

Storms filling up waterways throughout Calif.



The Upper Truckee River on March 6 is nearly full. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Paul Rogers

This weekend's soaking rains delivered just what drought-weary Northern California needed: billions of gallons of water pouring into the state's major reservoirs – and more predicted for later this week.

With rain totals reaching 10 inches or more in some mountain areas, 46 of the largest reservoirs in California, closely tracked by the state Department of Water Resources, collectively added 391 billion gallons of water between Friday and Monday morning – enough for the needs of 6 million people for a year.

The reservoir list, which includes such massive lakes as Shasta, Oroville, Folsom, San Luis and New Melones, jumped in storage by 10 percent to 13.2 million acre-feet, as powerful

storms pouring off the Pacific sent torrents of water surging down creeks, rivers and hillsides.

Even with that increase, however, the 46 reservoirs bumped up from 66 percent of their historic average on Friday to just 72 percent now. Like somebody with a badly overdrawn checking account, California's lakes need a continued infusion to get back to normal.

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