

May a good moisture month for Sierra

By Phillip Reese and Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

For a lone, lovely month, it hasn't much felt like a drought in the Sierra Nevada.

Rain and snow have fallen week after week during May in the high country. Temperatures have dropped below normal most days, reducing the amount of water lost to evaporation. Southern California has received an unusual amount of rain, too: San Diego has seen 2.4 inches of precipitation in May; it normally gets 0.21 inches.

Climatologists said the wet weather has not put much of a dent in California's drought, now in its fourth year. Yet some experts said the recent precipitation could offer a promising, albeit uncertain view, of what's in store for winter, even raising the prospect of a rain-filled El Niño season.

As of Friday, more than 4 inches of water had fallen in parts of the Sierra Nevada, some of it as rain, some as snow. That's more than five times the normal amount in some places. It has rained more during May in some parts of the Sierra than it did during the entire winter, federal data show.

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