

California Drought Update

by Patrick Ruckert

October 22, 2015

<http://www.californiadroughtupdate.org>

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

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A Note to Readers

As I have often written, there is no solution to the California water crisis outside of a fundamental political change in the nation. A statement issued by Lyndon LaRouche on October 20, addresses that necessity. The full statement follows some drought news, some California crop reports and an important item on commodity prices. The final item this week is the report that South Africa has struck a blow against the man-caused climate change hoax.

Did the Rain End the Drought?

No. Last week, while a very small area of a very large state was deluged by rain, mud slides and flooding, for one day, the rest of the state remained sunny and warm. A report from *Capital Public Radio* on October 22, "Rain No Help For Long-Term California Drought," states:

"The U.S. Drought Monitor released October 22 says the storm system last week did little to ease the long-term drought in California. The weekly report also pointed out that California reservoir storage is the "second lowest on record" for this time of year."

The article then quotes from the U.S. Drought Monitor of October 22,

"The report also says the "extremely dry conditions" are having negative effects on topsoil and subsoil moisture, and rangeland and pasture conditions in California, Oregon and Washington, and the conditions are "hampering winter crop establishment" in Oregon and Washington."

The October 20 U.S. Drought Monitor (see below) reports that for California, 92 percent of the state is in severe drought, 71 percent is in extreme and 46 percent is in exceptional drought.

The Drought Monitor intensity levels are Abnormally Dry, Moderate, Severe, Extreme and Exceptional Drought.

In the Pacific Northwest, Oregon is 100 percent in severe drought and Washington is 90 percent in severe drought. Extreme drought covers 67 percent of Oregon and nearly 68 percent of Washington.

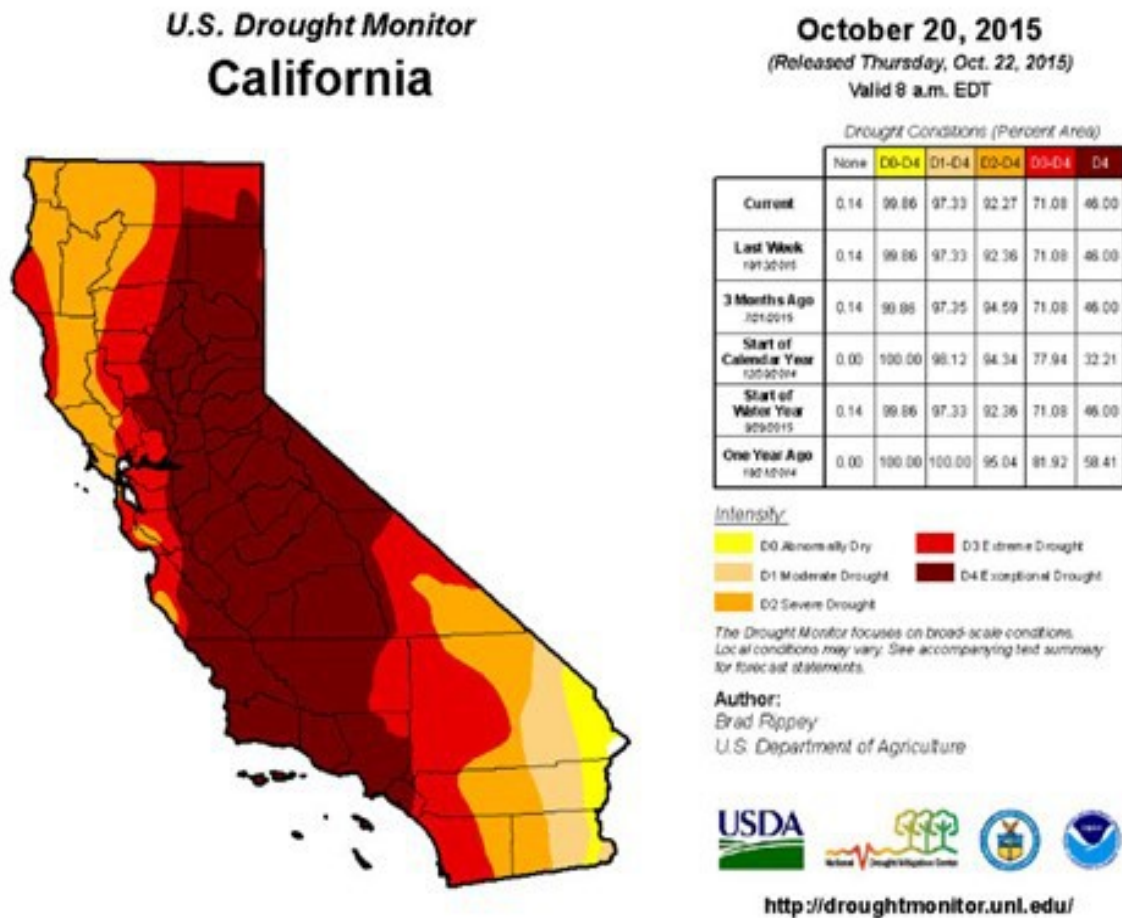
Another report on *Capital Public Radio* on October 19, "Don't Count On El Niño For Sierra Snowpack," by Ed Joyce, states,

"Despite predictions for a strong El Niño to bring above-average rain to most of California,

forecasters say it won't likely help where it's most needed.

“The [NOAA Climate Prediction Center](#) seasonal outlook does not forecast where or when snowstorms may arrive, nor does it project seasonal snowfall totals. Snow forecasts are determined by the strength and track of winter storms, which are not predictable more than a week in advance.

“But the outlook does say El Niño isn't expected to make a significant difference in bringing snow to one of areas hardest hit by the drought: the central and southern Sierra Nevada.”



Meanwhile, the long-term forecasts, as the saying goes, are all over the map. For example, as reported by *Science News* on October 21, the DOE/Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, in “a new study suggests that the weather patterns known as El Nino and La Nina could lead to at least a doubling of extreme droughts and floods in California later this century.” If you care to read it, here is the link:

http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/10/151021161032.htm?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+sciencedaily%2Fearth_climate%2Fwater+%28Water+Conservation+News+--+ScienceDaily%29

And From the Governor's Office of Emergency Services

As Joe Friday used to say, "Just the facts, Mam." So we shall take here a few facts from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services report of October 16:

Fire Activity: Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE and the US Forest Service have responded to over 7,524 wildfires across the state, burning 814,485 acres. Fire activity across California remains high with nearly 159 combined wildfires in just the past week. Up from 7,187 fires burning 799,974 acres as of September 30.

Wells: As of October 7, approximately 2,502 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 12,510 residents. Cal OES has reported that 2,355 of the 2,502 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley. If you are experiencing a water supply shortage, please submit a report on DWR's website.

Reservoir Levels as of October 15 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 31% of capacity (40% of year to date average); Don Pedro 31% of capacity (47% of average); Exchequer 8% of capacity (18% of average); Folsom Lake 17% of capacity (31% of average); Lake Oroville 29% of capacity (48% of average); Lake Perris 36% (47% of average); Millerton Lake 35% of capacity (90% of average); New Melones 11% of capacity (20% of average); Pine Flat 12% of capacity (34% of average); San Luis 18% of capacity (35% of average); Lake Shasta 33% of capacity (56% of average); and Trinity Lake 21% of capacity (32% of average). An update of water levels at other smaller reservoirs is also available.

Scientists Smack the Governor : Wild Fires Not Caused by Climate Change

Governor Brown never misses an opportunity to blame everything on man-caused climate change, usually in the most apocalyptic terms possible. So, when he blamed this year's large and destructive wild fires on that cause, we were not surprised. But, neither fire experts nor other scientists could remain silent on this one. Here are some excerpts from a *Los Angeles Times* article on October 19, "Gov. Brown's link between climate change and wildfires is unsupported, fire experts say," by Jeff Chiu and Page St. John:

<http://www.latimes.com/local/politics/la-me-pol-ca-brown-wildfires-20151019-story.html>

The ash of the Rocky fire was still hot when Gov. Jerry Brown strode to a bank of television cameras beside a blackened ridge and, flanked by firefighters, delivered a battle cry against climate change.

The wilderness fire was "a real wake-up call" to reduce the carbon pollution "that is in many respects driving all of this," he said.

"The fires are changing.... The way this fire performed, it's not the way it usually has been. Going in lots of directions, moving fast, even without hot winds."

"It's a new normal," he said in August. "California is burning."

But scientists who study climate change and fire behavior say their work does not show a link between this year's wildfires and global warming, or support Brown's assertion that fires are now unpredictable and unprecedented. There is not enough evidence, they say.

University of Colorado climate change specialist Roger Pielke said Brown is engaging in "noble-cause corruption."

Pielke said it is easier to make a political case for change using immediate and local threats, rather than those on a global scale, especially given the subtleties of climate change research, which features

probabilities subject to wide margins of error and contradiction by other findings.

"That is the nature of politics," Pielke said, "but sometimes the science really has to matter."

At a U.N.-sponsored panel on air pollution last month, Brown again linked wildfires and global warming.

"In California, our forest fires are more frequent, [of] greater magnitude and display completely unique characteristics," the governor said. "We're already being affected by climate change."

But climate scientists' computer models show only that global warming will bring consistently hotter weather in future decades. Their predictions that warming will bring more forest fires — mostly in the Rockies and at other higher elevations, while fires may actually decrease in Southern California — also are for future decades.

Even in a warmer world, they say, land management policies will have the greatest effect on the prevalence and intensity of fire.

Even climate ecologists who describe a strong tie between fire frequency and weather say they cannot attribute that connection to phenomena beyond normal, multi-decade variations seen throughout California history.

"There is insufficient data," said U.S. Forest Service ecologist Matt Jolly. His work shows that over the last 30 years, California has had an average of 18 additional days per year that are conducive to fire.

Today's forest fires are indeed larger than those of the past, said National Park Service climate change scientist Patrick Gonzalez. At a symposium sponsored by Brown's administration, Gonzalez presented research attributing that trend to policies of fighting the fires, which create thick underlayers of growth, rather than allowing them to burn.

"We are living right now with a legacy of unnatural fire suppression of approximately a century," Gonzalez told attendees.

Fire behavior specialist Jeff Shelton, who provided daily forecasts for the Rocky fire and, later, the Jerusalem fire, said he could not attribute their behavior to climate change. He cited the summer's dry weather, an abundance of fuel created by a lack of previous fires, and steep slopes that allowed the fires to spread quickly.

Ecologists said their behavior was typical of natural chaparral fires, which burn infrequently but intensely.

A regional staff member in Brown's emergency operations office called the fires "unprecedented," a description then used by the administration for other conflagrations.

But those burns were classic plume-dominated convection fires, fed largely by an abundance of combustible material, fire scientists said.

"They are more and more common because we have more and more fuels," said Joaquin Ramirez of Technosylva, an international fire modeling company based in San Diego.

Low Agro-Commodity Prices Slam U.S., European Farmers

Oct. 17 (EIRNS)--Amidst the overall U.S. economic decline, prices have dropped drastically to beef and milk producers, and to other farmers, which in speculator-speak, is attributed to over-production and declining consumer demand. In reality, eaters can't pay; and farmers are getting slammed, by both the elimination of parity pricing protection 50 years ago, and the wild futures speculation in Chicago

and Wall Street. With a few twists, the same situation obtains in Europe, where farmers have taken to the streets in protest.

Lyndon LaRouche gave the reminder today: "Wall Street is inedible!" He added, "It's poisonous," if you do eat of it.

Without a swift shift in the situation--Glass-Steagall, and setting aside the London/Obama factor, the onset of Quantitative Easing to-the-nth means guaranteed famine. In the forefront is the debacle now underway in dry California, but across the board, farms and ranches are getting whacked.

In the U.S., as of early October, cash (market-ready) cattle in Kansas sold at around \$124 per hundred pounds, back to where it was in 2013. Ranchers report losing \$100-700 per head if they sell; and are stuck with the fat animals, if they don't.

Grain and oilseed producers are likewise hit with low prices, below their cost-of-production. For many farmers who crop on rented farmland, their current cash rents are above what they can grow to generate income to cover costs and rent. But if they forego the land in 2016, they may never be able to rent it back again.

Milk producers are hit especially hard by falling prices, given the investment required to maintain dairy herds. The farm price for milk (all classes) in 2015 is at the current rate, coming in at \$16.95/100 lbs (about the same as five years ago), in contrast to \$23.97/100 lbs in 2014.

However, the figures as such aren't the story. The dynamic of high-and-low prices swings, serves to drive out family-scale operations, and consolidate production into fewer and fewer hands--ultimately concentrated in the very few cartels. Add to this, that Federally-subsidized farming insurance and banking policies are destroying what's left of smaller and medium-sized producers. The mega-bucks, mega-tech ag operations are more and more farming mega-paths of land in the Americas. These are the corporate fascists backing the Trans-Pacific-Partnership as "good" for agriculture and food.

In Europe, mass farmer actions have taken place repeatedly in France, Britain and elsewhere, over the past several months. In early September in Brussels, some 6,000 farmers and 2,000 tractors protested against the European Commission. The farmers used hay sprayers, blocked traffic and laid on their horns. The EC reacted with a nominal price support of 500 mil euros (\$560 million). The European Milk Board farmers group states that prices have gone down 30-40% in a short time, for most dairy farmers. On Sept. 9, decades-long EC milk quotas were lifted, with no production management nor aid for the dairymen. The EC blames "overproduction."

California Crop News

Here are some excerpts from the *San Jose Mercury News* article of October 20, by Michael Marks, "Navel orange prices rise as the drought hits hard:"

Harvest has begun for navel oranges, one of the most popular and important crops ever grown in California. The drought has reduced acreage, as farmers pull out trees of this heavily watered crop. Even so, growers are expecting a better than average crop. Last year, they harvested nearly 80 million cartons.

Expect to pay more for your oranges this year. Growers are paying \$1,300 per acre-foot of water

compared to around \$150 just two years ago.

Californiaagtoday.com reports on October 15, that a new record walnut crop of 575,000 tons was harvested this year. <http://californiaagtoday.com/record-walnut-crop/>. Walnuts are grown on approximately 300,000 acres of farm land.

A Presidential Policy Statement from Lyndon LaRouche

larouchepac.com/20151020/presidential-policy-statement-lyndon-larouche

October 20, 2015

The overwhelming majority of sane Americans reacted with horror and anger at the clown show of a Democratic Party presidential debate staged by CNN and Facebook on Tuesday, Oct. 13. The disrespect for the institution of the presidency that was demonstrated by the manner in which the debate was engineered came close to matching the obscenity that has characterized the several Republican Party debates so far.

In response to an outpouring of support that I have received, by merely speaking the truth about these abominations, I must issue the following brief statement on the nature of our current national crisis and the proper framework for approaching this vital presidential election.

First, the defining issue for today is the fact that Wall Street is hopelessly, irreversibly bankrupt, and there can be no serious improvement in the conditions of life for the vast majority of Americans until Wall Street is shut down altogether. The first and most immediate remedy for the bankruptcy of Wall Street is the reinstating of Glass Steagall.

The simple truth is that an honest appraisal of the disastrous collapse of real productivity in the US economy is that a large and growing majority of our fellow citizens are facing job loss, starvation, collapse of genuine health care services, the destruction of the educational system and an overall disintegration of basic infrastructure. This has accelerated under the Barack Obama presidency, but it began before that, particularly during the George W. Bush terms in office.

Any attempt to dodge this fundamental truth during the now ongoing presidential campaigns, by appealing to "issues" or populist slogans, dooms the United States to total destruction in the very short term period ahead.

Wall Street must be shut down totally. The entire Wall Street system is bankrupt. It must be ended. Then, we must do what Franklin Roosevelt did to overcome the Great Depression. Today, we face an even greater challenge, due, in part, to the decades of collapse of the productive powers of labor in this nation. Shut down Wall Street now, reinstate Glass Steagall as a means of reconstituting viable commercial banking, and then begin a program of Federal credit to revive the productive economy, through capital investment in infrastructure and other vital programs. We must begin to reverse the collapse of our industrial economy, and we must train a new generation of young people to develop the skills to function in a modern, technology-intensive growing economy.

This is what the 2016 presidential candidates must address. Any attempt to divert from this essential agenda is tantamount to surrendering to Wall Street and those who would see the United States disintegrate altogether.

A segment of the American people, horrified by the clown show of last week, is demanding nothing less. Any candidate who fails to meet this standard does not belong in the race. This is not a popularity contest or a test of who can best pander to the worst pragmatic impulses of a beaten-down and terrified public. This is an election that will determine whether or not the United States still has the moral fitness to survive.

I hear the American people crying out for a future minus the scourge of Wall Street. They deserve nothing less.

A second statement from LaRouche PAC makes clear that the possibility of actually achieving the policy that LaRouche demands was published on October 18:

Obama Can and Must be Ousted This Week

larouchepac.com/20151018/obama-can-and-must-be-ousted-week

South Africa Likens Draft Climate Deal to Apartheid

Finally, this article reports on how the less developed countries are not going along with the man-caused climate change hoax.

BONN, Germany | By [Alister Doyle](#)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/10/19/us-climatechange-summit-talks-idUSKCN0SDIU920151019>

Mon Oct 19, 2015

South Africa on Monday criticized a draft United Nations accord on fighting climate change as a form of "apartheid" against developing nations.

A summit in Paris is supposed to agree a global accord for tackling climate change in December, but a last week of negotiations on the draft text, which began in Germany on Monday, got off to a stormy start with developing nations saying their demands had been omitted from the pared down 20-page draft.

"It is just like apartheid," Nozipho Joyce Mxakato-Diseko, South Africa's delegate who speaks on behalf of the main grouping of more than 130 developing nations and China, told the meeting.

"We find ourselves in a position where in essence we are disenfranchised," she said, saying views of the poor had been ignored. South Africa's apartheid system was overthrown in 1994 when Nelson Mandela became the nation's first black president.

Developing countries said the draft, drawn up by two senior diplomats, favored rich nations and failed to stress that developed nations needed to take the lead in cutting greenhouse gas emissions and to provide far more aid and clean energy technology.