

# Interpreting Water Supply Forecasts

For each Central Valley Project (CVP) allocation announcement, two forecasts are issued for each contract type by location within the CVP. Unless otherwise specified, all runoff forecasts are based on runoff volumes that would occur naturally without any upstream influences. For the February through May period, the runoff volume estimates are based on the observed inflow to date and current snow pack measurements made at the end of each preceding month. Water users need to know what the different forecasts represent if they are to use the information appropriately when making operational decisions. Following are explanations of each of the forecasts.

***90 Percent Chance of Exceedance Forecast (Dry or Conservative):*** There is a 90-percent chance that the actual runoff volume will exceed this forecast value, and there is a 10-percent chance that the actual runoff volume will be less than this forecast value.

***50 Percent Chance of Exceedance Forecast (Wet):*** There is a 50-percent chance that the actual runoff volume will exceed this forecast value, and there is a 50-percent chance that the actual runoff volume will be less than this forecast value. Generally, this forecast is in the middle of the range of possible runoff volumes that can be produced given current conditions.

These forecasts represent the uncertainty inherent in making runoff predictions. This uncertainty may include sources such as unknown future weather conditions, the various prediction methodologies and the spatial coverage of the data network in a given basin.

These forecasts are provided to water users to help make risk-based decisions. Water users can select the forecast corresponding to the level of risk they are willing to accept in order to minimize the negative impacts of having more or less water than planned for in a given year.

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