

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

The Arkansas River Basin May 1 snowpack percentage remained unchanged from last month at 95 percent of average. This is only 72 percent of the snowpacks measured at this time last year. On the brighter side, SNOTEL data shows that, overall, the basin received a 2.2 inch increase in snow water content from April 1 to the peak value measured on April 19. Ordinarily, the basin only sees an increase of 0.5 inches during April. This year's peak was 14 percent higher when compared to the average peak snowpack. Looking at the sub-basin snowpacks, it is apparent that the spring weather patterns definitely favored the upper portion of the basin. The Upper Arkansas Drainage reported 98 percent of average snowpacks while the Purgatoire Watershed could only muster 35 percent of average snowpacks. After three consecutive months of below normal precipitation, the higher elevations finally got above normal precipitation during April at 120 percent of average. This helped to raise totals for the water year to 99 percent of average. Reservoir storage remains below normal at 94 percent of average but is 5 percent higher than the amount of storage available at this time last year. The Purgatoire and Cucharas watersheds were the only basins with significant changes in the forecasts, dropping 23 and 17 percentage points, respectively. Below to well below average runoff is expected during the May-September forecast period, with the exception of the mainstem of the Arkansas and the northernmost basins which can expect near average flows.

ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN

Forecast Point -----	period -----	50% (KAF)	% of avg	max (KAF)	min (KAF)	30-yr avg
CHALK CK at Nathrop	APR-JUL	23.0	100	33.0	14.3	23.0
	MAY-JUL	22.0	100	32.0	13.8	22.0
	APR-SEP	27.0	100	39.0	16.6	27.0
	MAY-SEP	26.0	96	38.0	16.1	27.0
ARKANSAS RIVER at Salida (1)	APR-JUL	255	100	320	200	255
	MAY-JUL	240	100	305	184	240
	APR-SEP	310	100	395	235	310
	MAY-SEP	295	98	380	220	300
GRAPE CK nr Westcliffe	APR-JUL	13.2	82	25.0	6.10	16.1
	MAY-JUL	10.4	80	22.0	3.30	13.0
	APR-SEP	16.0	82	28.0	7.90	19.6
	MAY-SEP	13.2	80	25.0	5.10	16.5
PUEBLO RESERVOIR Inflow (1)	APR-JUL	370	96	510	255	385
	MAY-JUL	340	97	480	225	350
	APR-SEP	470	97	645	325	485
	MAY-SEP	440	98	615	295	450
HUERFANO RIVER nr Redwing	APR-JUL	10.6	86	13.8	7.90	12.3
	MAY-JUL	9.5	85	12.7	6.80	11.2
	APR-SEP	13.4	87	17.5	9.9	15.5
	MAY-SEP	12.3	85	16.4	8.80	14.5
CUCHARAS RIVER nr La Veta	APR-JUL	6.5	58	10.2	3.80	11.3
	MAY-JUL	5.50	56	9.2	2.80	9.90
	APR-SEP	8.0	62	12.1	7.80	13.0
	MAY-SEP	7.0	60	11.1	3.80	11.7

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

TRINIDAD LAKE Inflow (1)	MAR-JUL	21.0	62	35.0	11.0	34.0
	MAY-JUL	15.5	53	30.0	5.90	29.0
	APR-SEP	23.0	52	42.0	10.5	44.0
	MAY-SEP	20.0	50	39.0	7.40	40.0

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