

Storms provide water for Yosemite falls to flow again

By Dana M. Nichols, Stockton Record

SAN ANDREAS – After an unusually long stretch with no water, Yosemite National Park's beloved waterfalls are flowing again, the park announced Monday.

Blame the record dry summer and a fairly dry winter last year for Yosemite Falls drying up in July, several months earlier than usual.

Upper and Lower Yosemite Falls as well as Bridalveil and other waterfalls are flowing again just before Thanksgiving, thanks to storms that dumped almost 2 inches of rain over the weekend, park officials said.

"After such a dry period, seeing the waterfalls flowing again is spectacular," Yosemite National Park Superintendent Don Neubacher said.

The park recorded one of its driest years on record, and the driest winter since 2007.

Park staff said the recent storms also brought the first significant snowfall of the season at altitudes higher than 8,000 feet. Park scientists said the storm helped saturate extremely dry soils.

The flow of the Merced River, measured at the Happy Isles Gauging Station, had dipped below 4 cubic feet per second in October.

Such a low level is rare. The storm system over the weekend has not yet done much to boost Merced River flows.

Still, it did dump enough snow to make back country travel

difficult. Tioga Road and Glacier Point Road within the park remain closed.

Unsettled weather is expected the rest of the week, with a chance for more rain and snow.