Flood Diversion and Recharge Enhancement Initiative

ANNUAL GROUNDWATER RECHARGE ROUND-UP | JUNE 2026

Hydrology Hindsight

Recharge opportunities are often weather-driven and vary geographically across California. The timing, temperature, duration, and location of precipitation events influence whether opportunities of diversions for recharge will occur and how much water may be available. Reflecting on the recent hydrology in California provides important context for understanding a given year's reported recharge volumes.

Figure 1 highlights that while the Statewide annual average precipitation has remained relatively consistent since 1975, year-to-year variability is high with large swings between wet and dry years, generally either well above or well below average. It also highlights a long-term increase in California's winter minimum temperatures. Warmer winters tend to reduce occurrence and persistence of snowpack, alter runoff timing, and ultimately impact high-flow recharge opportunities.

In Water Year 2025, precipitation varied widely across different regions in the state. While considered an overall below average year, Northern California generally experienced average to above average precipitation, while Central and Southern California received below average to much below average precipitation.

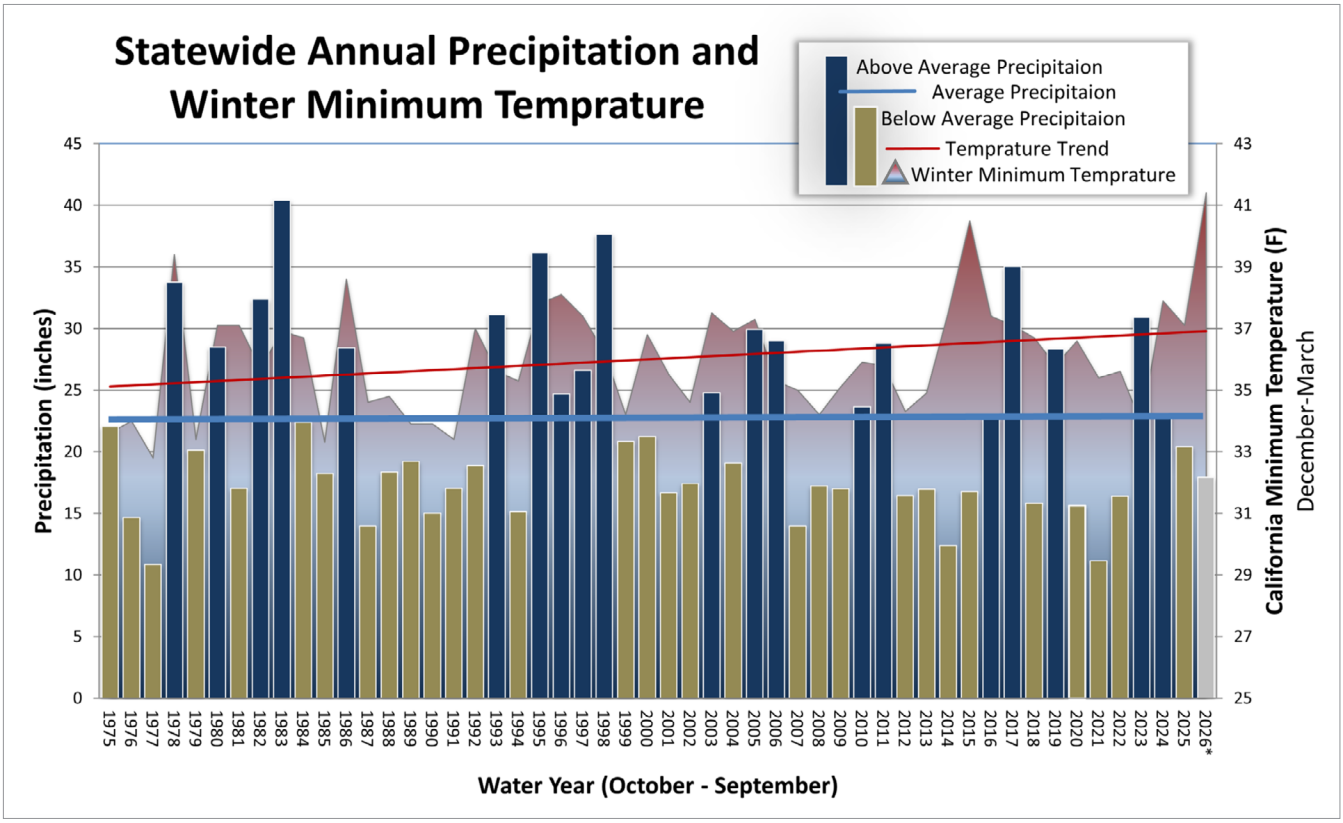


FIGURE 1 Statewide Annual Precipitation – NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, (Climate at a Glance: U.S. Time Series, Precipitation). *WY 2026 Precipitation (grey) through March 2026. Source: California Department of Water Resources (DWR) **California's Groundwater Semi-Annual Update May 2026**

Recharge Pathways

California has multiple pathways to divert water for managed aquifer recharge (MAR). For more information about each of these pathways, visit: **State Water Resources Control Board Permits for Groundwater Recharge** and their **Flood Recharge Diversions (Water Code §1242.1) websites**.



Existing Water Rights

Diversions for recharge could be conducted under existing standard water rights, provided the appropriate provisions are included.

Temporary Groundwater Permits

Temporary groundwater recharge permits authorize diversions of winter high flows for underground storage, including 180-day and 5-year permits.

CWC §1242.1 Diversions

A relatively newer statutory pathway allowing for diversions for recharge without a water right or permit at times of imminent flood risk, when specific conditions are met.

New Recharge Resources

DWR *CALIFORNIA'S GROUNDWATER* PRODUCTS
The most up-to-date compendium of statewide data and information on the occurrence, nature, use, and conditions of California's groundwater resources and management. See DWR's **Bulletin 118 website**.

AQUIFER RECHARGE POTENTIAL MAPS DWR's Basin Characterization Program has developed a GIS-based tool incorporating best available geophysical data to identify areas with relatively greater potential for recharge. Find it on the **SGMA Data Viewer**.

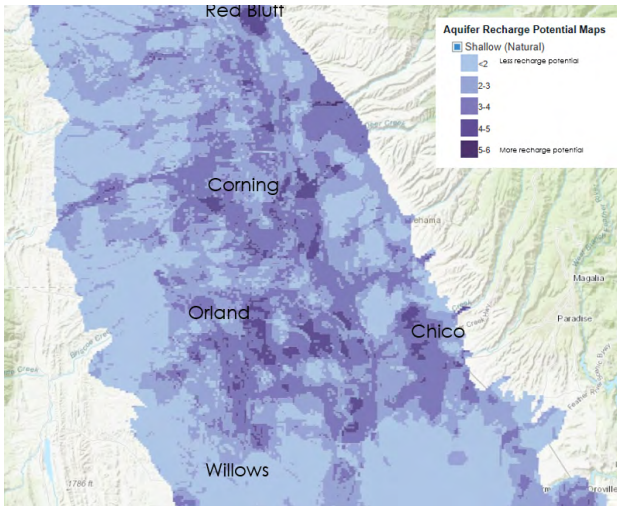


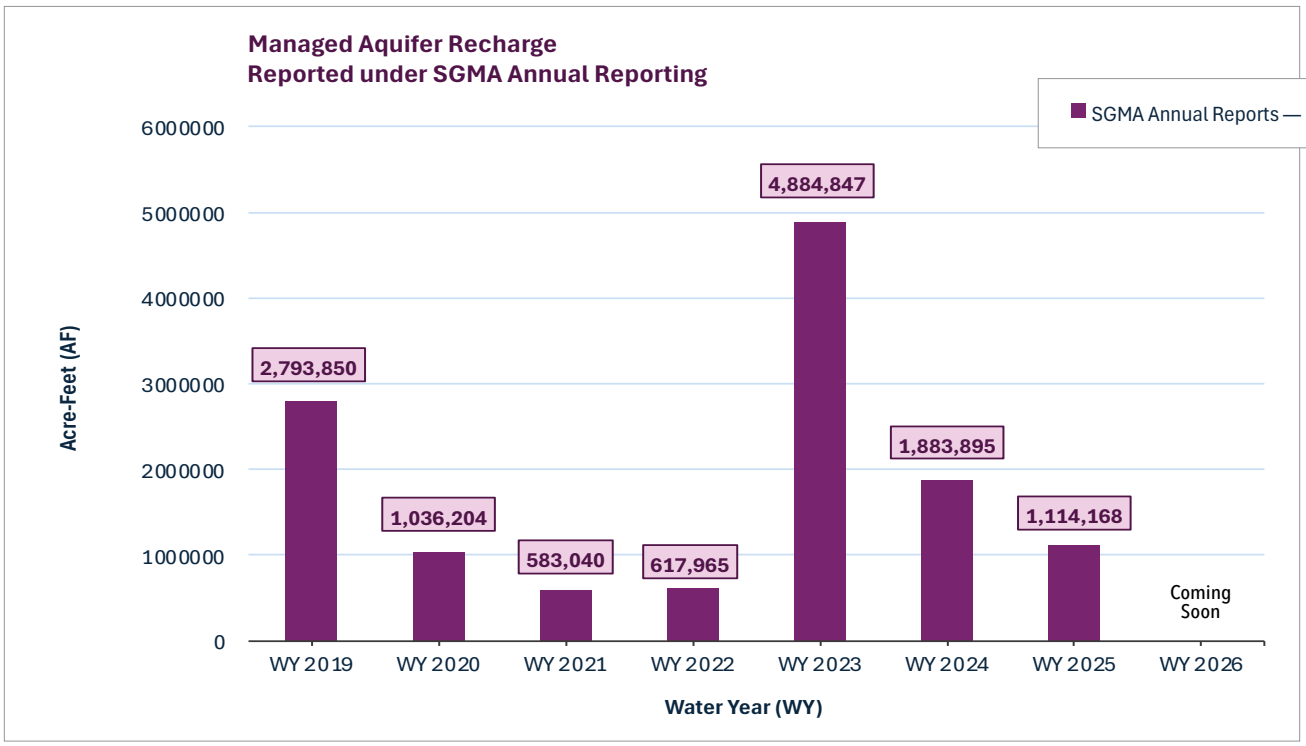
FIGURE 2 Map of potential aquifer recharge locations in the Sacramento Valley. Developed by DWR's Basin Characterization Program.

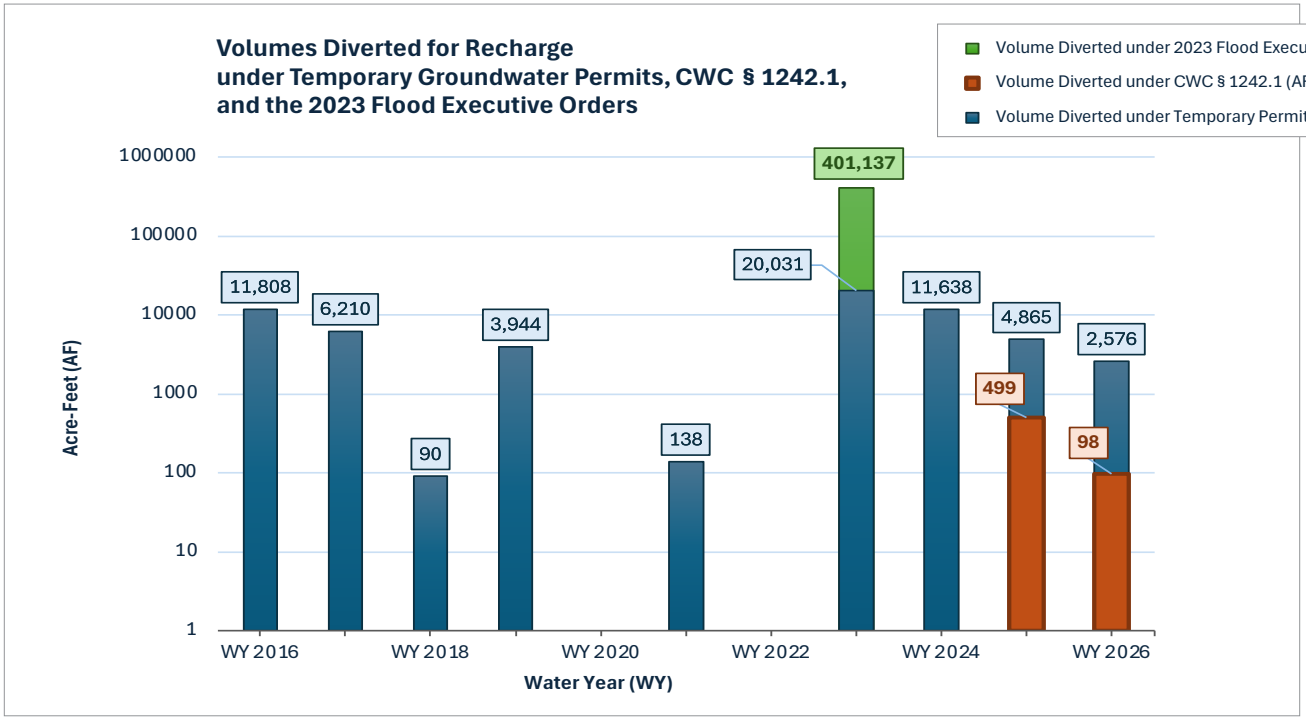
Recharge in the Spotlight

ASSEMBLY BILL 2026 A bill introduced in 2026 by Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry that aims to streamline diversions for recharge under temporary groundwater permits and California Water Code (CWC) §1242.1 Diversions.
AB 2026 Text.

SENATE BILL 659 Enacted in 2023, this requires DWR to include actionable recommendations to expand recharge opportunities in the 2028 California Water Plan, and all subsequent water plans. **SB 659 Text**.

Recharge Reporting





WATER YEAR 2025

CWC §1242.1 Diversions

3 REPORTS

499 ACRE-FEET (AF) DIVERTED

695 ACRES

Temporary Groundwater Permits

6 NEW PERMITS

105,783 AF AUTHORIZED

4,618 AF DIVERTED

SGMA Annual Report MAR

1,114,168 AF TOTAL MAR REPORTED

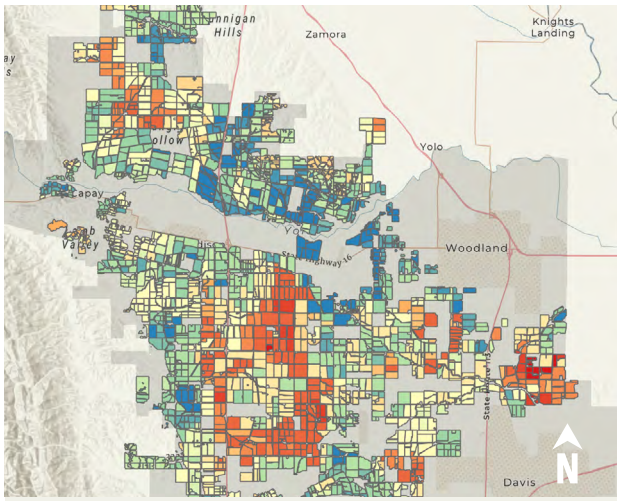
26 BASINS REPORTED MAR

-769,727 AF (-41%) CHANGE FROM WY 2024

RECHARGE IN ACTION: **Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District**

The Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (YCFC&WCD) provides a great example of how long-term planning, utilizing existing infrastructure, and streamlined permitting can support successful recharge implementation. YCFC&WCD has more than a decade of recharge experience and represents the majority of recharge reported under temporary permits.

YCFC&WCD have successfully worked with the State Water Resources Control Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to implement diversion criteria for their temporary groundwater permit that is tailored to local Cache Creek conditions. This alternative diversion criteria differs from the more commonly used "90/20" methodology and has provided relatively consistent opportunities for recharge based on local conditions since 2016, while still protecting environmental and downstream users.



YCFC&WCD IS EXPANDING THEIR RECHARGE PORTFOLIO TO INCLUDE ON-FARM RECHARGE, PRIORITIZING AREAS OF INTEREST BASED ON RECHARGE INFILTRATION POTENTIAL.

65% OF ALL TEMPORARY PERMIT RECHARGE

38,276 AF TEMPORARY PERMIT DIVERSIONS SINCE 2016

3,750 AF DIVERTED IN WY 2025

219 DIVERSION DAYS UNDER TEMPORARY PERMITS SINCE 2016.





ABOVE Diverted stormwater flows through the YCFC system in March 2023.

LEFT 160 miles of earthen canals are used to recharge the aquifer.

Source: https://www.yologroundwater.org/ycfc-wcd-groundwater-recharge