

Drought may not hurt whitewater rafting season

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

In the strange and continuing saga of California's weather and water, the three best whitewater-rafting destinations – the South Fork American, Tuolumne and Middle Fork American – should have sensational conditions this summer in spite of the drought.

The rivers are not expected to be in crisis in spite of the record-low Sierra Nevada snowpack, 8 percent of the historical average and the lowest measured in 65 years of records.

The numbers show that Northern California's winter was not so dry as it was warm. So warm that it rained more than snowed in the high country for most of the winter, although rainfall totals are still below average for most of the state.

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