



Westlands Water District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA RELEASE

STATEMENT

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WESTLANDS WATER DISTRICT**

Today the Bureau of Reclamation announced a forecast of the allocation for south-of-Delta Central Valley Project water service contractors: 45 percent based on a 90 percent exceedence forecast and 50 percent based on a 50 percent exceedence forecast.

Historically, Reclamation has announced its forecast of allocations at the Mid-Pacific Region water users conference, which is being held next week in Reno, Nevada. However, because of operational uncertainty in 2009 and 2010, a forecast of allocations was not released. In an effort to provide early and helpful information to farmers, Reclamation resumed its historic practice of releasing a forecast of what it expects to allocate in February.

This announcement is excellent news for the farmers and communities that rely on water from Reclamation to grow the crops that provide over 50 percent of the food supply for the United States, and it is the result of continuing efforts by the Department of the Interior to minimize water supply impacts from biological opinions while complying with its obligation to protect listed species. Compare to initial allocations in 2009 and 2010, zero and 5 percent respectively, this forecast will enable farmers to make better informed planting decisions and put people back to work.

Unfortunately, this allocation forecast also shows how broken California's water delivery system is. In a year that is on track to be one of the wettest years on record, with flood releases already occurring from the Project's reservoirs, it is a sad commentary that Reclamation can forecast only a 45 percent allocation. This is further evidence that if we are going to sustain the economy of this state, we have to fix the Delta problem. Until we fix the delivery facilities, we will continue to be water short throughout the state.

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