

# Water Official

## Dire Warning for '78

5/19/77

Sacramento

Extraordinary measures may be necessary to prevent total exhaustion of Northern California's stored water supplies early in 1978, a state official said yesterday.

John Bryson, chairman of the state Water Resources Control Board, said the drought is worse than had been thought.

Runoff in the Sacramento Valley may be 25 per cent less this year than in 1924, the driest year on record, he said.

If the drought persists, Bryson said, water supplies will be exhausted for major population centers, including the San Francisco area.

"The only available emergency supply to the Bay Area appears to be the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta," he said. "Thus, there is a need to conserve sufficient supplies available for rediversion from the Delta, to serve this area."

The board announced it will meet next Tuesday to consider "extraordinry measures."

Bryson said April was the seventh consecutive month of below-normal precipitation in the Sacramento Valley, and that seasonal precipitation to date is about half what it was for the same seven-month period last year.

"If 1978 is like 1977, upstream supplies could be completely exhausted early in 1978 unless extraordinary steps are taken immediately," Bryson said.

Associated Press

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