



National Weather Service

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



November 2002

Location	Date	Time Local/ Standard	Path Length (Miles)	Path Width (Yards)	Number of Persons Killed	Number of Persons Injured	Estimated Damage Property	Estimated Damage Crops	Character of Storm
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CALIFORNIA, South Central

CAZ096>097		S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns							
	07	0600PST			0	0			Winter Storm
	09	1600PST							
Fresno County									
	08	1600PST			0	0			Urban/Sml Stream Fld
	09	1600PST							
Kern County									
	08	1600PST			0	0	23K		Urban/Sml Stream Fld
	09	1600PST							

After a relatively benign active weather month in October, November 2002 also started slow for Interior Central California. However, the first major trough off from the East Pacific combined with tropical moisture from Hurricane Huko at southern latitudes brought copious amounts of rain (snow levels at or above 9,000 feet Mean Sea Level) and gusty wind at higher elevations from the 7th until early on the 9th. What was unusual for this area was the change from the normal summer/fall dry conditions to the wet season in such dramatic fashion with little in the way of transition. During the period in the Southern Sierra Nevada 46" of new snow fell at Volcanic Knob and Upper Burnt Corral; and in the Tulare County Mountains 80" fell at Chagoopa Plateau. Numerous foothill locations received 5-10" of rain within the 3-day period in the foothills of the Southern Sierra Nevada. Johnsondale, in Tulare County received 16.38" of rain in the 3-day period. On the San Joaquin Valley floor Merced received 1.80" in 3 days, Fresno 1.76"; Hanford 1.44"; and, Bakersfield 1.29." Rainfall amounts for the 8th were over 1" at several Valley locations thereby establishing new 24-hour rainfall records, e.g. Fresno's old record for the 8th was 0.23" ... new record 0.98". There were 23 pole fires caused by wind and arcing reported by Southern California Edison utility and ultimately affected 102,000 residents in the Central and Southern S.J. Valley.

CAZ095-098>099		Kern Cty Mtns - Indian Wells Vly - Se Kern Cty Desert							
	07	1800PST			0	0			Wind
	08	1800PST							

The first storm of the winter season moved onshore bringing heavy rain and windy conditions for Interior Central California on the 7th. Numerous locations reported gusty wind with damage reported to powerlines due to arcing and felled trees. In the Kern Mountains poles were downed in the Weldon and Onyx area east of Lake Isabella and around Mt.Mesa and Southlake around 3:30 AM on the 8th. In the Kern Desert, Indian Wells Canyon and Laural Mountain reported wind in excess of 50 MPH at both locations

CAZ089>090-093		W Central Sj Valley - E Central Sj Valley - S Sierra Foothills							
	07	2103PST			0	0			Wind
	08	0400PST							

Significant frontal passage brought gusty wind with speeds of 40 to 44 MPH across the Central San Joaquin Valley and into the neighboring foothills of the Southern Sierra Nevada.

CAZ093>097		S Sierra Foothills - Tulare Cty Foothills - Kern Cty Mtns - S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns							
	08	1000PST			0	0	200K		Flood
	09	1800PST							

Tehachapi in Kern County reported 4.67" of rain and Lodgepole in Tulare County received 11.55" of rain in the 3-day period from the 7th to the 9th along with the 16.38" at Johnsondale. Despite the very dry antecedent conditions, this amount of rainfall lead to flooding problems...especially in and around the Tulare County Mountains. Snow levels were relatively high, at 9000 feet MSL. Park Dispatch reported washouts on Parker Pass Road and the Road below Durwood Resort in Southeast Tulare County, as well as the road that leads from Johnsondale southward to Kernville in Kern County. Flooding also occurred along Highway 178 near Kelso in Kern County (Glennville received 6" of rain); rock/mudslides occurred on Highway 168 and Highway 180 in the S.Sierra Nevada foothills; and, with numerous rock/mudslides, and road erosion problems, the Tulare County foothill roadways of the General's Highway and Mineral King were closed. Sequoia National Park had to evacuate folks from a flooded trailer park near Ash Mountain on the morning of the 9th. Due to erosion problems with the McNally Fire in Southeast Tulare and Northeast Kern Counties, debris was spread across many mountain roads in the area as well as contributing to a fish kill in the Kern River. Additional flooding and mudslide problems were noted along Highway 178 in Kern County. Peak flow into Lake Isabella from the Kern River was 26,500 CFS on Friday night, the 8th. The lake storage increased from 82,000 acre-feet to 109,000 acre-feet and increased in elevation 5 feet in a 2-day period from the 8th to 9th.



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CALIFORNIA, South Central

CAZ095-098>099 **Kern Cty Mtns - Indian Wells Vly - Se Kern Cty Desert**

08	1555PST				0	0			Wind
09	2100PST								

In conjunction with the multiple day precipitation event from the 7th through the 9th, gusty wind continued to buffet the Kern County Mountains and Deserts. Wind was often reported with 40+MPH gusts at several different automated reporting sites. There were spikes of 74 and 91 MPH at Indian Wells Canyon at 1613 PST and 1713 PST in the early afternoon of the 9th during the event. In the Mojave area winds again were generally around 40+MPH on the 8th into the 9th with a few gusts to 60 Knots at the Inyokern Airport during the afternoon of the 9th.

CAZ089>092 **W Central Sj Valley - E Central Sj Valley - Sw Sj Valley - Se Sj Valley**

14	0000PST				0	0	1.4M		Fog
22	0930PST								

Following the very substantial rain for the 3-day period from the 7th through the 9th of the month, high pressure aloft built and resided over Interior Central California. This weather regime, quite conducive to dense morning fog formation, established itself between the 10th and 13th, and maintained itself through the end of the month. The fog was especially widespread from the 14th through the morning of the 21st. Numerous vehicle accidents occurred due to the extremely poor visibilities on Central and Southern San Joaquin Valley roadways...especially during the week starting the 18th. During this week there were 4 indirect traffic fatalities due to the dense fog with at least 32 injuries. Specifically on the 20th, 50 trucks and cars were involved in multi-vehicle pile-ups in a 3-mile stretch of Highway 99 just north of the Merced-Madera County Line...and in Tulare County a couple of multi-vehicle pileups occurred in the dense fog. Also on the 20th, a series of 8 accidents occurred just north of the Madera-Fresno County Line on Highway 99 resulting in injuries and damage. On the morning of the 22nd, there were several separate accidents due to locally dense fog in North Kings and West Tulare Counties that resulted in indirect injuries.

CAZ096>098 **S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns - Indian Wells Vly**

25	0900PST				0	0			Wind
26	1600PST								

A closed low off the Southern California Coast provided for strong offshore pressure gradients resulting in gusty northeast wind flow over the upper elevations of the Southern Sierra Nevada and Tulare County Mountains, and the Indian Wells Valley in the Kern County Desert. In the S.Sierra, power outages were reported in Yosemite Valley as winds downed power lines and trees and trees were downed along Highway 140 down to El Portal. Wind speeds reached 40-50 MPH consistently with a gust to 61 MPH and Ellery Lake. Likewise in the Tulare County Mountains, speed in the range of 40-50 MPH were common with a gust to 62 MPH at Bear Peak. In the Indian Wells Valley, wind speeds of 40-50 MPH were observed with a few gusts over 60 MPH and an isolated gust to 79 MPH at Laural Mountain early in the afternoon of the 25th.

CAZ092 **Se Sj Valley**

26	0715PST				0	0			Fog
	1000PST								

While fog was patchy within the Central and Southern San Joaquin Valley on the morning of the 26th, widespread dense fog did form with visibilities as low as 200 feet in the Southeast San Joaquin Valley.

Madera County
10 E North Fork

27	1200PST				0	0	22K		Wildfire
29	1200PST								

The cause of the Rock Creek fire is unknown but it burned 420 acres before containment by Sierra NF crews.