

Calif. missed a year's worth of rain since '12

By Avaneesh Pandey, International Business Times

California – currently facing one of the worst droughts on record – has accumulated a rainfall “deficit” of about 20 inches since 2012, according to a new NASA study. In other words, the difference between actual rainfall in the state and the rainfall expected on average is now equivalent to a whole year's worth of precipitation.

Although California has typically seen wide annual fluctuations in rainfall, the wet years balanced out the dry ones during non-drought periods. However, the latest precipitation data gathered by NASA shows that California accumulated a deficit of almost 13 inches between 2012 and 2014, and another 7 inches during the 2014-2015 wet season.

According to the study, this lack of rains can be attributed to the absence of “atmospheric rivers” – narrow, water vapor-rich jets that travel through the atmosphere, typically from west to east – over the eastern Pacific Ocean.

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