

Snowpack and Water Supply Conditions for the Arkansas Basin as of April 1, 2009

In the Arkansas River Basin, as has been the case in much of the state, the snowpack has sunk below average from 109% last month to 96% on the first of April.

Year-to-date precipitation is also just below average at 95% which is good considering March precipitation yielded 86% of the monthly average, up from February's 65% of average. If the snowpack can maintain the current water content across the entire Arkansas for two more weeks, and with normal weather conditions, the snowmelt will begin as it typically does in the middle to last weeks of April.

Factor in the current reservoir storage of the whole Arkansas Basin standing at 94% of average, and matters are not as bad as they are in the South Platte. In the Arkansas Basin as a whole, it is a "textbook scenario" in that slightly below average snowpack, precipitation, and reservoir storage yields slightly below average streamflows at 90% basin wide.

There are individual forecast points such as the Chalk at Nathrop and the Arkansas River at Salida that are expecting slightly above average flows. Just as we have streams with above average flows, there are also streams with below average flows, for example: Trinidad Lake Inflow at 68% and Cucharas River near La Veta at 79%. It might be useful to state, that in the few days since April 1, the snowpack according to the SNOTEL sites in the Arkansas River Basin has made gains to above average levels.

ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN

Forecast Point -----	period -----	50% (KAF) -----	% of avg ----	max (KAF) -----	min (KAF) -----	30-yr avg -----
CHALK CK at Nathrop	APR-JUL	25.0	109	37.0	15.6	23.0
	APR-SEP	29.0	107	43.0	17.9	27.0
ARKANSAS RIVER at Salida (1)	APR-JUL	270	106	295	250	255
	APR-SEP	330	107	370	290	310
GRAPE CK nr Westcliffe	APR-JUL	13.2	82	17.3	9.7	16.1
	APR-SEP	16.0	82	19.2	13.1	19.6
PUEBLO RESERVOIR Inflow (1)	APR-JUL	375	97	520	255	385
	APR-SEP	475	98	680	305	485
HUERFANO RIVER nr Redwing	APR-JUL	11.1	90	17.0	6.40	12.3
	APR-SEP	14.0	90	21.0	8.40	15.5
CUCHARAS RIVER nr La Veta	APR-JUL	8.9	79	15.7	4.00	11.3
	APR-SEP	10.3	79	17.0	5.20	13.0
TRINIDAD LAKE Inflow (1)	MAR-JUL	23.0	68	32.0	15.3	34.0
	APR-JUL	25.0	78	35.0	16.6	32.0
	APR-SEP	33.0	75	45.0	23.0	44.0

Max is 90 percentile and min is 10 percentile.

Averages are for the 1971-2000 period.

All volumes are in KAF.

footnotes:

1) streamflow is adjusted for upstream storage