

NASA: 11 tril. gallons of water would end drought

By Mark Berman, Washington Post

The historic, horrendous drought in California continues to be historic and horrendous. Even as rain continues to fall over parts of California, the drought is still ravaging much of the state.

To give you an idea of just how brutal this three-year drought has been, NASA decided to use its satellites (it is NASA, after all) to take measurements and figure out the amount of water needed to recover. The answer is 11 trillion gallons, which is a lot of water.

NASA came up with this number by using its Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment satellites to eyeball the water storage in the Sacramento and San Joaquin river basins. This data showed that the water storage in these basins was 11 trillion gallons below normal seasonal levels at the peak of the drought earlier this year, according to the NASA announcement.

The volume of water in these basins has dropped by 4 trillion gallons each year since 2011, with most of this loss due to the lack of groundwater under the state's Central Valley.

Read the whole story