

Jerry Brown says California's groundwater management 'not aggressive enough'

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Gov. Jerry Brown said in an interview aired Sunday that California is not aggressive enough policing use of the state's groundwater, promising stepped-up oversight in future years.

Brown's [remarks on NBC's "Meet the Press"](#) followed [the release of a study](#) tying climate change to the worsening effects of California's drought.

Asked he if was "about to police agriculture more," the Democratic governor said, "Well, I think that's good advice, but of course I don't rule by decree. I work through the Legislature. California now has groundwater management for the first time in its entire history, so we are much more aggressive. But as that scientist suggested, we're not aggressive enough. And we will be stepping it up year by year."

Brown last year signed a [package of groundwater-management bills](#) making the state the last in the West to assert broad control over groundwater. The oversight of drilling and pumping wells is a major source of controversy in California's agricultural industry.

Scientists have attributed the state's historic drought primarily to natural – not man-made – causes. But they say rising temperatures have worsened its effects, and Brown has used the drought to skewer Republican presidential candidates skeptical of climate change.

Earlier this month, Carly Fiorina, the Republican presidential candidate and former chief executive of Hewlett-Packard Co., responded by [blaming environmentalists and their Democratic allies](#) for blocking the construction of dams in California.

Brown said in the interview aired Sunday that he has "never heard of such utter ignorance."

"Whether we need a dam or two is one thing," Brown said. "But the forest fires, the rising temperatures, the dryness – that's an atmospheric fact of life. Building a dam won't do a damn thing about fires or climate change or the absence of moisture in the ground and vegetation of California. So, I think these people, if they want to run for president, better do kind of eighth-grade science before they make any more utterances."

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