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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RUNOFF PREPARATION MEETING THIS THURSDAY

The County of Inyo and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power invite residents to a runoff preparedness meeting tomorrow, Thursday, April 27 from 5-6 p.m. at the Tri-County Fairgrounds Home Economics Building, 475 Sierra St., Bishop. The meeting is also available via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/2023RunoffPlanning>.

Officials from both agencies will be presenting the latest updates on the status of the Southern Sierra snowpack and efforts on the part of multiple agencies to prepare for the record volume of snowmelt expected to saturate the valley through at least August – at least two months longer than in normal years. These efforts include reinforcing bypasses, clearing creeks and streams of debris, unblocking culverts, and clearing ditches and other channels on the Owens Valley floor that haven't seen water in decades.

With most active waterways already flowing above or at capacity – including the Los Angeles Aqueduct – flooding will still be likely. The County and DWP have staged equipment such as excavators and backhoes at strategic areas throughout the Owens Valley to facilitate quick response to flooding.

Property owners are encouraged to attend Thursday's meeting either in person or via Zoom to hear the steps they can take to prepare themselves and their property for the coming deluge. The Inyo County Sheriff's Department will be discussing personal safety, and the need to recreate safely and responsibly this spring and summer. Sections of Owens River bank, for example, have already begun to erode and extreme caution is urged around this and other swollen waterways.

The Southern Sierra snowpack is almost 300 percent of normal and is expected to release at least one million acre-feet of snowmelt by fall (an acre-foot is equivalent to one acre of land covered in one foot of water). According to the California Department of Water Resources, 2023 is one of – if not the largest – snowpack years on record in California, eclipsing other big water years like 1952, 1969, 1983, and 2017.

Updates on road and flood conditions, as well as the availability of sand bags, can be found at <https://ready.inyocounty.us> and <https://pw.lacounty.gov/LACFCD/web/>. Additionally, LADWP will be providing regular updates on its water spreading and management efforts via www.ladwpeasternsierra.com.

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