

ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN as of May 1, 2011

The Arkansas River Basin snowpack on May 1 was measured at 112 percent of average and 126 percent of last year. For awhile, it looked like the basin was going to close out the winter season with a below average snowpack, but a favorable weather pattern moved in during the last week of April and gave the basin a much needed boost. While, overall, the basin is in good shape, the disparity between the headwaters of the Arkansas and the southern tributaries became even more apparent. The snowpack in the Upper Arkansas was 132 percent of average, up from 120 percent of average last month, while the Purgatoire Watershed could only manage a mere 19 percent of average snowpack (the lowest sub-basin snowpack percentage in the state), down from 52 percent of average a month ago. Mountain precipitation in April was near normal at 107 percent of average. The water year to date precipitation total is 95 percent of average and 98 percent of the total precipitation reported at this time last year. Reservoir storage is 86 percent of average and 28 percent of capacity. This year's stored water supply is 21 percent lower than the storage available a year ago. Reflective of the changes in the snowpack, forecasts in the upper portion of the basin and on the main stem of the Arkansas saw increases from last month while the southern tributaries dropped 16 to 18 percentage points. April-September streamflows are expected to range from 38 percent of average for the Cucharas River near La Veta to 148 percent of average for Chalk Creek at Nathrop.

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                        ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN
                        Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2011
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Forecast Pt | <=== Drier === Future Conditions === Wetter ===> |
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Forecast Pt | ===== Chance of Exceeding * ===== |
Forecast | 90% 70% | 50% | 30% 10% | 30 Yr Avg
Period | (1000AF) (1000AF) | (1000AF) (% AVG.) | (1000AF) (1000AF) | (1000AF)
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Chalk Ck at Nathrop
APR-JUL 22 29 34 148 39 48 23
MAY-JUL 22 28 33 150 38 47 22
APR-SEP 25 34 40 148 47 58 27
MAY-SEP 24 33 39 144 46 57 27

Arkansas R at Salida (2)
APR-JUL 275 310 340 133 370 415 255
MAY-JUL 265 305 330 138 360 405 240
APR-SEP 325 380 420 136 460 530 310
MAY-SEP 315 370 410 137 450 515 300

Grape Ck nr Westcliffe
APR-JUL 1.6 3.2 4.6 29 6.2 9.0 16.1
MAY-JUL 1.2 2.6 3.9 30 5.4 8.1 13.0
APR-SEP 2.8 5.0 6.8 35 8.9 12.5 19.6
MAY-SEP 2.4 4.4 6.1 37 8.1 11.5 16.5

Pueblo Res Inflow (2)
APR-JUL 330 415 480 125 550 655 385
MAY-JUL 315 400 465 133 530 635 350
APR-SEP 370 475 560 116 650 790 485
MAY-SEP 355 460 545 121 630 770 450

Huerfano R nr Redwing
APR-JUL 3.3 4.7 5.8 47 7.0 9.0 12.3

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MAY-JUL	2.8	4.1	5.1	46	6.2	8.2	11.2
APR-SEP	4.3	5.9	7.2	47	8.6	10.9	15.5
MAY-SEP	3.7	5.3	6.5	45	7.8	10.0	14.5
Cucharas R nr La Veta							
APR-JUL	1.7	2.4	2.9	26	3.5	4.5	11.3
MAY-JUL	1.3	1.9	2.4	24	3.0	3.9	9.9
APR-SEP	2.9	4.0	4.9	38	5.9	7.4	13.0
MAY-SEP	2.5	3.6	4.4	38	5.3	6.8	11.7
Trinidad Lk Inflow (2)							
MAR-JUL	5.2	8.6	11.3	33	14.4	19.7	34
MAY-JUL	4.2	7.3	9.8	34	12.7	17.7	29
APR-SEP	8.1	13.5	18.0	41	23	32	44
MAY-SEP	7.1	12.2	16.5	41	21	30	40

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* 90%, 70%, 50%, 30%, and 10% chances of exceeding are the probabilities that the actual volume will exceed the volumes in the table.

The average is computed for the 1971-2000 base period.

- (1) - The values listed under the 10% and 90% Chance of Exceeding are actually 5% and 95% exceedance levels.
- (2) - The value is natural volume - actual volume may be affected by upstream water management.
- (3) - Median value used in place of average.