



WATER & NATURAL RESOURCES NEWS



OCTOBER 2026



SGMA NEWS

County Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board Meeting

The next Madera County GSA Board meeting is scheduled for
Tuesday, October 06, 2026.

For more information, visit the [Board meeting portal](#) to view the full agenda packet and recording.



The poster features a blue background with a large orange semi-circle at the top. Inside the semi-circle, the text "MADERA COUNTY GSAs" is in blue, "FALL" is in large, colorful letters (red, orange, yellow, green), and "GSA RESOURCE FAIR" is in blue. The poster is decorated with autumn-themed illustrations: leaves and berries in the top corners and pumpkins at the bottom. A blue banner on the left says "No Registration Needed". The event details are listed on the right, and a list of activities is on the left. The Madera County logo is on the right. The bottom of the poster has a red bar with contact information.

MADERA COUNTY GSAs
FALL
GSA RESOURCE FAIR

 November 6, 2026
 10:00am - 2:00pm

 **Madera County Government Center**
Main Lobby
200 W. 4th Street
Madera, CA 93637

No Registration Needed

You're invited! Come & explore...

- Meet your Water Resources Specialist
- Discover the Dry Well Program
- Madera/Chowchilla Resource Conservation District
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Madera County Flood Control Agency
- California Water Institute & More!



 Join us for Dessert & Refreshments!

 WNR@maderacounty.com  (559) 662-8015  www.maderacountywater.com

Flood



Community Meetings on the Draft Modified Designated Floodway

The Central Valley Flood Protection Board (Board) enforces standards for the operation of the flood control system within California's Central Valley to protect life, property, and the general welfare of residents and landowners. These responsibilities include designating floodways along the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their tributaries and modifying existing designated floodways when conditions have changed. We are pleased to discuss the draft floodway for the Fresno and Upper San Joaquin Rivers with your community. This mapping along with a fact sheet and answers to frequently asked questions are available at <https://cvfpb.ca.gov/news/fresno-and-upper-san-joaquin-river-designated-floodway-public-meeting-october-8-2026/> and can be found under our News and Notices banner for your review and use. Current designated floodways are also viewable at <https://qis.bam.water.ca.gov/bam/>.

The designated floodway for the Fresno River is located within Madera County from Lake Hensley/Hidden Dam downstream through the City of Madera to Road 22 ½ (36.968137°N, 120.138405°W). That for the Upper San Joaquin River is located along the Fresno-Madera County border from Millerton Lake/Friant Dam downstream to near the intersection of James Ave and W Shields Ave in Fresno County (36.777097°N, 120.193207°W).

Meeting Date & Time

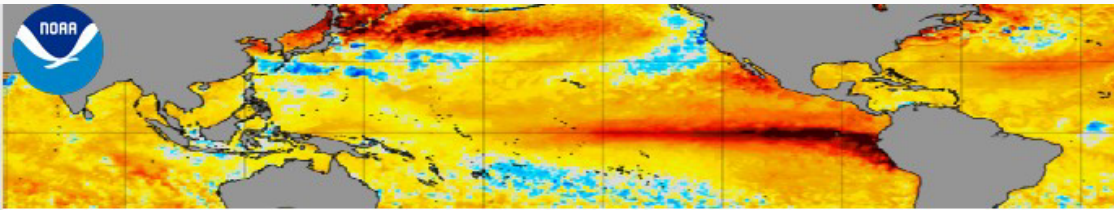
Thursday, October 8, 2026
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Fresno River)
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM (Upper San Joaquin River)

Meeting Location

Madera County Water and Natural Resources Department
200 W. 4th Street, Suite 3100
Madera, CA 93637

An option for remote attendance will be provided closer to the meeting date.

Preliminary comments, questions, and requests for internet access (in-person attendance only) must be submitted by e-mail to floodway@cvflood.ca.gov. Please include your name and professional affiliation. After the meeting, the Board will schedule a hearing to discuss adoption of the modified designated floodway. You may also contact the Board at (916) 956-7385 for additional information.



El Niño in California: Information & Preparedness Guide

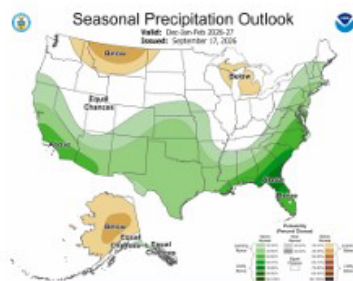
Mid-September 2026 Update

What is El Niño?

- El Niño refers to the warm phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) climate pattern, characterized by unusually warm ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
- El Niño is an oceanic phenomenon. It is not a storm or a series of storms.
- El Niño can significantly influence atmospheric steering currents and storm track, often altering typical seasonal precipitation, ocean temperatures, and coastal weather hazards in California.

What is the Forecast for 2026-2027?

- A strong El Niño is strengthening in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
- There is a very high likelihood (98% chance) of a very strong El Niño event through the fall and winter.
- There is a high likelihood (75% chance) of a historic event that would exceed the strength of previous El Niño events dating back to 1950.
- Stronger El Niño events can more significantly tilt the odds in favor of expected outcomes but even very strong El Niño events do not lead to the expected impact everywhere.



What are the *Potential* Weather Hazards during El Niño? (These are not a guarantee!)

- **Enhanced Heavy Rainfall:** A warmer ocean increases the amount of available moisture in the atmosphere. This can shift global storm tracks and enhance precipitation in winter storms, leading to prolonged rain events, flash flooding, and urban drainage overflow.
- **Landslides and Debris Flows:** Heavy rainfall on saturated hillsides can increase the risk of mudslides and debris flows—especially in recent burn scars and steep topography across coastal ranges.
- **Coastal Erosion & Storm Surge:** Winter storms can bring large waves and storm surge to coastlines. In addition, higher ocean levels due to warmer than normal waters can lead to more severe coastal erosion and coastal flooding, especially during periods of high tides.
- **Snowpack Dynamics:** While warm ocean temperatures often bring warmer storm systems (raising rain-snow elevations), strong El Niño cycles can yield heavy Sierra Nevada snowpack at higher elevations, impacting spring melt runoff.

How Should You Prepare?

- Prepare for winter storms like you do every winter in California with heightened awareness.
- Clear storm drainage systems and complete maintenance on vulnerable infrastructure.
- Forecasts, details, and impacts from potential winter storms come into view in the one to two week forecast. Coordinate with your local NWS office for briefings or visit [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov) for the latest forecasts, watches, and warnings!

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE - CALIFORNIA WEATHER FORECAST OFFICES

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration • U.S. Department of Commerce

[For more information](#)

Before the Rainy Season – A Quick Checklist

- ✓ Inspect the watercourse and identify trash, excessive vegetation damaged private structure, or flow restrictions.
- ✓ Remove trash and manageable debris and dispose of it properly.
- ✓ Manage excessive vegetation that significantly restricts flows; avoid unnecessarily removing healthy vegetation that helps stabilize the banks.
- ✓ Keep privately owned culverts, fences, crossings, or other structures from becoming hazardous obstructions.
- ✓ Do not place cut vegetation, soil, construction material, or other debris where stormwater can carry it into the channel.
- ✓ Make routine maintenance a habit instead of allowing vegetation and debris to accumulate for years.

Don't Over Clear

Proper maintenance does not mean removing every tree, shrub, or piece of vegetation. Remember, vegetation can also help stabilize banks and reduce erosion.

Important

Check before major channel work,
Excavation, grading, substantial vegetation removal, bank alteration, or other work affecting the waterway may require County, State, or Federal review or permits.
Check requirements before beginning significant work.

EVENTS



Celebrate Science Day 2026 at CNRA on October 5 & 6

The [California Council on Science & Technology](#) (CCST) and the [California Natural Resources Agency](#) (CNRA) will host [Science Day 2026](#) at the CNRA headquarters building in Sacramento on Monday and Tuesday, October 5 and 6. This annual event connects state-level science and policy with the ongoing research in universities, laboratories, and other research institutions across California. Through exploring the various initiatives underway at different State agencies, this effort seeks to develop new or expanded opportunities to support California in achieving its climate goals. [Registration](#) for this in-person event is open now.



Next Lunch-MAR webinar on Wednesday, October 7

The next [Lunch-MAR meeting](#) will feature [Ellen Bruno](#), associate professor of [Cooperative Extension](#) at UC Berkeley. Her presentation will explore the economics of managed aquifer recharge (MAR) from the costs and benefits identified across the research literature to new insights from the Kern Water Bank. This session will preview a forthcoming synthesis report and present an empirical case study using agricultural land values to estimate the economic value of groundwater storage and banking for landowners. This [hour-long webinar](#) begins at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 7. Registration is not required to attend



[For More Information](#)

THE LIVING SOILS REGENERATIVE SYSTEMS, POLLINATOR HABITAT AND BIODIVERSITY ON FARM



**IN THIS HANDS-ON WORKSHOP
YOU WILL LEARN TO:**

- ✓ **Grow food** using regenerative methods
- ✓ **Build** and restore living soil
- ✓ **Design** productive ecological systems
- ✓ Understand how regenerative farms actually operate
- ☎ 559 755-5148 🌐 <https://maderachowchillarcdd.org>

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2026
8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
BURROUGHS FAMILY FARMS
22323 E MONTE VISTA AVE., DENAIR, CA
95316

**TO REGISTER:
CONTACT OR SCAN QR CODE:**

CCA CREDITS &
CDEA INMP CREDITS PENDING!









The Madera/Chowchilla RCD will be hosting The Living Soils: Regenerative Systems, Pollinator Habitat & Biodiversity on the Farm, an on-farm educational workshop and tour on October 29th from 8:30 AM–12:30 PM. Registration for this workshop can be completed by visiting or scan QR code:
[Sign up Here](#)

NAVIGATING RISK IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

45th Annual Agribusiness Management Conference

THURSDAY OCTOBER 29TH 2026

October 29th, 2026 – 8:00am to 1:00 pm

Location: Pardini's, 2257 W Shaw Ave.

Fresno California

[Shop | Transact](#) - Register

[Agribusiness Management Conference - Institute for Food and Agriculture](#)

For more information.

CalCAN Conference 2026

November 9

Save the Date for the California Agriculture & Climate Conference!

San Joaquin Valley perspectives. Statewide agricultural solutions.

Agriculture is facing unprecedented challenges from climate change, economic pressures, and increasing regulation.

CalCAN's inaugural San Joaquin Valley conference will bring together farmers, researchers, technical advisors, policymakers, and agricultural leaders from across California to discuss challenges, explore opportunities and build connections towards a stronger, more resilient agricultural landscape across California.

Date:

November 9, 2026

Location:

DoubleTree Fresno Convention Center
Fresno, CA

Registration opens September 8, 2026

[Click here to learn more!](#)

RECHARGE IN ACTION

A Farmer Field Day

November 17, 2026



Join us for a classroom and field day event focused on real-world groundwater recharge solutions for Central Valley farms.



Explore Recharge Options

See how recharge basins, injection wells, subsurface recharge, and on-farm recharge work.



Find Funding and Support

Learn about incentives, technical assistance, and resources for recharge projects.



Understand the Benefits

Discover how recharge can support groundwater supplies, farms, habitat, and flood management.



Farmer-to-Farmer Learning

Hear practical insights and real-world lessons you can apply on your farm.



RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

Visit the event website to learn more and register:

<https://www.californiawater.org/event>

Or call (559) 278-7001 to register.



Funding for this event was in part made possible by a grant/cooperative agreement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.

FRESNOSTATE. | California Water Institute



Recharge in Action: A Farmer Field Day

The California Water Institute at Fresno State in partnership with Sustainable Conservation is hosting a classroom and field day for landowners on November 17 at the Fresno State campus. Whether you own or lease property, you will learn about groundwater recharge solutions that are available, hear from growers implementing these practices in their fields, and learn how recharge can support SGMA compliance and long-term farm water resilience. Learn more and register today at <https://www.californiawater.org/event/recharge-in-action/> or call (559) 278-7001 to register.



[For More Information](#)

OTHER NEWS

Water Blueprint

for the San Joaquin Valley

The Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley and the California Water Institute at Fresno State recently released the Unified Water Plan for the San Joaquin Valley, a congressionally authorized, federally funded report that gives local, state, and federal decision-makers a single roadmap for water investment across the eight-county region.

[Click here to read the full plan.](#)



Worried about the upcoming
storm season?

We are here to help!

Visit the FAM Co office or contact us to
get information on local resources, and
ways to get prepared for storm season.

**Located at the Oakhurst Government Center
40325 Hwy. 41, Oakhurst, CA 93644**

fireadaptedmadera@gmail.com



Different
Shapes
Different
Stories

What's Flying Overhead?

Raptors of North America

Use wing shape, tail shape and flight style to help identify!

Look Up
Learn
Enjoy! ♥

Falcons

- Long, pointed wings
- Long tail
- Fast, powerful flight
- Often flap more than other raptors



Example:

Peregrine Falcon
(and American Kestrel)



Accipiters

- Short, rounded wings
- Long tail
- Quick wingbeats, then glide
- Built for speed and agility



Examples:

Cooper's Hawk
Sharp-shinned Hawk



Buteos

- Broad, rounded wings
- Short, wide tail
- Soars and glides
- Often seen riding thermal currents



Examples:

Red-tailed Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Broad-winged Hawk



Northern Harrier

- Long, narrow wings
- Long tail
- Flies low, often with a slight V shape
- May appear to hover



Northern Harrier

Unique white patch on rump (often visible in flight)



Osprey

- Long, narrow wings with a noticeable "kink"
- Shorter tail
- Often holds wings in an "M" shape
- Usually near water



Osprey

Look for the dark wrist patches.



Bald Eagle

- Very large, broad wings
- Short, white tail (adults)
- Soars with flat wings
- Immature eagles have mottled dark and light plumage (no white tail)



Bald Eagle

Adults have a white head and tail.



Turkey Vulture

- Very large, broad wings
- Short tail
- Holds wings in a shallow V (dihedral)
- Often teeters while soaring
- Two-tone look: dark body with lighter underside edges



Turkey Vulture

Look for the two-tone wings and small head (appears smaller than other raptors).



Same Sky.
Different Wings.
Amazing Birds! ♥

The Secret Life of My Backyard
with Marion ♥

Notice
Appreciate
Protect ♥

Visit our website at:
maderacountywater.com

Have questions on your allocation, measurement, or any other GSA concern? [Schedule an appointment](#) with us! We can also be reached at (559) 662-8015, at the County Government Building on the third floor, or you can visit us online at maderacountywater.com.

