

Water

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However, a recent court document indicates that settlement talks could be fruitful in resolving the dispute.

In a joint filing, attorneys for the government and for Case say that a recent survey of the site, as well as other new information, "may provide the basis for a negotiated resolution of the claims asserted in this lawsuit."

The attorneys asked that deadlines in the lawsuit be pushed back three months to assist in "furthering settlement discussions of all or some issues in this case." U.S. Magistrate Judge Thomas Coffin has approved the request.

An attorney representing the federal government refused to comment on settlement talks and Capital Press

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Bill Case of Albany, Ore.,

was unable to reach an attorney for Case.

Case said that government representatives spent two days making measurements on his property but he didn't know specifics about what they found or how it may influence any settlement.

However, he said it's possible the government has realized it lacks jurisdiction in the case because he didn't place rocks into the river.

"We've proved to them we weren't working in the river. I had pictures and everything," Case said.



File photo

Federal climatologists predict that dry conditions will generally recede over the winter in Oregon, Idaho, Washington and parts of Northern California, providing an early and upbeat outlook on next year's water supply.

La Nina

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January in Oregon and parts Northern California. About one-third of Oregon is in drought, while 81 percent of California remains in drought.

A year ago, 100 percent of Washington was classified as being in a drought. Now only

8 percent of the state is even "abnormally dry."

In Idaho, 19 percent of the state is abnormally dry and 1 percent is in drought.

Bond, the Washington climatologist, said that even without a strong La Nina or El Nino, the state could have an eventful winter. He said current climatic conditions resemble the months before

massive flooding in February 1996. "I'd be surprised if we didn't have some major flooding," he said.

The seasonal outlook rates the chances that an area will have above-average or below-average precipitation and temperatures.

Here's a state-by-state look at the seasonal outlook:

- Washington: The odds favor above-average precipitation in most of the state, though the chances are no better than even in the South Cascades, south Puget Sound, and southwestern and south-central Washington. The chances are even that temperatures will be above or below normal for most of the state. The

odds favor above-average temperatures in southeastern Washington.

- Idaho: Southwest Idaho has equal chances for above- or below-average precipitation. The odds favor a wet winter elsewhere. The north end of the panhandle has equal chances of above- or below-normal temperatures. In the rest of the state, the odds favor a warm winter.

- Oregon: Equal chances of above- or below-average precipitation. Odds favor above-average temperatures.

- California: Chances for above- or below-average precipitation are equal in most of the state. Precipitation could change the status of parts of Northern California that are now in moderate drought. Odds favor a dry winter in the southern tip. The odds favor above-average temperatures throughout California. The drought could worsen in Southern California, according to the climate center.

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CELEBRATING NATIONAL 4-H WEEK!

4-H members get ready to take a hog to the show arena at the Tehama District Fair on Sept. 23 in Red Bluff, Calif. The fair enabled local youngsters to get a jump on National 4-H Week, an annual recruitment drive in early October.

RED BLUFF, Calif. — Youngsters here and around the country celebrated National 4-H Week this month by holding open houses and teaming with local businesses for community projects.

In Tehama County, 4-H'ers gathered donated goodies for a gift basket to give to the first baby born locally during the week, which was Oct. 2-8 this year.

Students also took part in the Tractor Supply Co.'s national Paper Clover Campaign, which raises funds to send students to 4-H camps and leadership conferences, and saluted other businesses that have helped the kids out.

"We're going to go around to different donors in the county such as Julia's Fruit Stand (in Dairyville, Calif.) ... and just do thank-you's," Allison Tucker, Tehama County's 4-H program educator.

On Oct. 5, youngsters took part in the 4-H National Youth Science Day, which is billed as the world's largest youth-led science experiment. This year's project, Drone Discovery, sought to teach students the science behind drones and how they are being used to solve real-world problems, according to the National 4-H Council website.

National 4-H Week activities seek to recruit new members to the youth development program, which had nearly 562,000 adult and youth volunteers nationwide and nearly 5.9 million total participants last year, according to the USDA.

Some activities highlight the 4-H program's appeal to youngsters in urban areas as well as rural. For instance, some clubs' open houses in Tehama County have featured arts and crafts, community service information and even dutch oven cooking contests.

"I think what's best about it is 4-H is a hidden gem in our county," Tucker said. "We have over 400 kids enrolled in this past year and a lot more could be enrolled. This is a great way for people to learn about it."

4-H members show their hogs in an arena at the Tehama District Fair in Red Bluff, Calif., on Sept. 23.

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