

Late-winter storms ease California's dive back into drought

April 2 2018, by Rich Pedroncelli And Ellen Knickmeyer

Storms hitting at the end of California's rainy season have eased the state's plunge back into drought.

Water officials trekked to the Sierra Nevada on Monday to measure the late-winter snowpack. Runoff from the snow historically supplies about a third of the state's water supply.

Snow survey chief Frank Gehrke says he measured 32.1 inches (812 millimeters) at one spot, called Phillips Station. Statewide, the snowpack stands at 57 percent of average.

That's nearly double where California stood before a series of storms rolled in last month.

A dry start to the winter had sent most of Southern California plunging back into drought. That happened less than a year after Gov. Jerry Brown declared the state's drought emergency over.

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