Dry California sends state into drought

By Brian Hickey, KCRA-TV

Record dry and warm weather across California has put the state in a severe drought, according to the National Weather Service.

Earlier this week the California State Water Resources Board issued a “Notice of Surface Water Shortage for 2013.”

The document warned that some water rights holders may see their diversion cut off by late summer and fall.



If dry conditions continue, piers in Tahoe may not have water under them like what happened in 2009. Photo/LTN file

The dire warning comes after California saw its driest winter in nearly 90 years.

The dry weather marks the second year in a row the state saw below-average precipitation.

Reservoirs across the state are at 80 percent of average for the time of year.

The State Water Resources Control Board warned that the lowest priority water rights holders may face restrictions by the end of the summer.

Some water rights holders in the Sacramento River watershed are already facing restrictions because flows in the river are from stored water and not natural sources.

The water board issued the notice to warn farmers of possible shortages as they begin planning what and how many winter crops they will plant.

Along with the notice, an attached two-page document offered water conservation tips for growers including recycling irrigation water, minimizing the length of planted rows, and using sprinkler systems when winds are calm.