



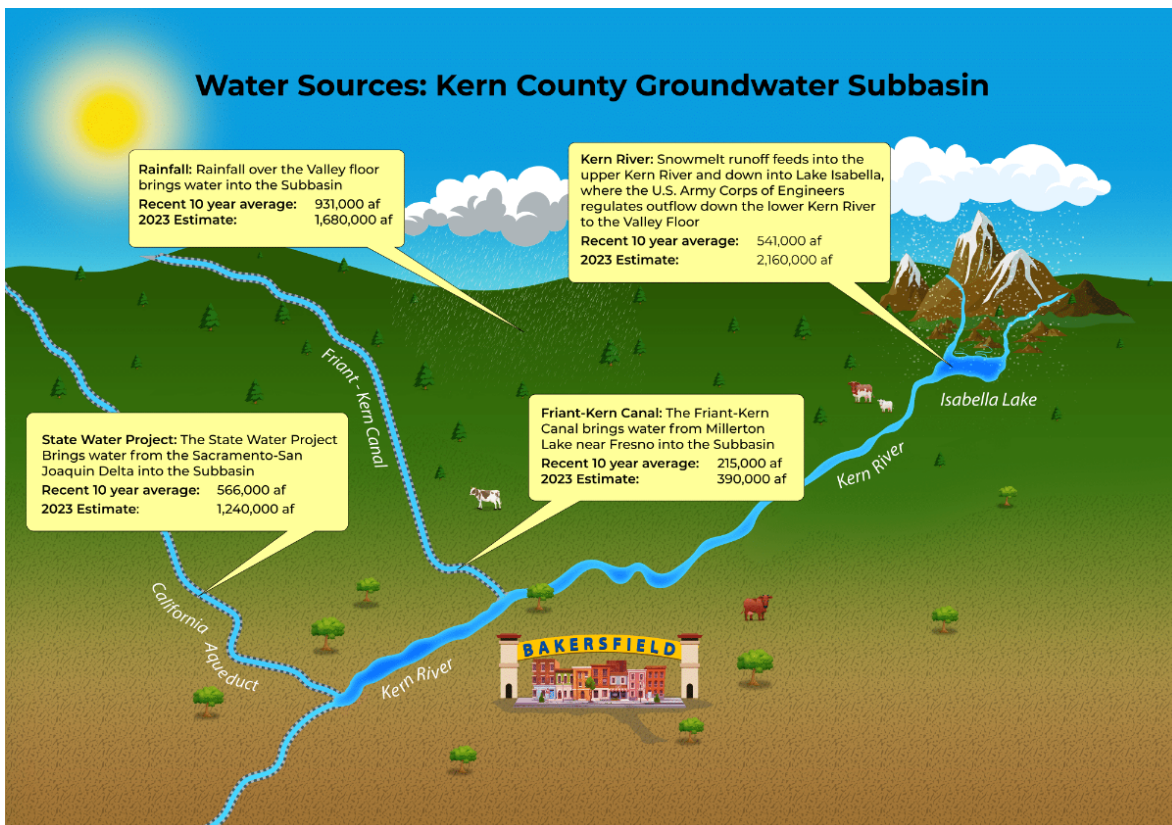
Sustainable Kern River

Newsletter | September 2023



What Sources Bring Water Into the Kern County Groundwater Subbasin?

New graphic details the sources of water that make their way into our community



[Click Here to View Resource](#)

Kern County Groundwater Subbasin Water Sources Comparison

Recent 10-year Average (AF)	2023 Estimates (AF)
<u>Kern River</u>	
541,000	2,160,000
<u>Rainfall</u>	
931,000	1,680,000
<u>State Water Project</u>	
566,000	1,240,000
<u>Friant-Kern Canal</u>	
215,000	390,000

This has been a record-setting water year for the Kern County Groundwater Subbasin. Nineteen atmospheric rivers ended recent drought conditions in the region and carried record flows into the Subbasin. A record winter snowpack 237% greater than the April 1 historical average provided a significant snowmelt runoff to feed the Kern River. Thanks to the responsible and prudent management of the Kern River’s water resources, [almost all of it went to beneficial uses right here in Kern County](#).

But the Kern River is not the only source the water comes from. So how does all that water make its way into the Kern County Groundwater Subbasin area? To help answer those questions, we’ve prepared a graphic and a chart that show those different sources of water as recent 10-year historical averages vs. the amount of water that is estimated to come into the Subbasin for 2023:

- **Kern River:** Snowfall over the Southern Sierra Nevada mountains melts and travels through the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks down the Wild and Scenic Kern River into Lake Isabella, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages outflows into the Kern River.
- **Rainfall:** Rainfall in our part of the Valley floor may appear minimal compared to other parts of the state — but it is a major source of water supply.
- **Friant-Kern Canal:** The Friant-Kern Canal, which is managed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as part of the Central Valley Project, carries water into the Subbasin from Lake Millerton near Fresno.
- **State Water Project:** The State Water Project, commonly referred to as the California Aqueduct, is managed by the California Department of Water Resources and carries water into the Valley from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Kern County Water Monitor

There is no shortage of media coverage when it comes to California water. Finding the most relevant articles to better understand how current weather conditions, groundwater management, irrigation efficiency and so many other issues stand to impact water availability in Kern County can be a daunting task. SKRC continues to monitor the wide range of voices weighing in on these subjects and more through our “Kern County Water Monitor.” We pulled out just a couple of the articles that we found particularly noteworthy to share with you.



Is the San Joaquin Valley ready for its post SGMA future? Not...quite...yet

By: Lisa McEwen, SJV Water
September 27, 2023

“In less than 20 years’ time, the San Joaquin Valley could become a patchwork of vast swaths of vacant, weed-filled lands interspersed with a few single-crop mega farms that employ only a small fraction of those who currently work in agriculture.

Or, it could be thriving with robust solar operations, thousands of water recharge basins, interconnected wildlife habitat, cohesive towns and a smaller, but diverse and secure farming economy.”

Video: Managing Water and Farmland Transitions in the San Joaquin Valley

By: Sarah Bardeen, Public Policy Institute of California
September 26, 2023

“For the past seven years, the PPIC Water Policy Center has been researching how the San Joaquin Valley can adapt to a future with less water. On September 20, we held a special half-day event on the Fresno State campus that drew together an array of growers, water managers, agency staff, and others to discuss how to best manage the changes ahead.”



Woman missing after being swept into Kern River missing, family member saved

By: Kern Valley Sun
September 26, 2023

“On the evening of Sept. 22, at approximately 11:42 p.m., the Kern Valley Substation of the Kern County Sheriff’s Office responded to a critical rescue operation near Sandy Flat Campground along the lower Kern River, according to the Kern County Sheriff’s Office.

A family member leaped into the river in an attempt to rescue her, but they were left stranded on rocks in the river.”

Residents swamped with dam water

By: John Watkins, Kern Valley Sun
September 25, 2023

“Everyone was excited a few months ago when dignitaries gathered and cut the ribbon signifying the completion of the Isabella Lake dam project.

Water was building behind the dam and there were predictions it would be a capacity lake with a chance of a flow over the spillway. Happy times were to be here again for valley businesses.”



JESSE VAD: Technology demystifies city's 'best kept secret'

By: Jesse Vad, Bakersfield Californian
September 22, 2023

“There’s a new way to explore the Kern River and it can all be done from the comfort of your own home.

The nonprofit Kern River Parkway Foundation has sponsored a visual mapping of the Kern River. Volunteers set out along the river on the parkway’s bike path and down some of the river in a kayak equipped with GPS and 360-degree cameras to capture the river for Google Maps Street View.”

Will a pending water rights bill on Gov. Newsom’s desk be a game changer in California water? It depends

By: Jesse Vad, SJV Water
September 15, 2023

“A water rights bill that made it through the Legislature this year is, arguably, a much weakened version of its original form, but the fact that it addresses senior rights at all is a significant step, according to experts.

Senate Bill 389, which clarifies the state Water Resources Control Board’s ability to investigate senior water rights, passed both the Assembly and Senate as of September 12.”



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Stay part of the conversation on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SustainTheKern>.

While the SKRC will continue to release regular newsletters, following the SKRC Twitter account is a great way to receive even more of our commentary and engage with us on the most recent Kern River water stories as they happen in real time.

About the Sustainable Kern River Coalition

The Sustainable Kern River Coalition is a regional group of water users, community members and business interests who are committed to protecting and maintaining the rights and access to Kern River water that support the families, farmers, small businesses and disadvantaged communities who are the backbone of Kern County's economy. If you or your organization is interested in joining the Sustainable Kern River Coalition, or in receiving additional information, contact us at info@sustainablekernriver.org.

