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# NEWS

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## SNOWPACK REMAINS BELOW AVERAGE DESPITE SNOWY DECEMBER

Denver, January 4, 2013 - The 2013 water year got off to a very slow start in the mountains of Colorado. As of January 1, Colorado's statewide snowpack was 70 percent of average and 91 percent of last year's readings, according to Phyllis Ann Philipps, State Conservationist, with the NRCS. "Conditions could have been much worse if we had not received the moisture we did in December" Philipps said. The much needed snowfall in December boosted the snowpack from just 36 percent of average recorded on December 1. Philipps also added that the January 1 snowpack is the fourth lowest within the last 32 years.

Mountain precipitation was 112 percent of average for December but due to exceptionally dry conditions in October and November statewide total water year to date precipitation remains below average. In October and November, Colorado received only 50 and 41 percent of average precipitation respectively. Statewide year to date precipitation was at 68 percent of average as of January 1. Basins in southern Colorado have the greatest deficits. The San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan basins reported only 59 percent of average year to date precipitation on January 1. The Upper Rio Grande and Arkansas basins recorded 62 and 61 percent of average for year to date precipitation respectively.

**(MORE)**

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So far this winter season has been dominated by high pressure weather systems and a jet stream that has not cooperated. January 1 snow surveys confirm that snow accumulation is below average for this time of year across the state. Total accumulation ranges from 82 percent of average in the Yampa and White River basins, to 61 percent of average in the Arkansas basin. The South Platte River basin reported 67 percent of average and the Colorado River basin reported 68 percent of average

Due to last spring's well below average snowpack and subsequent low streamflow volumes throughout most of the state, reservoir storage is currently well below average throughout Colorado. Statewide reservoir storage at the end of December was just 68 percent of average and 38 percent of capacity.

The table below shows Colorado's snowpack and reservoir storage as of January 1, 2013

BASIN	% AVERAGE SNOWPACK	% LAST YR.'S SNOWPACK	% AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE	% LAST YR.'S RESERVOIR STORAGE
GUNNISON	74	108	68	66
COLORADO	68	107	69	62
SOUTH PLATTE	67	72	77	69
YAMPA, WHITE, NORTH PLATTE	85	113	100	85
ARKANSAS	61	61	56	63
RIO GRANDE	65	69	50	78
SAN JUAN, ANIMAS, DOLORES, SAN MIGUEL	70	84	66	62
STATEWIDE	70	91	68	65

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