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NEWS

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FEBRUARY STORMS BOOST COLORADO'S SNOWPACK

Denver, March 6, 2014 – Statewide snowpack totals increased considerably during February.

As a whole, Colorado received above normal snow accumulation throughout the past month as multiple storm systems moved through the state. As of March 1, the state's snowpack was 116 percent of median and statewide precipitation total's for February reached 133 percent of average, according to Phyllis Ann Philipps, Colorado State Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Colorado's snowpack has tracked above the long-term normal for three consecutive months.

Once again this year's "No-Nino" weather patterns favored the northern and central mountain ranges in Colorado. The southwest part of the state, the Upper Rio Grande and the combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan basins, are still experiencing below normal snow conditions for this time of year. The combined San Juan basins did see a 3 percentage point increase from last month and are currently at 85 percent of median. The Upper Rio Grande basin on the other hand lost five percentage points, dropping to just 79 percent of median.

The Colorado, Gunnison, South Platte, and combined Yampa, White and North Platte basins all reported significant increases from last month. The South Platte basin currently has the largest snowpack as a percent of median; as of March 1 the basin was at 151 percent! Within the South Platte, the Saint Vrain and Boulder Creek sub-basins reported banner snowpack totals at 159

(MORE)

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and 171 percent of median respectively. The snowpack in the headwaters of the Arkansas basin also saw substantial improvements over the last month, putting the total for the entire Arkansas basin at 109 percent of median.

Reservoir storage across the state remains just below average, at 89 percent of average; this is a great improvement over last year's conditions at this time when storage was just 67 percent of average. With the current snowpack conditions and storage volumes drought conditions in most basins should be alleviated and reservoir storage should improve this spring.

Data collected during the recent snow surveys directly reflects what the state can expect for surface water supplies this coming spring and summer. The most recent streamflow forecasts continue to point towards, above to well above normal volumes for this spring and summer in most of the major river basins in Colorado; the exceptions will be the Upper Rio Grande and southwest basins.

The table below shows Colorado's snowpack and reservoir storage as of March 1, 2014.

BASIN	% MEDIAN SNOWPACK	% LAST YR.'S SNOWPACK	% AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE	LAST YR.'S % AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE
GUNNISON	114	157	90	66
COLORADO	130	185	97	65
SOUTH PLATTE	151	232	112	87
NORTH PLATTE	137	180	---	---
YAMPA/WHITE	121	160	111	98
ARKANSAS	109	162	60	50
RIO GRANDE	79	105	68	52
SAN JUAN, ANIMAS, DOLORES, SAN MIGUEL	85	103	71	66
STATEWIDE	116	161	89	67

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