

Rogue Basin Irrigation District's Severe Drought 2026 Operation Season

The Irrigation System

Three irrigation districts (Talent, Medford, and Rogue River Valley) (The "Districts") supply irrigation to over 35,000 acres of municipal and industrial water in the Rogue Basin.

TID 16,300 acres

MID 12,000 acres

RRVID 8,800 acres

The Districts are intricately tied to each other in a complex system of reservoirs and canals that include: 7 storage dams, 20 diversion dams, and 250 miles of canal.

All Districts obtain water from Howard Prairie Lake, Hyatt Reservoir, Emigrant Lake, Keene Creek Reservoir, and Bear Creek and its tributaries. Fourmile Lake and Fish Lake provide a partial water supply to MID and RRVID and Agate Reservoir provides water to RRVID.

*Acre Feet= a/f	Full Reservoir Capacities	May 2026 Volumes	June 2026 Volumes	July 2026 Volumes	August 2026 Volumes	September 2026 Volumes
Fish Lake	7,900 a/f*	5,171 a/f*				
Fourmile Lake	15,600 a/f*	4,251 a/f*				
Emigrant Lake	39,000 a/f*	27,609 a/f*				
Howard Prairie	60,600 a/f*	46,684 a/f*				
Hyatt lake	16,200 a/f*	8,690 a/f*				
Agate Lake	4,670 a/f*	4,678 a/f*				
Total	143,970 a/f*	97,083 a/f*				

As of May 4, 2026, the total reservoir storage was 65%

Weather conditions contributing to reduced storage

- Winter temperatures were warmer than average, resulting in minimal mountain snowpack.
- Spring temperatures were also warmer than average, with below-normal precipitation.
- Together, these conditions reduced inflows and led to a lower reservoir storage allotment for the 2026 season.



EMIGRANT LAKE 2020



FOURMILE LAKE 2025



FISH LAKE 2023



HOWARD PRAIRIE LAKE 2020



HYATT LAKE 2021

2012 Rogue Basin Biological Opinion Federal Requirement

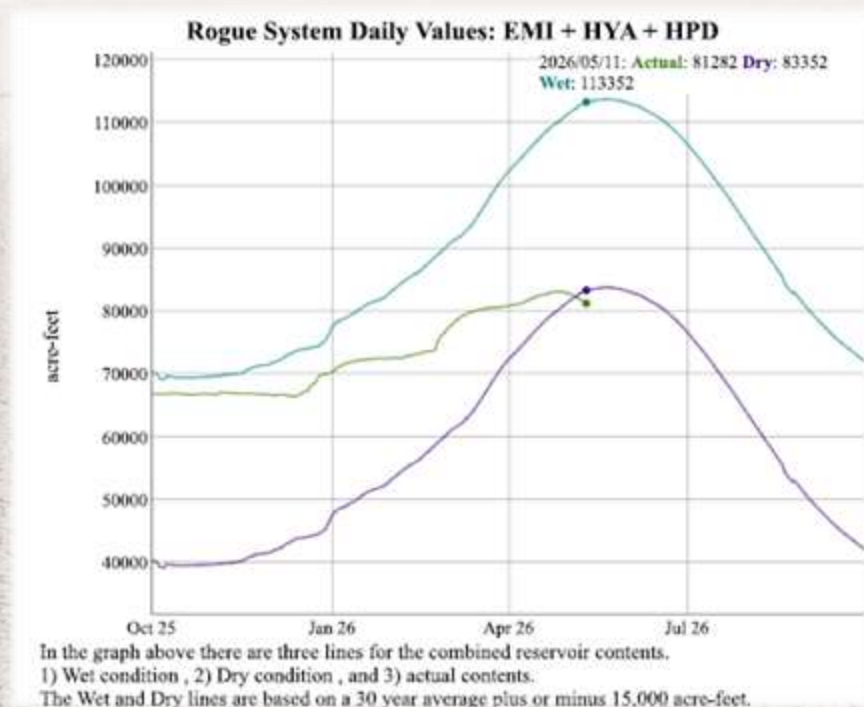
The 2012 Rogue Basin Biological Opinion established federal requirements to protect the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Coho Salmon (SONCC), a threatened species.

- Requires year-round instream releases to support fish passage and aquatic habitat.
- Increases system water dedicated to environmental flows.
- Reduces the seasonal irrigation allocation available to agricultural users.

Drought

April 23, 2026, the Governor's Office issued a drought declaration for Southern Oregon, supported by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. Reservoir levels are low and are expected to reduce water availability during the 2026 irrigation season. If conditions persist, an early shutoff is anticipated.

https://www.kdrv.com/news/regional/governor-kotek-declares-drought-emergency-in-jackson-county/article_9dfe152e-05ee-4454-8a30-97c6d88b15ee.html



Districts Request All Water Users

- Keep sprinklers in good working order.
- Replace worn pipe gaskets to eliminate leaks.
- Repair or replace leaking pipes.
- Clean and maintain surface ditches to ensure proper flow.
- Repair ditch sidewalls as needed.
- Coordinate with the District to schedule water deliveries.
- Follow the scheduled rotation.
- Limit runoff—once crops are adequately covered, do not waste water.
- If you finish irrigating early, notify the District so the water can be reassigned to the next user.

Each District will continue to monitor conditions and reservoir storage daily. The District requests voluntary compliance with water conservation efforts, and District staff will monitor to support good conservation practices.

Resources to attain assistance:

Energy Trust of Oregon Website: <https://www.energytrust.org/>

Jackson Soil & Water Website: <https://www.jswcd.org/drought>

Oregon Water Resources:

<https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/programs/climate/droughtwatch/pages/default.aspx>