on federal land.

Zinke and [President Trump](#) have been pushing active management in recent days in response to the wildfires, including the Mendocino Complex Fire, which is made up of two separate fires and is now California’s largest since record keeping began.

State and federal officials already spend hundreds of millions of dollars each year on forest management and fire prevention. But Republicans want more.

“Radical environmentalists would have you believe forest management means clear cutting forests and national parks. But their rhetoric could not be further from the truth. They make outdated and unscientific arguments, void of facts, because they cannot defend the merits of their policy preferences year after year as our forests and homes burn to the ground,” Zinke wrote.

Federal Government Moves to Allow Logging in Los Padres National Forest to Reduce Fire Risk

August 7, 2018, by [Los Angeles Times](#)

<https://ktla.com/2018/08/07/federal-government-moves-to-allow-logging-in-los-padres-national-forest-to-reduce-fire-risk/>

Logging has long been among California’s most divisive environmental issues — and the controversy shows little chance of cooling as the Trump administration pushes new efforts to thin forests.

The federal government is moving to allow commercial logging of healthy green pine trees for the first time in decades in the Los Padres National Forest north of Los Angeles, a tactic the U.S. Forest Services says will reduce fire risk. It’s an idea President Trump appeared to endorse in tweets inaccurately linking wildfire to state water management.

Lack Of Controlled Burns Contributing To California Wildfires

By [Emily Turner](#) August 3, 2018

(KPIX 5) — California’s devastating wildfires have been fueled by drought, heat and what Calfire calls missed opportunities to clear overgrown forests.

Controlled burns, fuel load, vegetation management – these are buzz words being thrown around the state capital right now. While the state is making all that a priority, the fact of the matter is it hasn’t for decades and we are dealing with the consequences

The new normal California faces is a year-round fire season. But if you ask any fire official, these flames are fueled by more than hotter, drier weather. They're also fueled by unchecked growth.

"After aggressively suppressing fires for the last 100 years we have put our forests in a state of peril," said Calfire Chief Thom Porter.

As a result, our communities are also in peril. It's a situation largely of our own making, says Calfire.

By abstaining from controlled burns year after year, unchecked growth has multiplied, dried out and created a tinderbox. The overgrowth has fueled deadly, out-of-control wildfires like the Carr Fire near Redding that took the lives of a four- and five-year-old.

"Prescribed burns alone will not stop that, but it is a tool that we can use to reduce the effect of those large fires," said Porter.

Calfire currently has a goal of burning 20,000 acres a year, a goal put into place in 2016.

Last year.. Calfire came close with 19,000 acres control-burned. But two years ago, only 13,000 acres were burned while the previous three years each saw only around 3,000 acres burned.

"If we had made this investment 10 or 20 years ago we would have seen – in some areas – smaller, less damaging fires."

California senator calls state 'a tinderbox ready to burn,' says policies need to change

[Cheri Carlson](#), Ventura County Star Published 4:32 p.m. PT Aug. 3, 2018 | Updated 7:06 p.m. PT Aug. 3, 2018

<https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/local/2018/08/03/california-senator-calls-state-tinder-box-ready-burn-says-policies-need-change/898240002/>

A local senator on Friday called for a more scientific, proactive approach in how California responds to wildfires, as blazes burned out of control throughout the state.

"Bottom line: California is a tinderbox ready to burn," said state Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson in a call with reporters Friday morning. "Clearly, we need to think differently and act differently."

Jackson, D-Santa Barbara, said current policies put the state in a position of largely reacting to fires.

She wants more focus on prevention and has crafted legislation she says could triple the amount of land treated with controlled burns.

[Senate Bill 1260](#), introduced in February, would streamline the process for private landowners and public agencies to remove dead trees and other vegetation through controlled burns (also called prescribed fire).

Oroville Dam Update

Videos

Oroville Spillways Phase 2 Update August 1, 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=US0vVLNRHJQ>

[California DWR](#)

Published on Aug 7, 2018

Crews place roller-compacted concrete (RCC) on the southern half of the Lake Oroville emergency spillway splashpad. Later, workers install epoxy-coated threaded dowel bars to anchor the RCC splashpad to the cut-off wall. Crews then use grout-enriched vibrated roller-compacted concrete (GEVR) to adhere the RCC splashpad to the concrete cut-off wall.

Oroville Spillway 360 Flyover August 2, 2018

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-H0kf_JKS1o

[California DWR](#)

Published on Aug 3, 2018

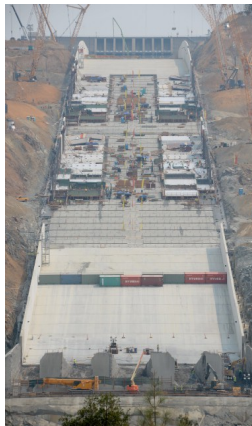
Oroville Spillway Construction Comparison: July 2017 vs July 2018

[California DWR](#)

Published on Aug 2, 2018

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=Hdg4gJDhrcE

OROVILLE SPILLWAYS CONSTRUCTION UPDATE for August 8



Bill Husa — Mercury-Register

From the Department of Water Resources:

Today the Department of Water Resources (DWR) provided an update on construction-related activities for the Oroville Spillways Emergency Recovery Project.

Construction on the Main Spillway

- *Placement of erosion-resistant concrete, or ERC, structural slabs began Monday, Aug. 6, on the uppermost 730 feet of upper chute. Placement of ERC structural walls is anticipated to start later this month. This section of upper chute is 45 percent complete.*
- *Placement of ERC structural slabs and walls on the middle chute continues. Crews have placed 109 of 228 slabs and 21 of 76 walls to date. The middle chute is now 58 percent complete.*
- *Demolition is complete and crews will begin placing reinforcing steel and concrete framework on the energy dissipaters, or dentates, at the base of the main spillway in the coming weeks. Placement of structural concrete on the dentates is anticipated to begin near the end of August.*

- *November 1, 2018 is a public safety construction milestone to complete placement of all concrete on the main spillway. Dry finishing, concrete curing, joint sealing, completing sidewall backfill and site clean-up on the main spillway will continue after November 1.*

Construction on the Emergency Spillway

- *Crews continue placement of roller-compacted concrete, or RCC, on the southern half of the new emergency spillway splashpad, which is 58 percent complete.*
- *The RCC buttress at the base of the emergency spillway weir will be built later this year. Drilling of steel dowels into the emergency spillway monolith structure that will support the buttress is 94 percent complete.*
- *Work at the emergency spillway site is not dependent on the public safety construction milestone and will continue past November 1, 2018.*

To view photos and video of the Lake Oroville Spillways construction, visit DWR's [Oroville Spillway photo gallery](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

Economics: Trade War and Credit Collapse?

In a U.S.-China trade war, what are the stakes for the Valley?

By Tim Sheehan

August 07, 2018

<https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/article216207610.html>

The prospects for a trade war of dueling tariffs between the United States and China continue to put American agriculture, including farmers and ranchers in California, on the front lines.

The [Trump administration announced Tuesday](#) that it's going ahead with tariffs on about \$16 billion worth of Chinese imports starting Aug. 23, putting into action some of the rhetoric that the president and his trade representatives have promised for months and setting the stage for planned retaliation by China.

In the central San Joaquin Valley, an estimated 37,000 people work in industries involved in industries that produce goods and commodities targeted by China for retaliatory fees on exports to that country, according to an [analysis earlier this year by the nonpartisan Brookings Institution](#). Tree fruit and nuts, cotton, and grapes, raisins and wine are among the products on which China is imposing a 15 percent tariff – on top of existing import duties that were already in place. Statewide, Brookings analysts estimated that more than 287,000 people work in industries that are at risk from Chinese tariffs – by far the most jobs of any state in the nation.

China is the third-largest international export market for California goods behind Canada and Mexico. Exports from the state to China amounted to about \$62.1 billion from 2013 through 2017, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's foreign trade statistics. In 2016, the California Department of Food and Agriculture reported that farm exports to China totaled more than \$2 billion – much of it in crops such

as pistachios, almonds and citrus as well as dairy products that are concentrated in Fresno, Madera, Kings and Tulare counties.

Global Credit Crunch Coming, Says IIF Chief Economist

Aug. 6 (EIRNS)—A report by chief economist Robin Brooks of the International Institute of Finance, on a coming global debt crisis, is reported in several locations. The IIF represents the largest global banks.

International Business Editor Ambrose Evans-Pritchard in the London Daily Telegraph Aug. 2 cited Brooks as saying that the collapse of the Turkish lira and Argentine peso are warning signs of huge overleverage in the international financial system. Brooks stated that these and other currency collapses in what the financiers call “emerging markets,” have come in response to increases in central bank rates that are much smaller than those of 2013 (the so-called “taper tantrum” set off by then Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke). Yet the reactions in 2013 were much less severe.

“What concerns the IIF is that the global interest rate shock so far has been modest. Yields on 10-year Treasuries have risen just 60 basis points, yet the damage has already been greater than in the ‘taper tantrum’ of 2013.... It is a warning sign of how vulnerable the tired, over-leveraged system has become,” writes Evans-Pritchard.

“A New Global Credit Crunch To Come?” is a much longer analysis Aug. 4, taking off from the IIF warning, by Marxist economist Michael Roberts in his blog, and reprinted by the Committee for the Abolition of Illegitimate Debt (CADTM). Roberts said the most likely immediate trigger for a bank meltdown is the Turkish lira collapse. “But Turkey is just the most extreme example of the growing debt crisis beginning to hit economies that depend on foreign capital flows and investment in order to grow (and that’s most).”

Roberts continued, “The locus of this impending debt crisis is not to be found in household debt (as it was in the global credit crunch in 2007 that led to the Great Recession) or in public sector debt (where governments have been applying stringent austerity measures), but in corporate debt.” And where: “U.S. companies must refinance about \$4 trillion of bonds, almost all of it at higher interest rates. This will hit debt-burdened companies that are already struggling and make it almost impossible for some to keep operating. Lenders, i.e. high-yield bond holders, will try to exit their positions all at once only to find a severe shortage of willing buyers. Something, possibly high-yield bonds, will set off a liquidity scramble.”