

ABC30

Feast or Famine: California's Water Crisis

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California has a water problem.

After years of drought, it seemed as if no relief was in sight. Then came January 2023. California was hit with 31 atmospheric rivers, record rainfall and a historic snowpack. But what happens when too little, becomes too much?

ABC30 presents Feast or Famine: California's Water Crisis. The new Taking Action Together original documentary explores the last 10 months as California transitioned from a drought-stricken state, to having too much water with nowhere to go.

Watch now at the video above or on ABC30's streaming apps on Roku, Apple TV, FireTV or Google TV.

The documentary explores four areas:

The Drought:

California leads the US in food production with over \$51 billion in revenue and is the 5th largest supplier of food in the world. But with a state that's been dealing with a mega drought for decades, what does it mean for farmers? Discover the science behind California's increasing droughts and the impacts it has on every California resident.

Sinking Groundwater:

California's largest reservoirs aren't behind dams, but underground and California is running out. When the over reliance of pumping groundwater continues, it has damaging effects. Since 2014, 5,300 domestic wells have gone dry. If over-pumping continues, another 9,200 wells could go dry by 2040, leaving most rural, disadvantaged communities without the water they need.

Not only are wells going dry but over-pumping is causing another phenomenon called subsidence, which is the sinkage of land. Since 2015 the Corcoran, CA area has seen over 4 feet of subsidence, leaving the area susceptible to flooding.

Flooding:

California experienced climate whiplash in 2023, coming off years of drought. After 31 atmospheric rivers, record rainfall and historic snowpack, communities throughout the state experienced flooding displacing many. With full reservoirs and swelling rivers, the record amount of water brought back what was once the largest body of water west of the Mississippi, Tulare Lake.

California's Water Future:

So, is the drought over? What happens with all the excess weather? What can we all do to help make California's water future more secure? Discover the small actions we all can do to make a difference when it comes to sustainability.