National Weather Service
Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena

January 2003

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

CALIFORNIA, South Central

CAZ090-092-096 — **E Central S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley - S Sierra Mtns**

01	**0000PST**	**0**	**0**			**Drought**
31	**2359PST**					

Rainfall for the month of January was much below normal for Interior Central California as well as much of the state of California. The rainfall for this critical rain/snowfall month was only 58% of normal over the northern portion of the state. In the center portion of the state, Fresno received only 0.40" thereby ending 1.76" below normal for the month (19% of normal). Bakersfield had only 0.01" of rain and that was 1.17" below its normal. Comparable poor amounts of rain/snow were received in the adjacent mountains for water storage for the upcoming summer.

CAZ089>092 — **W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley**

03	**0500PST**	**0**	**6**	**400K**		**Dense Fog**
05	**1200PST**					

Rain that occurred at the last part of December led to the development of extensive fog at the first part of January...and continued through much of January with just a few breaks. By the morning of January 3rd, widespread dense fog devoloped by sunrise throughout the Central and Southern San Joaquin Valley with avaition weather reporting stations all less than 1/4 statute mile visibility. The mornings of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th had dense fog in all areas of the Valley floor to the extent that the Highway Patrol implemented "pacing" to keep traffic speeds proper for the limited visibility. On the 4th, over 30 accidents were reported in the Central and South San Joaquin Valley due to the dense fog.

CAZ096>097 — **S Sierra Mtns - Tulare Cty Mtns**

05	**1821PST**	**0**	**0**			**High Wind (G92)**
06	**1600PST**					

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

05	**2000PST**	**0**	**0**	**3K**		**Strong Wind**
06	**2200PST**					

Cold frontal passage through Interior Central California and subsequent building of high pressure strongly over the Great Basin region at the surface led to significant northeast wind, Mono Wind, through the mountains and passes of the area. Ski towers measured wind gusts from 80-106 MPH during the evening of the 5th and very early morning hours of the 6th in the Southern Sierra Nevada. Many other mountain and desert locations had sustained wind often greater than 30 MPH with gusts into the 55-70 MPH range in the Kern County Mountains and Deserts.

CAZ089>092 — **W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley**

06	**2300PST**	**0**	**0**			**Dense Fog**
09	**1000PST**					

Dense fog formation with widespread visibilities less than 1/4 statute mile during the late evening hours of the 6th and again on the 8th led to "pacing" of traffic on Central and South San Joaquin Valley roads by the Highway Patrol during the morning hours of the 7th and 9th. Dense fog did occur also on the morning of the 8th but was patchy rather than widespread.

CAZ089>092 — **W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley**

11	**0100PST**	**0**	**6**	**145K**		**Dense Fog**
17	**1200PST**					

Widespread and dense morning fog continued throughout the Central and Southern San Joaquin Valley from the morning of the 11th through the morning of the 17th of January. The morning of the 15th had lighter fog but was still widespread throughout the Central and South Valley. Accidents were reported on the 7th, and 14th in Kings County, and 16th in Tulare County due to very poor visibilities in dense fog.

Fresno County

1.7 WNW (Fch) Chandle	**11**	**0400PST**	**0**	**0**	**2.5M**		**Wildfire**
	31	**2359PST**					

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CALIFORNIA, South Central

The Marks-Nielson Fire began in the early morning hours of the 11th of January and continued to burn until February 14th. The fire was spread through 3 acres of woodchips and other debris piled over 20-feet high in spots. It began by spontaneous combustion and caused a health problem due to its soot for much of the Fresno metropolitan area. With a number of agencies involved along with the Federal EPA intervention, the cost of putting the fire out is estimated to be over $2.5M.

CAZ089>092 — **W Central S.J. Valley - E Central S.J. Valley - Sw S.J. Valley - Se S.J. Valley**

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
	27	**0445PST**			**0**	**3**	**30K**		**Dense Fog**
	31	**2359PST**							

Little change in the weather pattern over California brought consistently good conditions for overnight dense fog formation for the period of the 27th through the 31st (into the morning of the 1st of February) in the Central and Southern San Joaquin Valley. On the morning of the 27th dense fog contributed to a fatality and 3 injuries in an accident in Kern County southeast of Bakersfield

CAZ095 — **Kern Cty Mtns**

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
	28	**0640PST**			**0**	**0**			**Dense Fog**
		1014PST							

Like its counterpart the San Joaquin Valley, the Tehachapi Valley in the Kern Mountains had dense fog formation around dawn on the 28th. Visibilities were reported less than 100 feet in this infrequent occurrence.