

Opinion: Dwindling Sierra snowpack here to stay

By Alex Hall Katharine and Davis Reich, Los Angeles Times

Although recent storms have dumped heavy snow across the Sierra Nevada, the April 2 snowpack measurement showed that it is still well below average. Last week, the Sierra-wide reading put the total snowpack at 15.8 inches of water content, or 43 percent below normal.

Here's an even more sobering reality. According to our new research, such spring snow measurements will be considered far above average in the decades to come.

We have just completed detailed projections of the Sierra Nevada's future climate. Our findings tell the story of a snowpack on life support. If greenhouse gas emissions continue unchecked, by the end of this century, the Sierra snowpack in a typical April will be 64 percent smaller than it was at the end of the 20th century.

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