

Snowpack and Water Supply Conditions for the South Platte basin as of April 1, 2009

Continuing it's downward trend in both snowpack and precipitation, the South Platte River Basin now has the lowest snowpack levels and the lowest total cumulative precipitation in the state at 85% of average snowpack and 94% of average year-to-date precipitation. Late March snow storms helped to bring the snowpack up from 82% on March 22 to 90% on April 1 according to SNOTEL data. As of April 1, the Clear Creek drainage is the only sub-basin in the South Platte with above average snowpack at 105%. Alternatively, the Stain Vrain and Upper South Platte drainages are the two worst basins in the state with respect to snowpack at 71% and 76% respectively.

On a very optimistic note, reservoir storage over the entire basin is 99% of average and 83% of full capacity with spring runoff season yet to start.

Although it is unknown as of yet how positively these early April storms have affected the snowpack, the streamflow outlook is not great. Despite encouraging reservoir numbers, all streamflows are forecast to be below 90% in the South Platte. Streamflows are forecasts to be as low as 40% of average on the Bear Creek at Morrison and 51% on the Bear Creek at Evergreen. Current low snowpack and precipitation, coupled with dry soils prior to the start of the snowpack, are the culprits leading to low streamflow forecasts.

SOUTH PLATTE RIVER BASIN

Forecast Point	period	50% (KAF)	% of avg	max (KAF)	min (KAF)	30-yr avg
ANTERO RESERVOIR Inflow (1)	APR-JUL	11.3	67	21.0	6.00	16.8
	APR-SEP	14.1	65	28.0	7.20	21.8
SPINNEY MOUNTAIN RESV Inflow (1)	APR-JUL	45.0	80	83.0	24.0	56.0
	APR-SEP	56.0	81	109	29.0	69.0
ELEVENMILE CANYON RESV Inflow (1)	APR-JUL	47.0	81	89.0	25.0	58.0
	APR-SEP	58.0	81	118	28.0	72.0
CHEESMAN LAKE Inflow (1)	APR-JUL	85	75	168	43.0	114
	APR-SEP	106	76	215	53.0	140
SOUTH PLATTE R at South Platte (1)	APR-JUL	154	75	330	71.0	205
	APR-SEP	192	75	420	88.0	255
BEAR CREEK abv Evergreen	APR-JUL	9.9	51	21.0	4.60	19.3
	APR-SEP	13.9	56	30.0	6.50	25.0
BEAR CREEK at Morrison	APR-JUL	10.0	40	25.0	4.00	25.0
	APR-SEP	14.0	45	35.0	5.60	31.0
CLEAR CREEK at Golden	APR-JUL	96	87	127	65.0	110
	APR-SEP	115	86	157	73.0	134
ST. VRAIN CREEK at Lyons (1)	APR-JUL	72.0	77	89.0	55.0	94.0
	APR-SEP	86	79	106	66.0	109
BOULDER CREEK nr Orodell (1)	APR-JUL	42.0	81	53.0	31.0	52.0
	APR-SEP	48.0	80	63.0	33.0	60.0

If you have questions, please contact: USDA/Risk Management Agency/Topeka Regional Office Telephone 785.228.5512

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SOUTH BOULDER CK nr Eldorado Spgs	APR-JUL	33.0	81	42.0	24.0	41.0
	APR-SEP	37.0	80	48.0	26.0	46.0
BIG THOMPSON R at Canyon Mouth (1)	APR-JUL	76.0	77	98.0	54.0	99.0
	APR-SEP	94	79	121	67.0	119
CACHE LaPOUDRE at Canyon Mouth (1)	APR-JUL	199	81	300	133	245
	APR-SEP	220	80	330	147	275

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