

# California Thaw Yields Spectacular Waterfalls

## Long, Snowy Winter Fuels Nearly Unprecedented Spring Cascades Down Mountainsides



A snowy winter and a spring thaw has caused waterfalls to spring up around California. (ABCNEWS)

By **BRIAN ROONEY**



**YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, Calif., May 28, 2005** — After a long and snowy winter, the spring thaw has brought a bloom of waterfalls to the mountains of California unlike anything seen for many years.

Waterfalls cascade for hundreds of feet, zig-zag down mountain faces, and explode at the bottom in clouds of mist.

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Near the base of Yosemite Falls, Matthew Weinberg, a retired lawyer from the Bay Area who has come to the park for 20 years said, "You're seeing falls that have never been seen before by most people."

Parts of the California mountain ranges received 180 percent of normal snowfall this year. A quick warming trend has brought flooding to some areas, and a profusion of waterfalls.

### **Waterfalls Spring Up**

Waterfalls have sprung up in spots that have been dry for years. Astounding amounts of water are pulsing off the tops of thousand-foot cliffs.

Bridal Veil Falls, one of the signature attractions of Yosemite, can be seen clearly from lookout areas miles away. Tourists from all over the world have come to see the falls and take pictures of this stunning sight.

At the base of Bridal Veil, visitors are soaked in a small gale created by tons of water hitting the valley floor. They are enveloped in a fine mist and droplets of water like a hard rain.

The waterfalls are not only in the Sierra Nevadas.

Half an hour from downtown Los Angeles, you can hike into the hills and find magnificent waterfalls.

### **100-Year Falls?**

Chris Shaffer, a nature writer, has spent years seeking out hidden waterfalls, compiled into his book, "A Definitive Guide to Waterfalls of Southern and Central California." He said there are as many as 100 waterfalls running hard right now that typically are dry in a normal rain year.

"They talk about the 100-year bloom of the flowers," Shaffer said. "Well, this could be the 100-year power of these waterfalls. They're flowing at a force right now that we may not see again for several decades."