

Major California reservoirs below 50% capacity

By Veronica Rocha, Los Angeles Times

Most of California's major reservoirs are now less than half-full – or at what officials call a “seriously low” level – but that's still nowhere near the historic lows set in 1977, the state's driest year on record.

The latest report released Wednesday by the California Department of Water Resources shows 10 of the state's 12 major reservoirs below 50 percent of their total capacity, with some nearing just 20 percent.

“They are not historical levels, but they are seriously low,” department spokesman Ted Thomas said.

But when all 12 of the major reservoirs are combined, the average is at 60 percent, Thomas said. That's puts the state in a far better position than it was 37 years ago, when a crippling drought brought the statewide reservoir average down to 41 percent.

As of Wednesday, the largest federal reservoir in California at Lake Shasta was only at 36 percent capacity, which is 4.5 million acre-feet of water, he added.

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