

County of Nevada

Drought Resilience Plan



**NEVADA
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California Senate Bill (SB 552): Securing Rural Water Resilience

SB 552, enacted in 2021 in response to vulnerabilities revealed during the five-year drought, serves as a key component of implementing California's 2018 water conservation and drought-planning laws (SB 606 and AB 1668).

The Why

SB 552, driven by the 2012 Human Right to Water update to the Water Code, requires state and local governments to plan ahead so small systems and private well owners aren't caught off guard by the next shortage.

Who Does This Help

The law targets two drought-vulnerable groups: state small water systems serving 5–14 households and individual homes that rely on their own private wells.

What County Governments Must Do

Counties are now the front-line leaders for rural drought planning, responsible for forming a Drought Task Force that regularly assesses local water risks and creating a Drought Resilience Plan that identifies areas where wells may run dry and outlines how emergency water—such as bottled or hauled supplies—will be provided.

General Plan & Safety Elements: SB 552 allows counties to integrate their drought resilience plans into existing plans such as the General Plan or Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP)



Nevada County – Securing Resilience Under SB 552

SB 552 is reshaping Nevada County's drought preparedness by shifting the community from reactive emergency response to proactive long-term planning, a critical change given the county's ranking as the fourth highest drought-risk area in California. With 7,321 domestic wells identified as potentially or confirmed at risk of running dry, this planning effort carries significant importance for local residents.

The Planning Journey

Nevada County met the law's requirements by creating an Advisory Group and over two years of technical analysis and community input, mapped drought-risk areas, identified the Western Foothills as highly vulnerable, gathered resident feedback and assembled a diverse Drought Advisory Group representing key local agencies and stakeholders.

Solving the "Emergency Gap"

Nevada County has historically had no formal program to help private well owners during water shortages. Through the SB 552 process, we are developing short-term response actions such as mutual-aid agreements, bottled or hauled-water distribution, and strategically located filling stations to provide emergency potable water when wells fail.



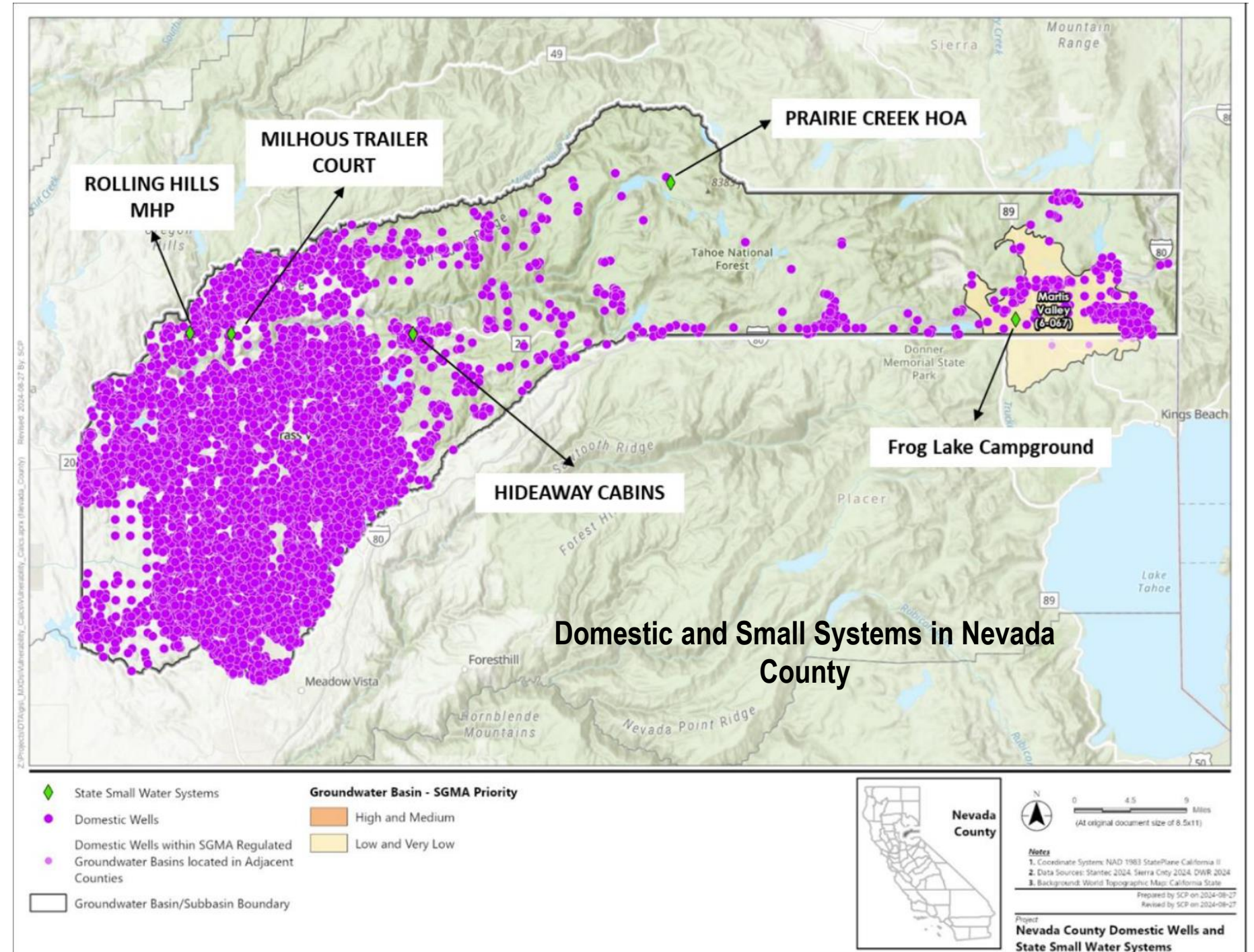
Nevada County – Securing Resilience Under SB 552

Building Permanent Resilience

Nevada County is building long-term drought resilience by expanding water supplies through rainwater harvesting and greywater use, strengthening wells before problems occur, and exploring connections to nearby public water systems. Together, these actions help ensure rural communities have more reliable water during future droughts.

Sustainable Water Management Strategies for Resource-Constrained Counties

Many rural counties face similar financial constraints, so Nevada County is meeting SB 552 requirements by relying on existing organizations, pursuing state and federal funding opportunities, and implementing low-cost strategies like education, outreach, and exploring system consolidation. These efforts help the county strengthen drought resilience without requiring major new infrastructure spending.



Nevada County DRP – Next Steps

Nevada County Drought Resiliency Advisory Group

- Meet annually (or as needed during an emergency) to review status of current drought conditions, needed updates to the County's DRP and discuss long-term solutions & infrastructure projects.

Incorporate Plan into County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)

- **Annex to LHMP:** County DRP as a resource and guide for emergencies as part of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)
- **Oversight Collaboration:** Office of Emergency Services (OES) and Environmental Health Department (EHD) sharing in the roles and responsibilities for the County's DRP. County Agencies will work collaboratively with NID, City of GV, City of NV, TTPUD, Donner Summit WD, Ag Commissioner, Farm Bureau, Cannabis Alliance and Water Operators

Short-Term Response Actions Established in the DRP

- Community and Public Engagement. Update website with resources and guidance and review communication protocol (County OES & EH)
- Supply Interruption Notification (such as planned power outages) – NID, PG&E and Nevada County Advisory Group
- Conservation and Demand Management. Promote water saving methodologies via social media and website (Co. OES & EH). Streamline permitting processes (EH). Use of Licensed Water Haulers.
- Develop Thresholds for communitywide procurement and delivery of packaged water and providing dedicated water filling sites during drought and water shortage emergencies. (Co. OES & EH)
- Provide DRP and other Drinking Water guidance on website (EH)

Nevada County DRP – Next Steps: Long-Term

Long-Term Mitigation & Actions Strategies Established in the DRP

Addressing Data Gaps

- Domestic Well Monitoring. Identify and Document all domestic wells in use in Nevada County, integrate GIS to provide real-time overview of domestic well data to include depth and water quality results, (EH, County GIS and State Department of Water Resources)
- Dry Well Reporting and Abandonment. Ensuring wells are abandoned properly as information for the annual report to State Water Board (EH)

Countywide Planning

- Regional Planning Integration. Updating plans (hazard mitigation, wildfire, emergency operations, resources & resiliency). (County OES)

Communication and Outreach

- Website Presence. Updating website with a dedicated DRP site. Include state resources and links and information on drought-resilient landscaping & wildfire mitigation. (County EH as lead & County OES)

Drinking Water Well Mitigation

- Grant assistance opportunities, Non-drought hazard assessment & Storage water tank installation program. (County EH as lead & County OES)

System Consolidation

- Coordination with regional suppliers on consolidation planning and implementation. (County in coordination with our regional water suppliers).

Nevada County Website - Source for Information

County Drought Resilience Plan

Private Residential Wells

Small Water Systems

Did You Know?

[Home](#) › [Departments](#) › [Departments C - D](#) › [Community Development Agency](#) › [Departments](#) › [Environmental Health](#) › [Drinking Water Wells](#) › [County Drought Resilience Plan](#)

County Drought Resilience Plan

Summary of California Drought Resilience Legislation SB 552

In September 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Senate Bill (SB) 552 (Hertzberg), which assigned new responsibilities and requirements at the State of California (State) and local levels to help small water suppliers and rural communities reduce their risks of inadequate water supply amid a water shortage event/drought.

Drought Resilience Plan Purpose and Scope

Senate Bill 552 requires counties to prepare a plan to achieve meaningful and long-term improvements in water resilience for their residents. The Nevada County Drought Resilience Plan's (DRP) goal is to implement a plan that assists with achieving meaningful improvements in water resilience for our Nevada County residents. In addition, the Nevada County DRP meets requirements of Senate Bill 552 by establishing a standing county drought resilience advisory group to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county's jurisdiction. The Nevada County DRP also includes potential drought and water shortage risk and proposed interim and long-term solutions.

Systems Covered by the DRP Include: **State small water systems (SSWSs)** which are systems of piped water to the public for human consumption that serves at least 5, but not more than 14, service connections. **Domestic wells** which are a groundwater well used to supply water for the domestic needs of an individual residence or a water system that has no more than 4 service connections. In addition, the Nevada County DRP covers water shortages due to **Drought** which is a period of abnormally dry weather that results in water shortages and **non-Drought Hazards** such as wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and extended power shutoffs, and water quality issues, amongst others.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR), through a stakeholder task force, prepared the County Drought Resilience Plan Guidebook [DWR County Drought Resilience Guidebook](#), which provides guidance on all elements, including how to complete a vulnerability assessment that informs short-term response actions and long-term mitigation strategies and actions, examples of short-term response items and long-term mitigation actions, and how to implement and maintain the County Drought Resilience Plan. Additionally, SB 552 directed Department of Water Resources to maintain and update its Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool [Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool](#) ¹ for counties to use in the plan preparation.

[Nevada County Drought Resilience Plan](#)

Nevada County Website - Source for Information

Domestic Well Owners' Resources

- [State Water Board Financial Assistance Funding - Grants and Loans](#)
- [RCAC Household Water Well & Septic System Loan/Grant Programs](#)
- [Department of Water Resources Conservation tips](#)
- [Save Our Water - Conserve Water](#)
- [Department of Water Resources Dry Well Reporting System](#)
- [Department of Water Resources Factsheet: Tools for Dry Well Susceptibility and Reporting](#)

STEP	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
1	Assemble Nevada County Advisory Group	completed
2	Community input the Nevada County Drought Resilience Survey	completed
3	Townhall held June 23, 2025, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.	Watch Video from Town Hall
4	Nevada County Advisory Group Meetings November 2024 & September 2025	completed
5	Nevada County Advisory Group Final DRAFT DRP review February 2026	completed
6	Nevada County Board of Supervisors Approval of DRP July 2026	in progress

Request for Board of Supervisors

Approve the Resolution for the Nevada County Drought Resilience Plan





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Questions & Thank you