# LOCAL CONDITIONS: WATER YEAR 2025-2026

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# DROUGHT TRIGGER METRICS

- US Drought Monitor (USDM) classifications
- Dry well reports to California Department of Water Resources
- Current year hydrology
  - Lake Mendocino reservoir storage (inland)
  - Two-year precipitation accumulation (coastal)

# US DROUGHT MONITOR CLASSIFICATIONS

- The USDM is a "snapshot" of drought conditions based on recent measurements of precipitation, streamflow, reservoir levels, temperature, evaporative demand, soil moisture, vegetation health, and other factors.
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the USDA, and the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln update the USDM weekly.

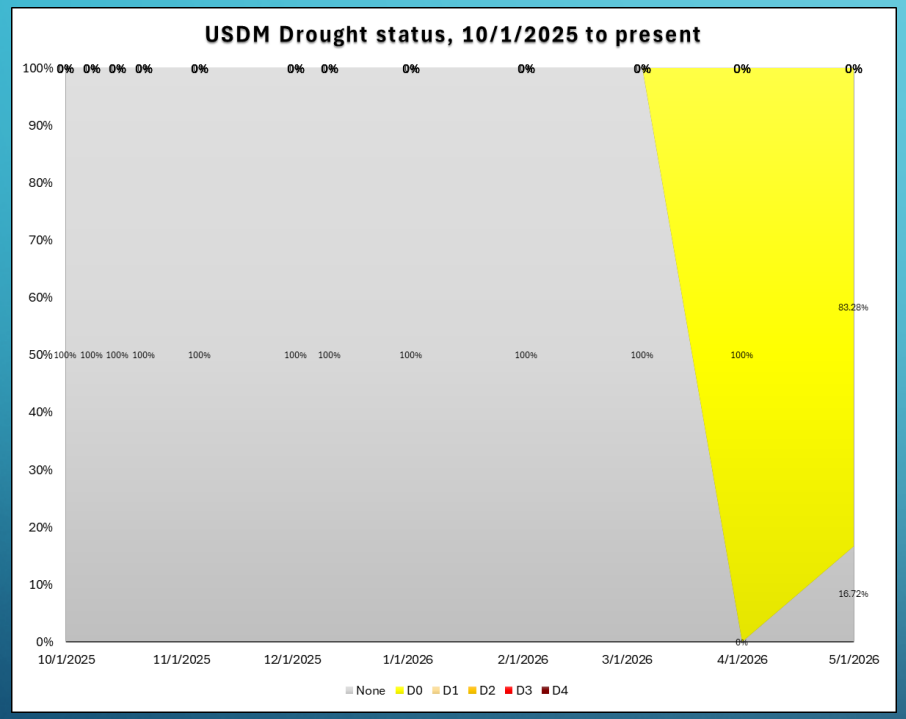
- "None"= normal or wet conditions
- D0 = abnormally dry
- D1 = drought-moderate
- D2=drought-severe
- D3=drought-extreme
- D4=drought-exceptional

Stage 1 – Water Shortage Monitoring

Stage 2 – Water Shortage Warning

Stage 3 – Severe and Emergency Water Shortage

# US DROUGHT MONITOR CLASSIFICATIONS



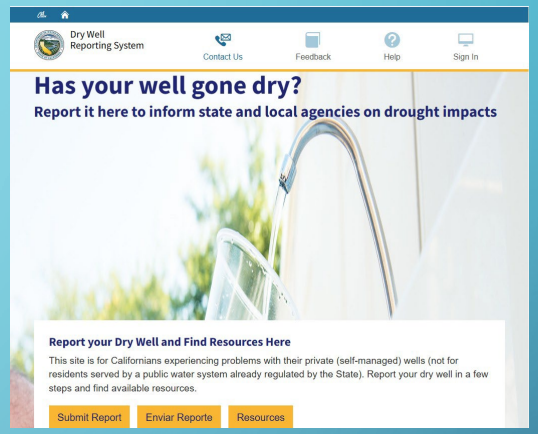

- From October 2025 through March 2026, the entire County was given a “None” classification.
- At the beginning of April, the entire County was reclassified as D0 – abnormally dry conditions.
- At the beginning of May, 17% of the County was given a “None” classification and the remaining 83% was classified as D0.

# REGIONAL TRIGGERS

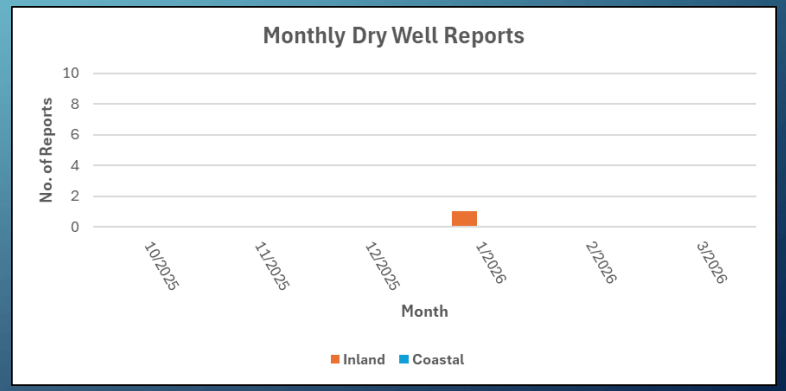
- The number of dry well reports and current year hydrology triggers are measured differently for inland and coastal Mendocino County.
- For this monitoring, “coastal Mendocino County” encompasses the Big-Navarro-Garcia watershed and “inland Mendocino County” encompasses the remainder of the County.

# DRY WELL REPORTS

- MyDryWell allows Californians to report problems with private wells to inform state and local agencies of drought impacts on households.
  - All data is publicly available except for name, address, and contact information.
  - This is not tied to enforcement. You will not get in trouble for reporting a dry well.
- Our drought trigger is the number of dry well reports to DWR in any 3-month period:
  - Stage 1: <4 reports
  - Stage 2: 4-6 reports (inland), or 4-12 reports (coastal)
  - Stage 3: >6 reports (inland) or >12 reports (coastal)

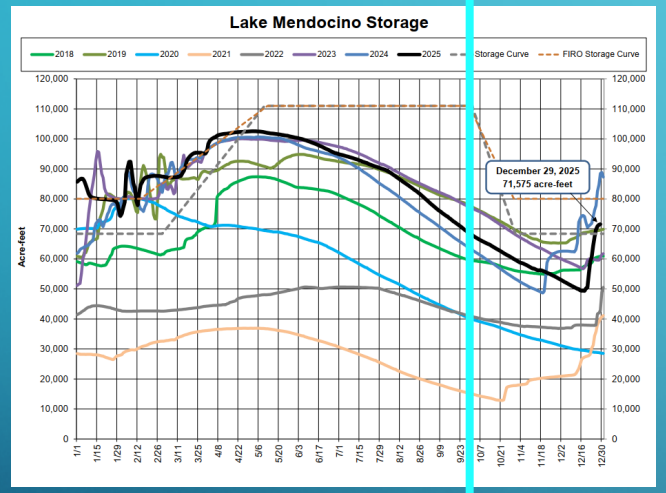



mydrywell.water.ca.gov/report

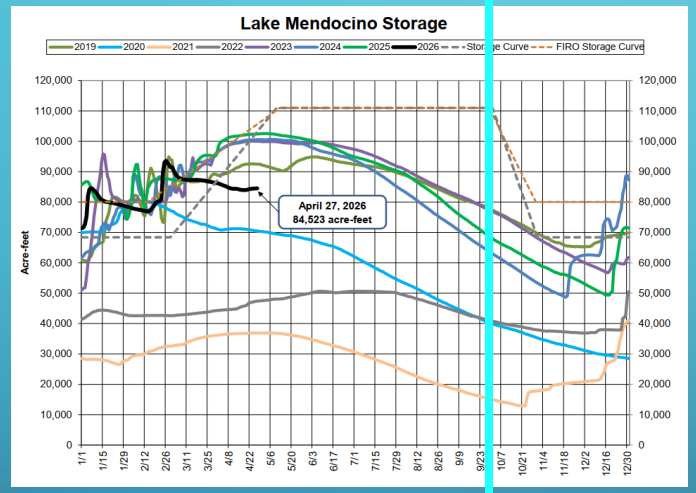


# CURRENT YEAR HYDROLOGY: RESERVOIR STORAGE

2025-2026 Water Year



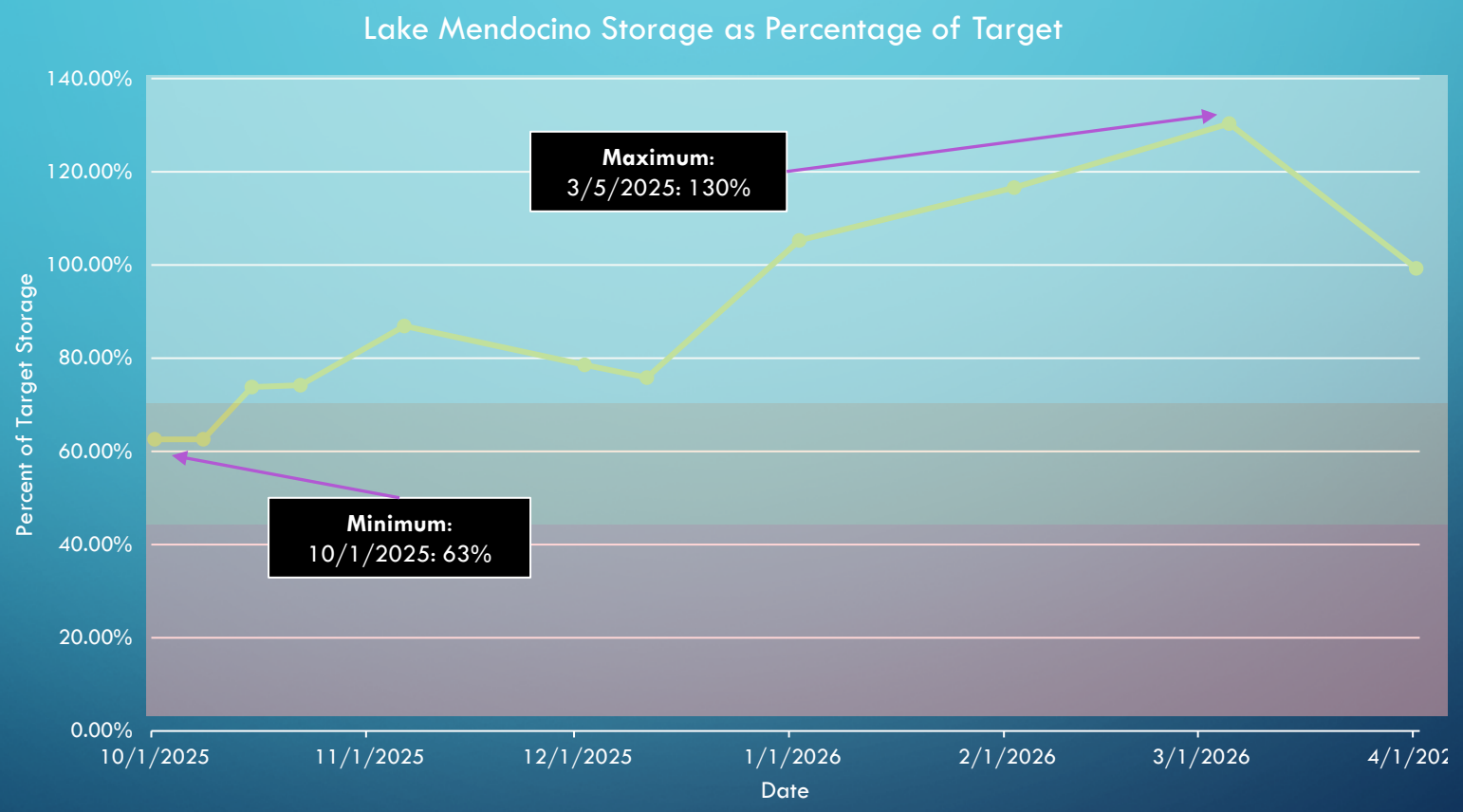

Source: Inland Water and Power Commission



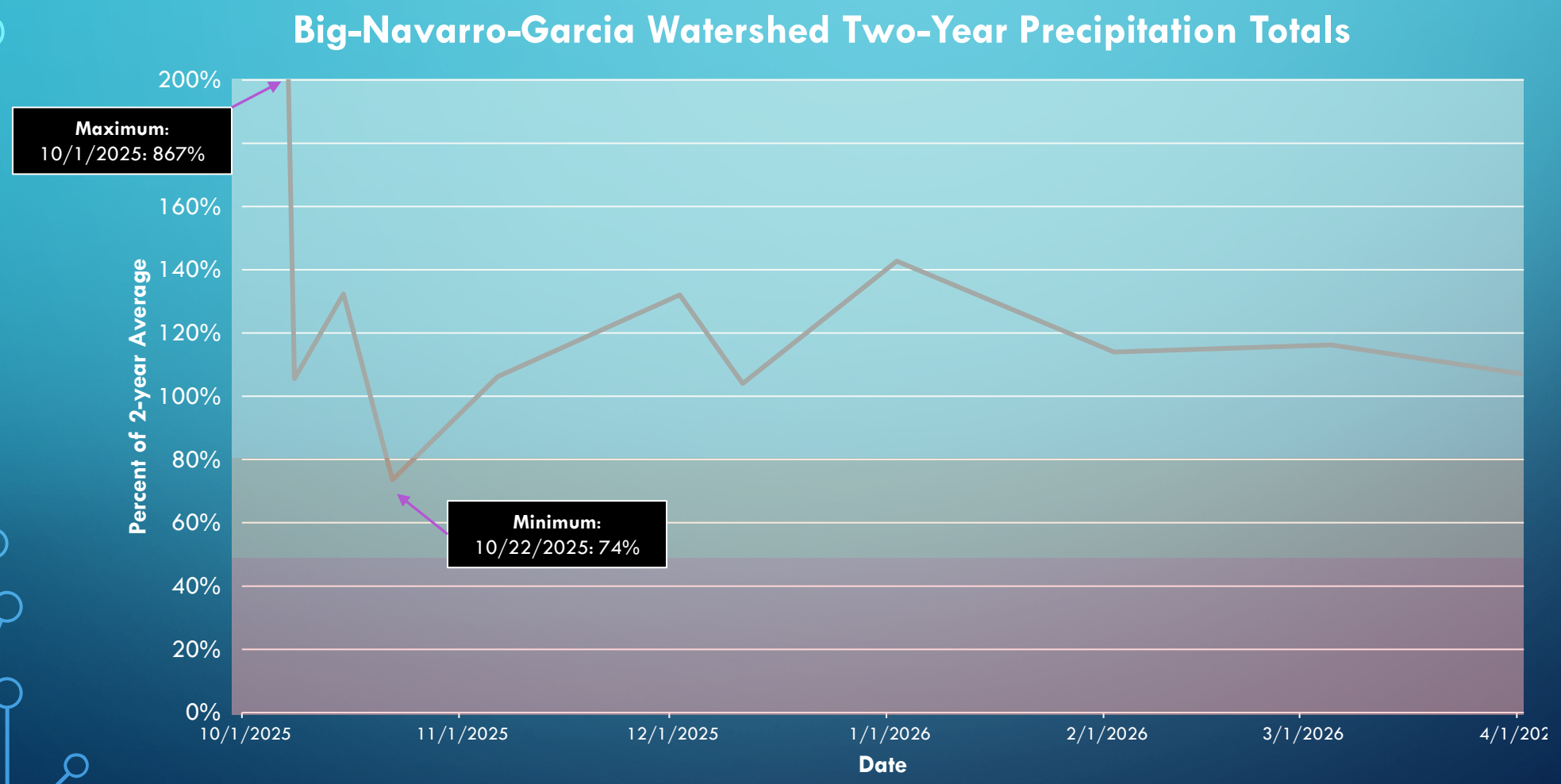

Source: Inland Water and Power Commission

- To assess reservoir storage, the Mendocino County Water Agency tracks Lake Mendocino storage levels as a percentage of the target storage curve (the grey dotted line).

# CURRENT YEAR HYDROLOGY: RESERVOIR STORAGE



# CURRENT YEAR HYDROLOGY: TWO-YEAR PRECIPITATION TOTALS



# IN SUMMARY…

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| Stage 1 | Water Shortage Monitoring | • Track Drought Response Triggers<br>• Convene CDTF meetings<br>• Community outreach and education<br>• GSA coordination | • Partnership with NGOs<br>• Facilitation of mutual aid agreements<br>• Identification of additional funding |
| Stage 2 | Water Shortage Warning | • Continue Stage 1 actions<br>• Community engagement and outreach<br>• Voluntary Water Cutbacks | • Temporary ordinances |
| Stage 3 | Severe and Emergency Water Shortage | • Continue Stage 1 & Stage 2 actions<br>• Increased and enhanced community engagement<br>• Identify and pursue additional funding | • Seek state & federal emergency declarations<br>• Emergency and interim water supplies (filling stations, water hauling, bottled water), contingent upon available funding |

# MCWA DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

- Monitoring drought triggers
- Convening Drought Task Force Meetings
- Sharing information with drought response partners and the public
    - Visit our Drought Portal at https://www.mendocinocounty.gov/government/mendocino-county-water-agency/drought-water-conservation or using the QR code to the right
- Email us at mcwa@mendocinocounty.gov