USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Colorado
Water Supply Outlook Report
May 1, 2016

Jay Welz and Lauren Austin, hydrologic technicians with Colorado Snow Survey, weigh a snow sample near the Hidden Valley snow course in Rocky Mountain National Park. The surveyors measured 8.6 inches of SWE for Hidden Valley, which is 130 percent of the normal amount typically measured during the May 1st survey.

Date: 4/27/2016 Photo By: Lexi Landers

REMINDER: We are soliciting field work photos from our snow surveyors again this year. Each month we will pick one to grace the cover of this report! Please include information on where, when and of who/what the photo was taken.

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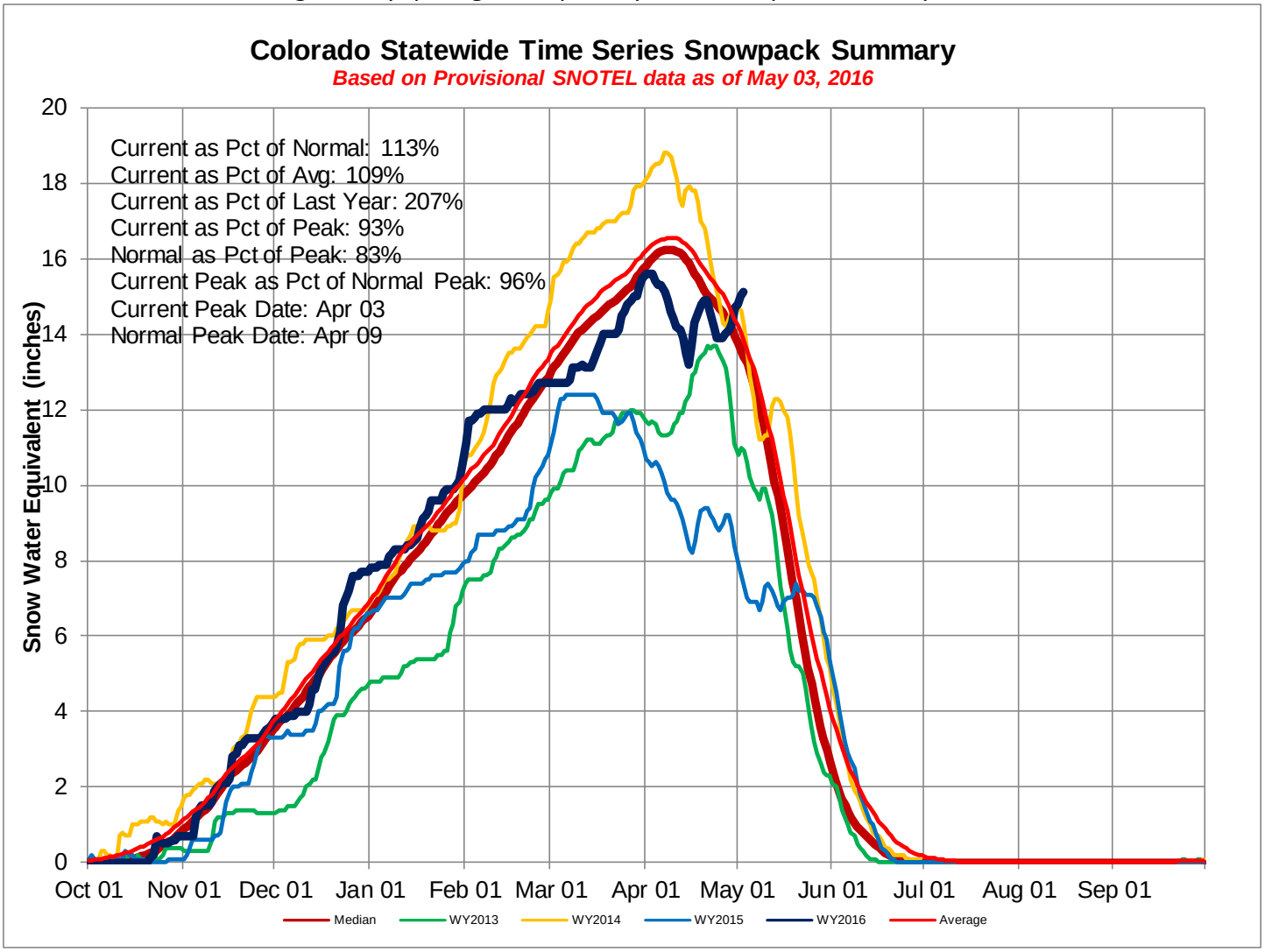
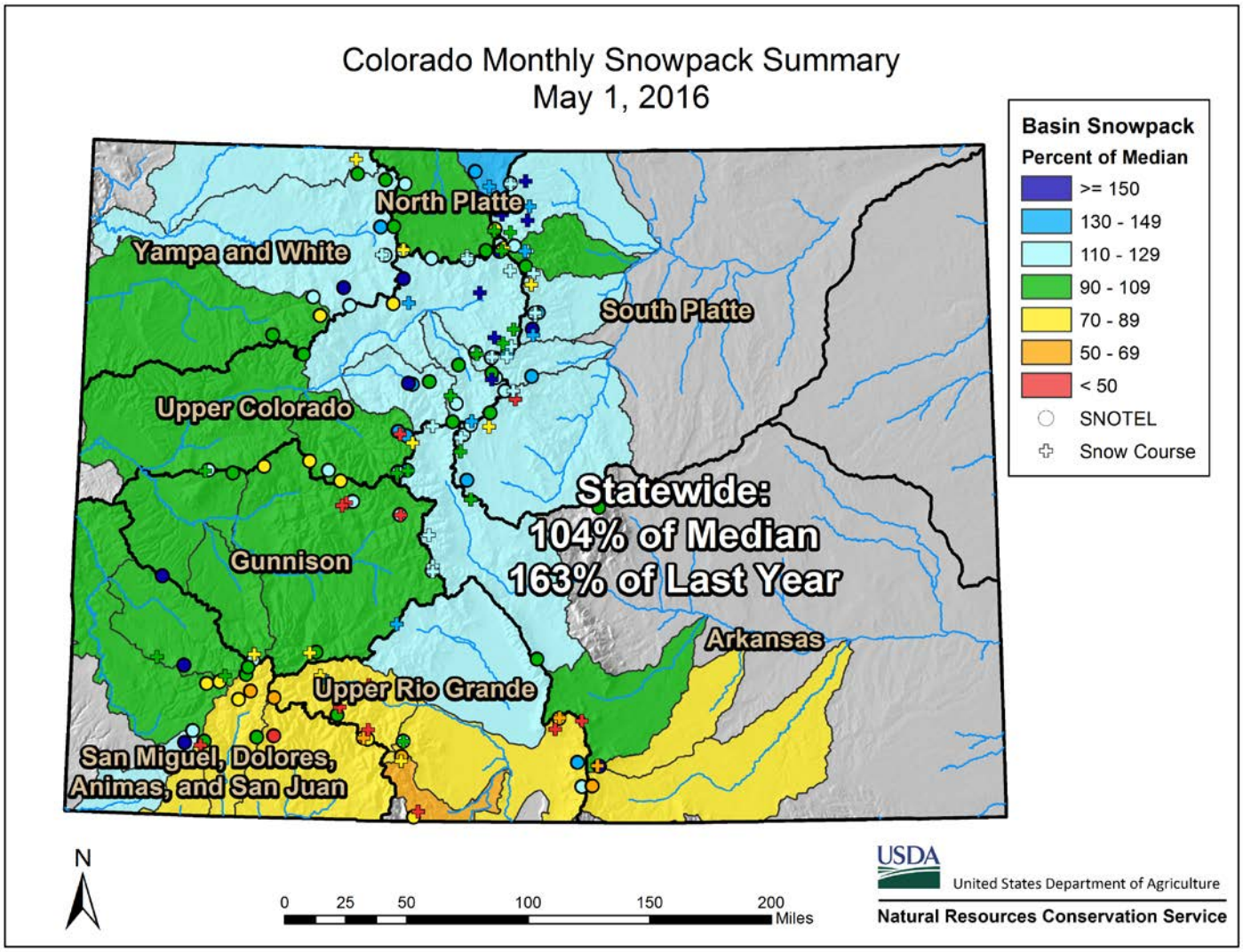
Statewide Water Supply Conditions

Summary

The majority of Colorado streams are currently, or are beyond, experiencing the initial pulse of snowmelt runoff. Additionally, recent storms added to the snowmelt runoff by providing rain to many low and mid-elevation locations. In general, mountain precipitation across Colorado through April enhanced the overall water supply outlooks by providing beneficial moisture to soils and considerable snow amounts to the higher elevations. While much of the state benefited from normal precipitation amounts, the southwestern corner received lesser amounts, but fortunately much did fall in the form of snow. These recent storms provided improvements to snowpack percent of normal by 5 to 15 percent in all watersheds except the Rio Grande, and better than normal precipitation occurred in all watersheds except the combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan basins. As many tributaries continue to receive increasing snowmelt runoff, prospects for both reservoir storage and streamflow volumes look favorable going into May. Statewide reservoir totals increased one percent since April 1st and remain above the average, yet declines occurred in the Rio Grande, Arkansas and combined Yampa, White and North Platte watersheds. However, the latter two reservoir system reductions are likely due to the plentiful precipitation during April and anticipated increased runoff. Streamflow forecasts are generally quite good especially when compared to last year's forecasts at this time.

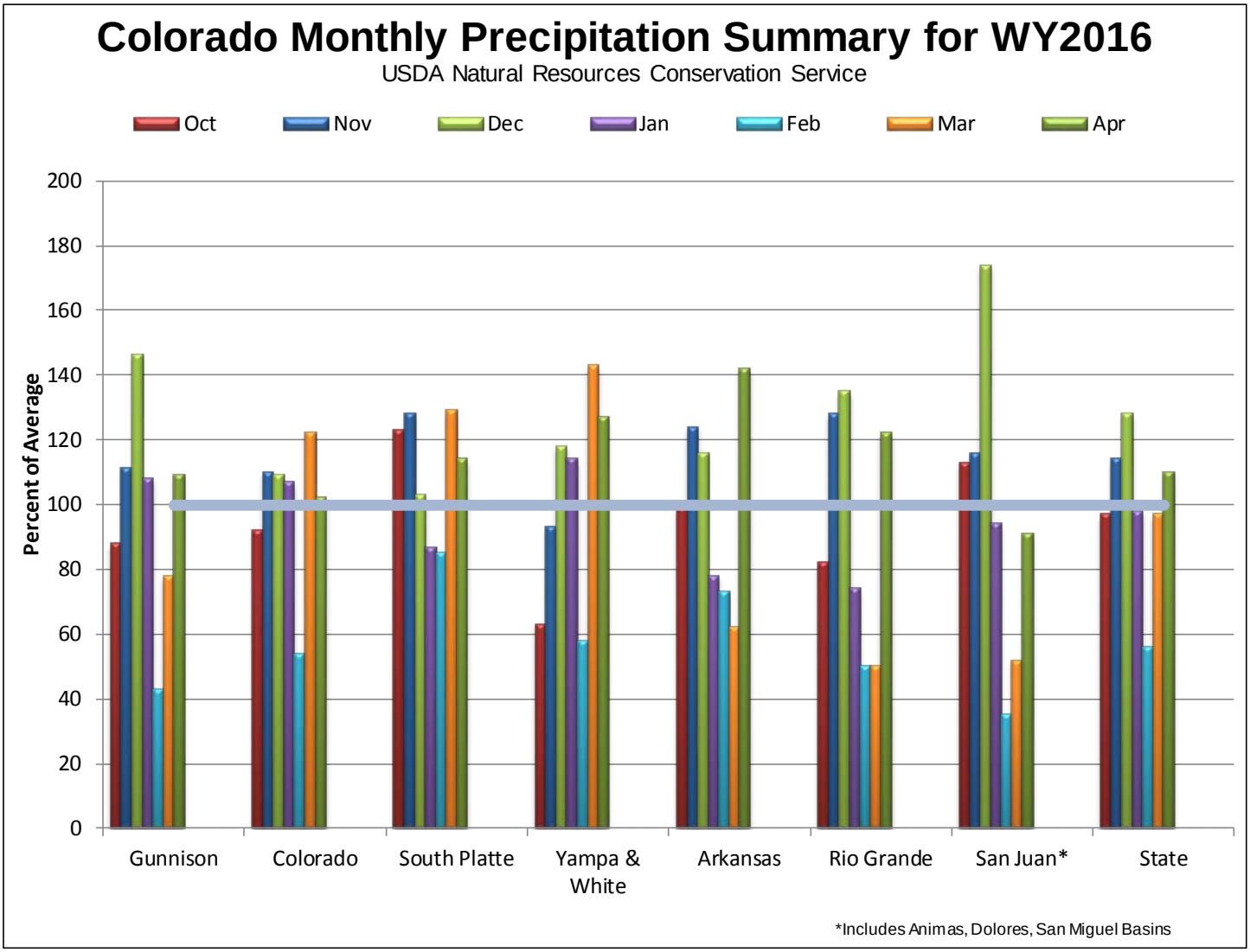


Snowpack



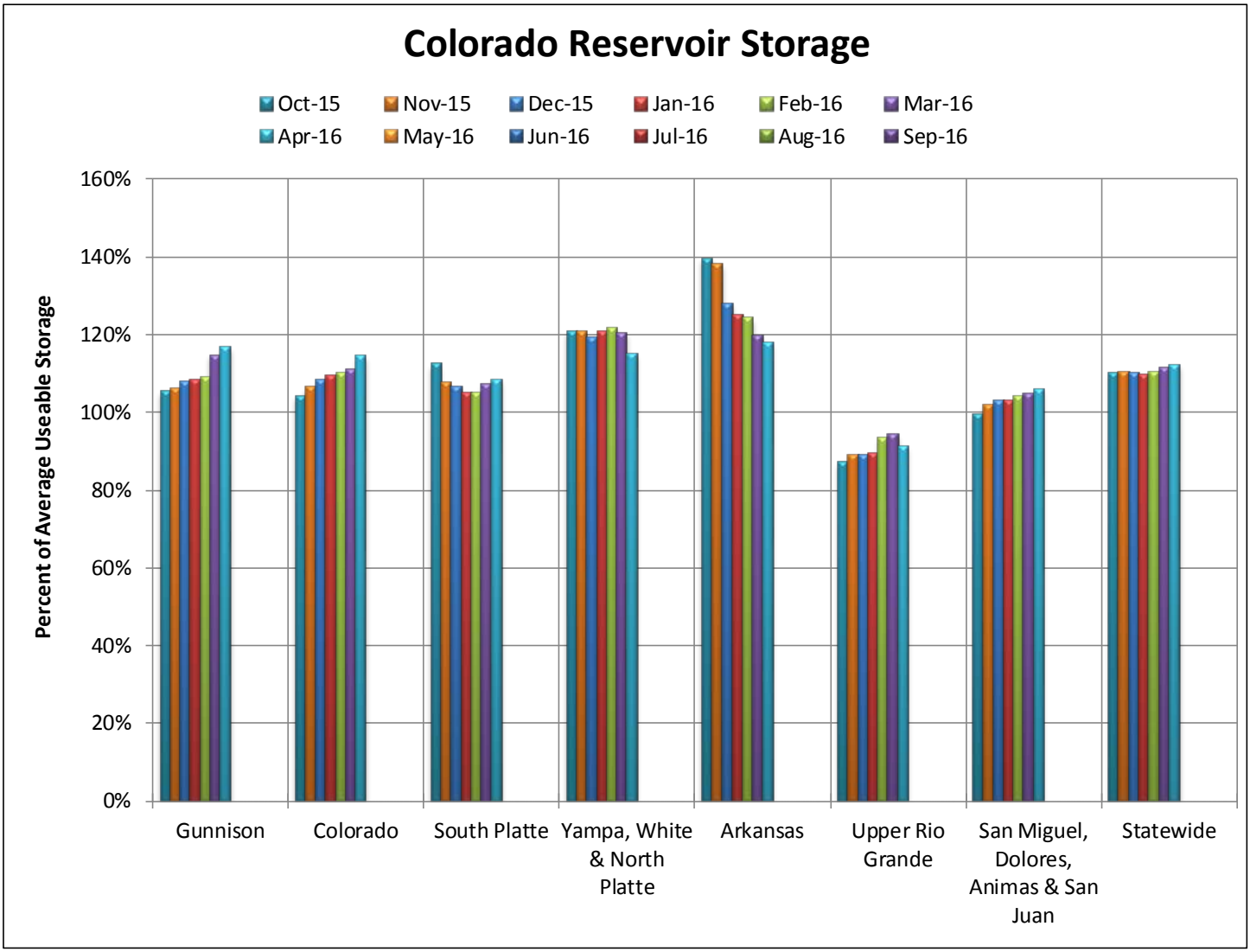
Cooler mountain temperatures and increases in precipitation during April helped improve mountain snowpack throughout Colorado. Many SNOTEL sites in the South Platte, Arkansas, and combined Yampa, White, and North Platte River basins continued to accumulate snow and had yet to reach peak snowpack for the year on May 1st. Additionally, many locations in the Gunnison, Upper Rio Grande, and combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River basins, as well as low-elevation sites in the other river basins, saw delays in melt and a brief increase in snowpack amounts. Almost all of state's river basins experienced increases in percent of normal snowpack compared to last month. The Arkansas had the greatest improvement in snowpack with respect to normal, shifting from 92 percent on April 1st to 110 percent of median on May 1st. The Gunnison River basin also saw a substantial improvement upward to normal conditions and is now at 100 percent of the median. The South Platte, combined Yampa-White-North Platte, and Upper Colorado River basins have the healthiest snowpack with respect to normal at 114, 113, and 112 percent respectively. The Upper Rio Grande was the only major River basin that did not experience an improvement in snowpack percent of normal since last month. Additionally, despite the snowpack additions at many SNOTEL sites, the Upper Rio Grande and the combined southern river basins remain the only basins that have a below normal snowpack and are at only 77 percent and 85 percent of median snowpack respectively. These basins did not reach typical peak snowpack accumulations, so less than normal snowpack will be available to contribute to runoff this spring and summer.

Precipitation



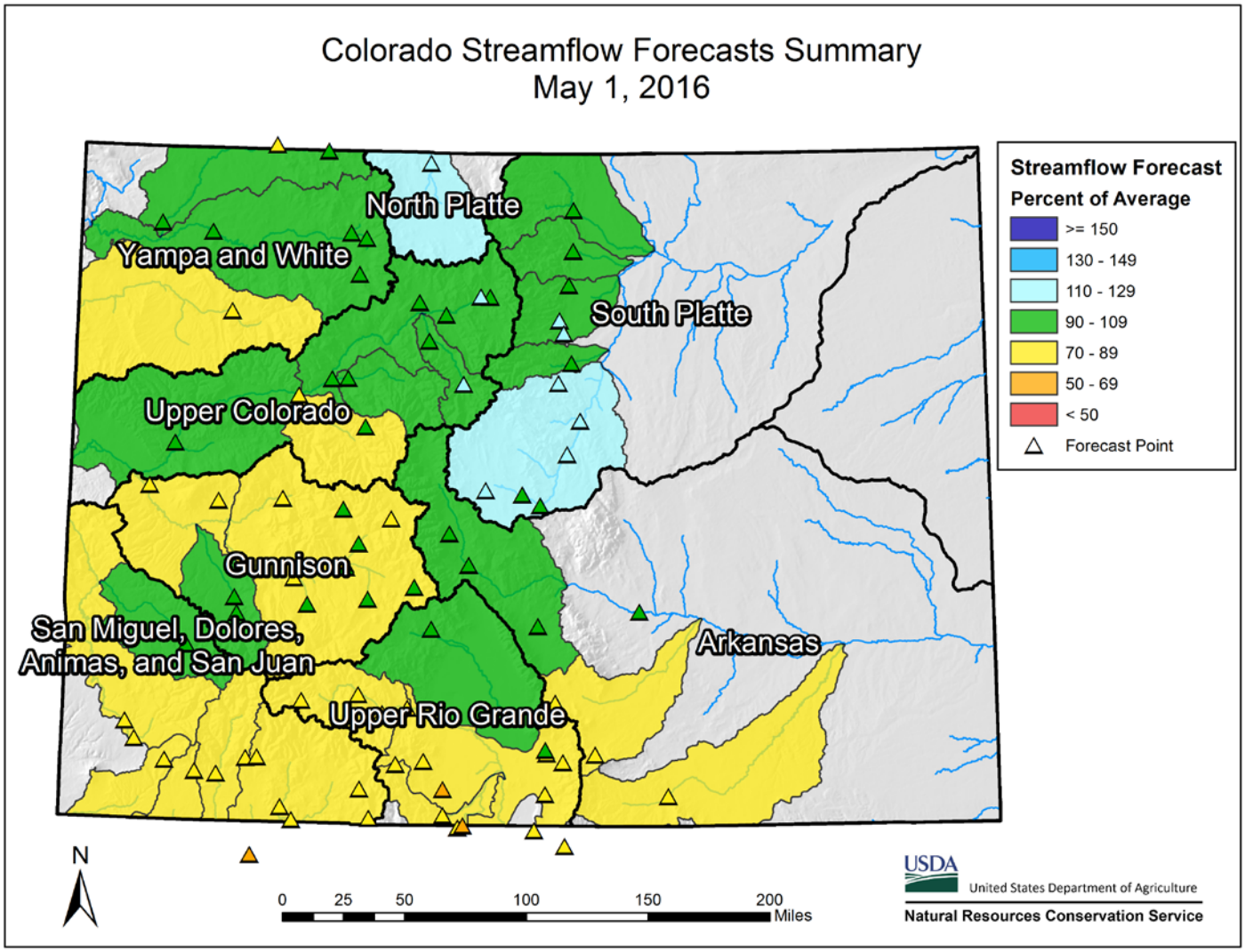
An active weather pattern delivered abundant precipitation across Colorado during the latter half of April. Unlike many of the previous storms that favored the northern portion of the state this winter, the precipitation events during April were beneficial for all of the major river basins. Most basins accumulated precipitation that was well above normal for the month and statewide April precipitation was 110 percent of average. The Arkansas River basin experienced the greatest precipitation amounts with respect to normal at 142 percent of average. The Upper Rio Grande also had a good April and accumulated 122 percent of normal precipitation for the month. This comes as a welcome change as both of these basins have had precipitation much below normal since December. The combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan was the only major river basin that did not receive above normal precipitation during April, yet still received 91 percent of average precipitation for the month. Moisture received during April helped all the major basins maintain near to above normal water year-to-date precipitation. Statewide, accumulated precipitation for the water year continues to track with normal conditions and is currently at 100 percent of average.

Reservoir Storage



End of April storage for the majority of Colorado's reservoirs is near or above normal, which has provided another boost in percent of normal for the state, increasing statewide storage to 112 percent of average. The percent of average storage has been climbing steadily during the 2016 water year for reservoirs in the Gunnison, Upper Colorado, and combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River basins and this trend continued during April with these basins rounding out the month at 117, 115, and 106 percent of average respectively. Collective reservoir storage in the South Platte River basin also increased slightly from 107 to 108 percent of average. The Arkansas River basin held steady at 120 percent of average storage and now has the highest percent of average out of the major river basins. The Upper Rio Grande basin experienced its first drop in percent of normal this water year from 94 to 91 percent of average, but is still substantially better than last year when it was 76 percent of average at this time. The combined Yampa, White, North Platte River basin also experienced a drop in percent of normal from last month, down from 120 to 115 percent of average. This drop in reservoir storage likely reflects the abundant snowpack in this basin, as reservoir operators adjust reservoir levels in anticipation of an above normal runoff season.

Streamflow



The water budget of Colorado, as well as that of the downstream states, depends heavily on April mountain precipitation. This year April produced near normal precipitation across much of the state, but last year was a different story as was stated in the May 1, 2015 Colorado Water Supply Outlook Report, "The majority of Colorado's streams are expected to produce roughly 50 to 70 percent of average streamflow volumes". This year's forecasted streamflows are predicted to surpass last year's forecasts in most locations by a large margin. The majority of this year's streamflows across Colorado are projected to be between 70 and 112 percent of normal. The lower forecasted volumes in the state are mainly in the San Juan, northwestern and southern Rio Grande, and parts of the Gunnison River basins. Generally these forecasts range from 70 to 85 percent of normal, yet are far better than this time last year. Farther north and east in Colorado, projections range from 85 to 112 percent of normal, in some cases above 112 percent of normal where considerable precipitation fell over the last few weeks in areas such as Bear Creek near Evergreen, Willow Creek Reservoir Inflow, and Boulder Creek near Orodell. Although most forecast values are often consistent with others in the greater watershed, forecasts can vary more than would be expected. Therefore, be sure to reference specific forecast points of interest for the most accurate projections. Also note that confidence in a given forecast, or forecast skill, can often be indicated by the spread of the exceedance forecasts. A large range between the 90 and 10 percent forecasts can indicate lower skill than a smaller range between these forecasts. A large factor that plays into this forecast skill is future precipitation, which can be highly variable this time of year.

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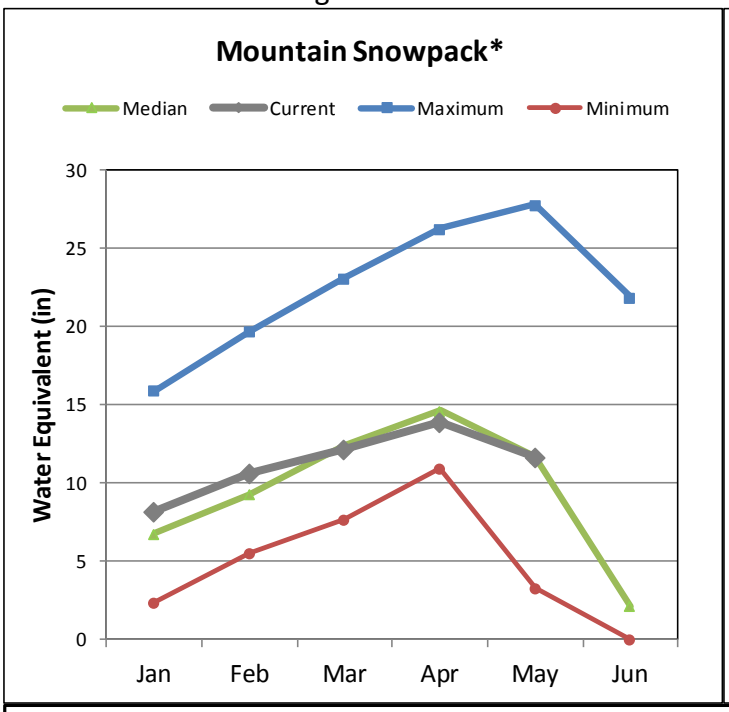
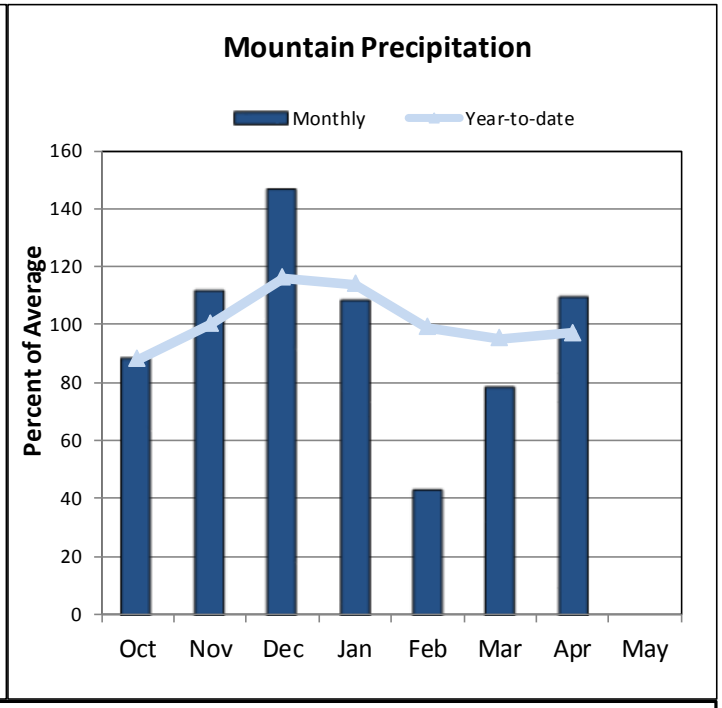
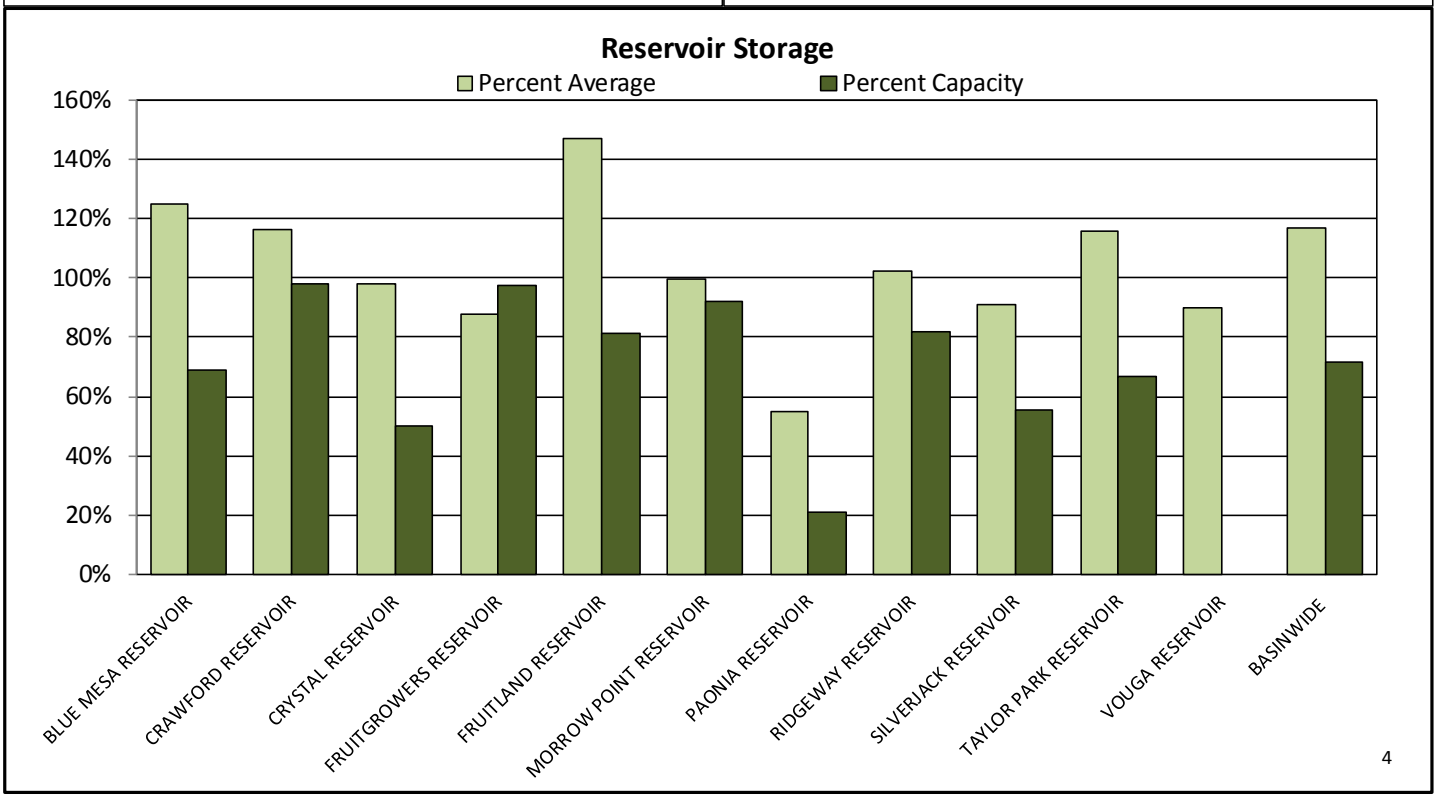
GUNNISON RIVER BASIN

May 1, 2016

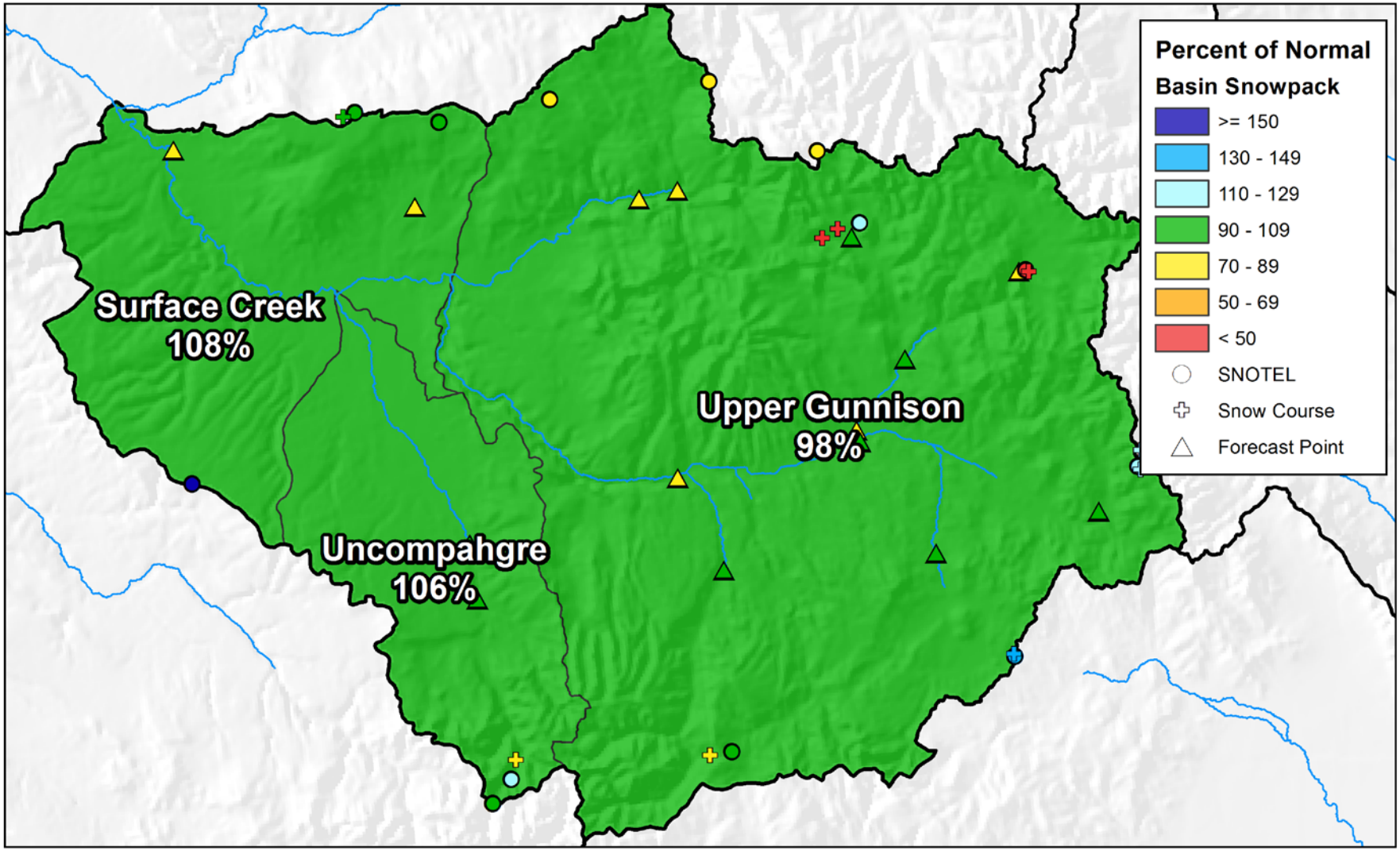
Snowpack in the Gunnison River basin is normal at 100% of the median. Precipitation for April was 109% of average which brings water year-to-date precipitation to 97% of average. Reservoir storage at the end of April was 117% of average compared to 123% last year. Current streamflow forecasts range from 107% of average for Tomichi Creek at Sargents to 79% for the North Fork of the Gunnison near Somerset.







Gunnison River Basin Snowpack and Streamflow Forecasts
May 1, 2016



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Gunnison River Basin
Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2016

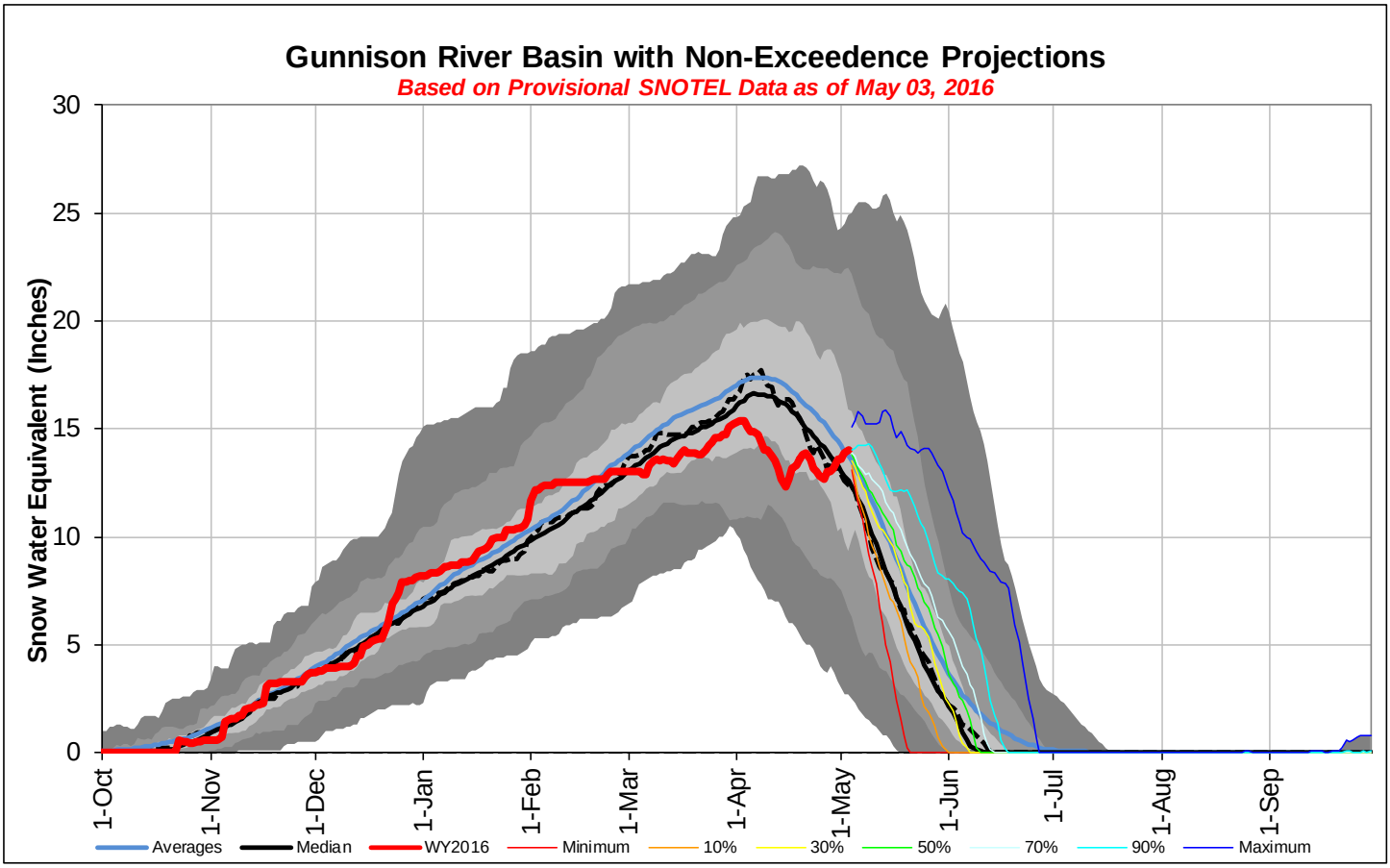
Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

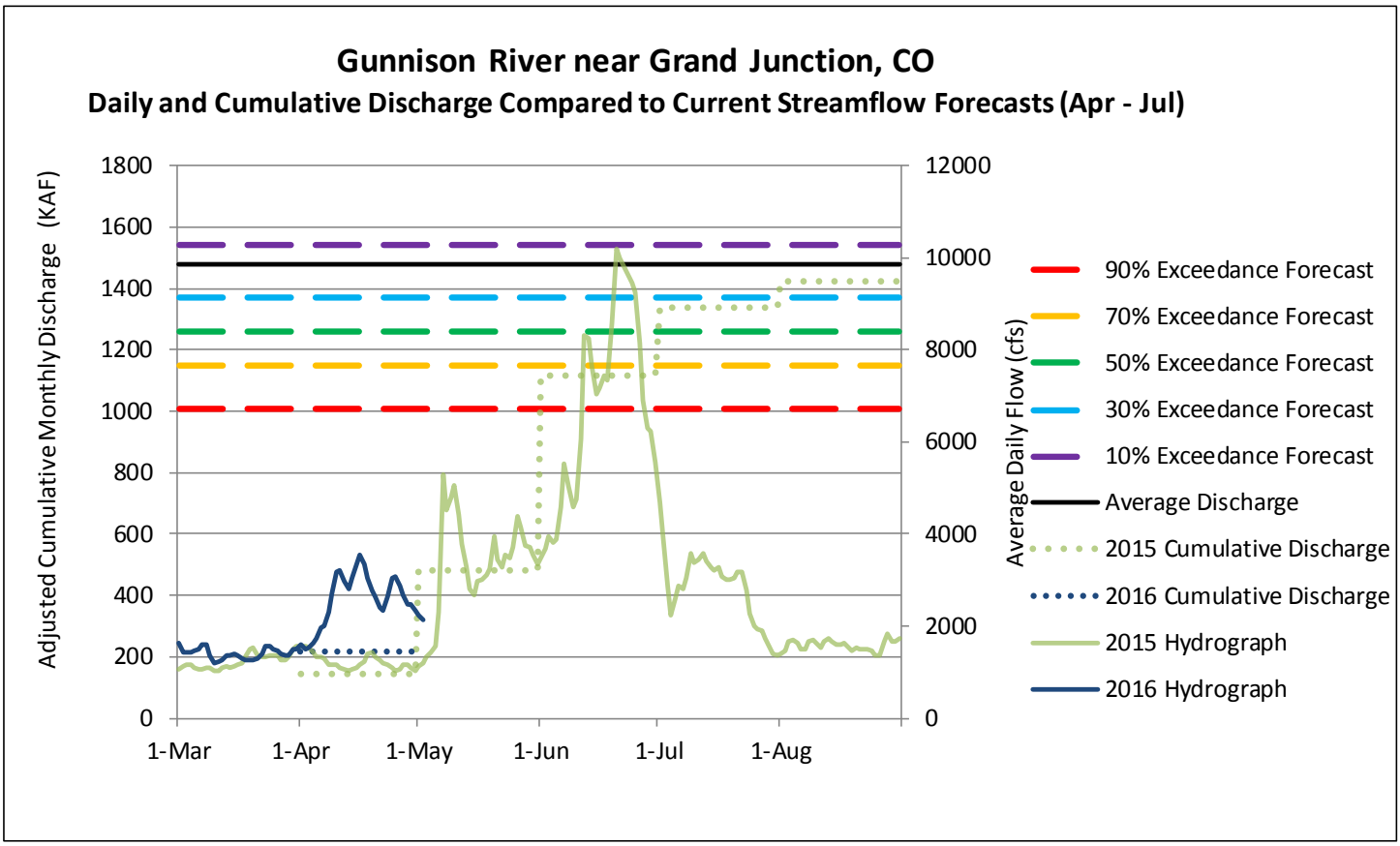
GUNNISON RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Taylor Park Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	68	78	86	87%	94	106	99
	MAY-JUL	59	69	77	86%	85	97	90
Slate R nr Crested Butte								
	APR-JUL	65	71	76	92%	80	88	83
	MAY-JUL	56	62	67	91%	71	79	74
East R at Almont								
	APR-JUL	144	156	165	91%	174	188	182
	MAY-JUL	127	139	148	89%	157	171	166
Gunnison R near Gunnison [2]								
	APR-JUL	265	300	325	88%	350	395	370
	MAY-JUL	230	265	290	87%	315	360	335
Tomichi Ck at Sargents								
	APR-JUL	21	28	32	107%	37	45	30
	MAY-JUL	16.8	23	27	104%	32	40	26
Cochetopa Ck bl Rock Ck nr Parlin								
	APR-JUL	9.2	12.6	15.4	103%	18.5	24	15
	MAY-JUL	5.6	9	11.8	99%	14.9	20	11.9
Tomichi Ck at Gunnison								
	APR-JUL	44	58	70	95%	83	104	74
	MAY-JUL	30	44	56	90%	69	90	62
Lake Fk at Gateview								
	APR-JUL	100	112	120	98%	129	142	123
	MAY-JUL	92	104	112	97%	121	134	116
Blue Mesa Reservoir Inflow [2]								
	APR-JUL	500	560	605	90%	650	720	675
	MAY-JUL	425	485	530	88%	575	645	600
Paonia Reservoir Inflow								
	MAR-JUN	62	71	78	81%	85	96	96
	APR-JUL	59	70	78	80%	87	100	97
	MAY-JUN	34	43	50	72%	57	68	69
	MAY-JUL	36	47	55	73%	64	77	75
NF Gunnison R nr Somerset[2]								
	APR-JUL	187	210	230	79%	250	275	290
	MAY-JUL	144	168	185	77%	205	230	240
Surface Ck at Cedaredge								
	APR-JUL	11.7	13.1	14.1	84%	15.1	16.8	16.8
	MAY-JUL	8.4	9.8	10.8	77%	11.8	13.5	14.1
Ridgway Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	80	91	98	97%	106	118	101
	MAY-JUL	71	82	89	98%	97	109	91
Uncompahgre R at Colona [2]								
	APR-JUL	99	117	130	95%	144	166	137
	MAY-JUL	84	102	115	96%	129	151	120
Gunnison R nr Grand Junction [2]								
	APR-JUL	1010	1150	1260	85%	1370	1540	1480
	MAY-JUL	790	935	1040	84%	1150	1320	1240

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of April, 2016	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Blue Mesa Reservoir	570.7	597.3	457.1	830.0
Crawford Reservoir	13.7	12.3	11.8	14.0
Crystal Reservoir	8.8	8.9	9.0	17.5
Fruitgrowers Reservoir	3.5	3.4	4.0	3.6
Fruitland Reservoir	7.5	5.8	5.1	9.2
Morrow Point Reservoir	111.1	109.6	111.8	121.0
Paonia Reservoir	3.2	13.9	5.8	15.4
Ridgway Reservoir	68.0	71.6	66.6	83.0
Silverjack Reservoir	7.1	8.9	7.8	12.8
Taylor Park Reservoir	71.0	82.2	61.2	106.0
Vouga Reservoir	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
Basin-wide Total	865.4	914.8	741.1	1213.4
# of reservoirs	11	11	11	11

Watershed Snowpack Analysis May 1, 2016	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
UPPER GUNNISON BASIN	18	98%	55%
SURFACE CREEK BASIN	3	108%	52%
UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN	4	106%	40%
GUNNISON RIVER BASIN	22	100%	53%



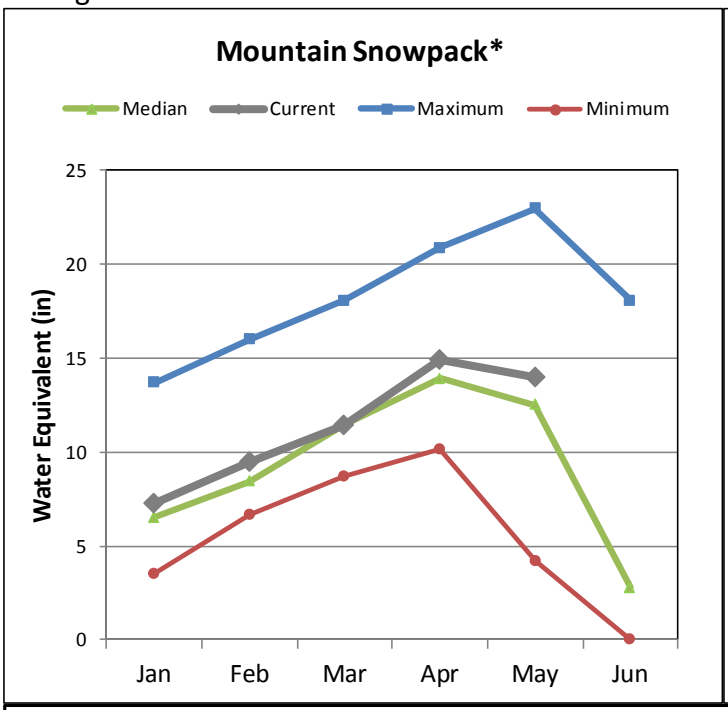


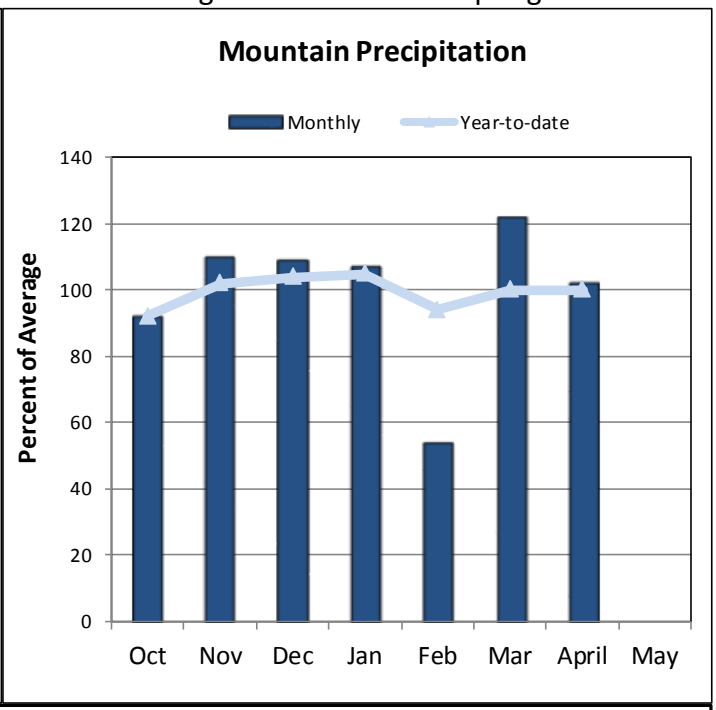
Please refer to the sections at the end of this report for further explanation concerning these graphs.

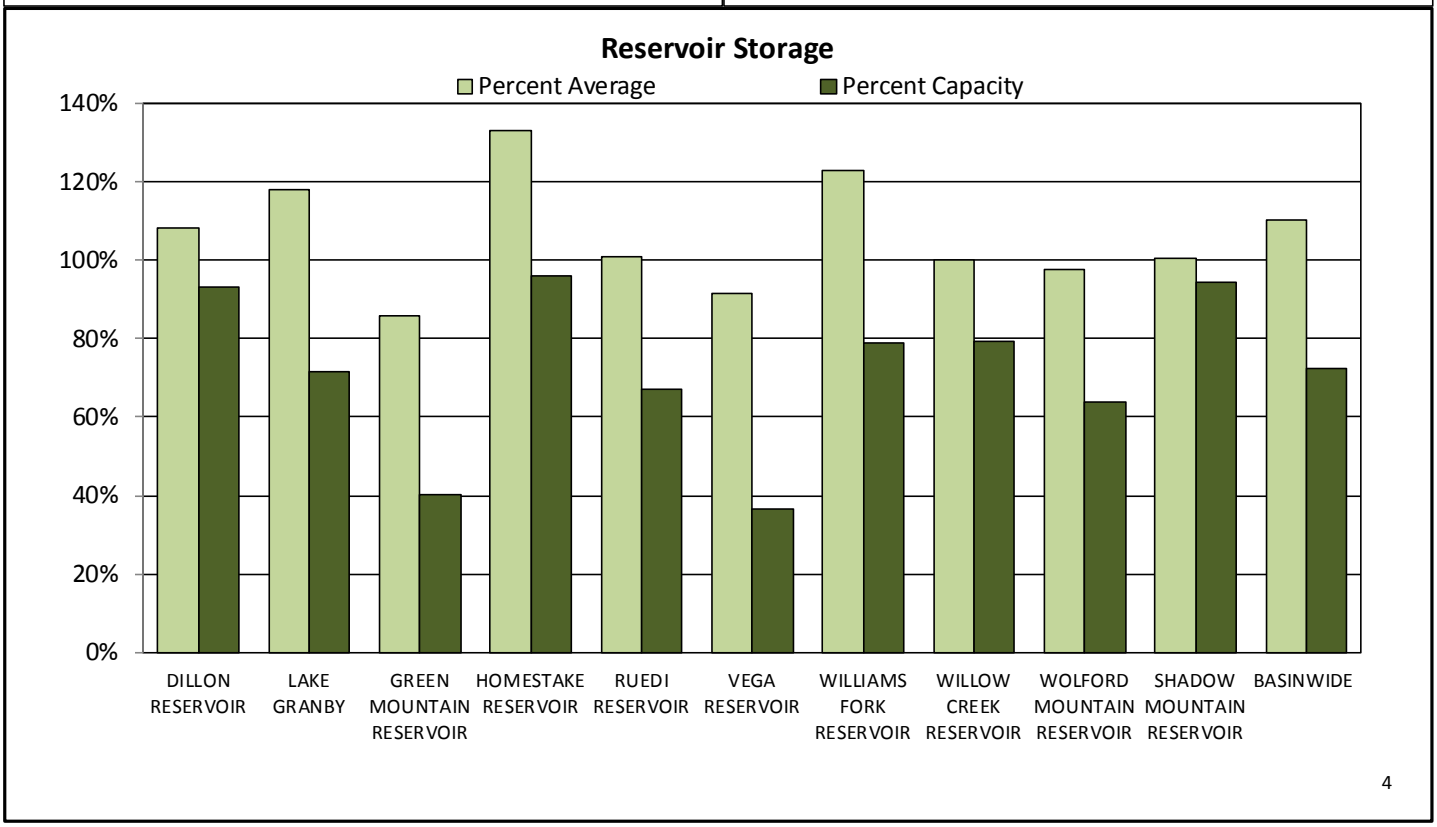
UPPER COLORADO RIVER BASIN

May 1, 2016

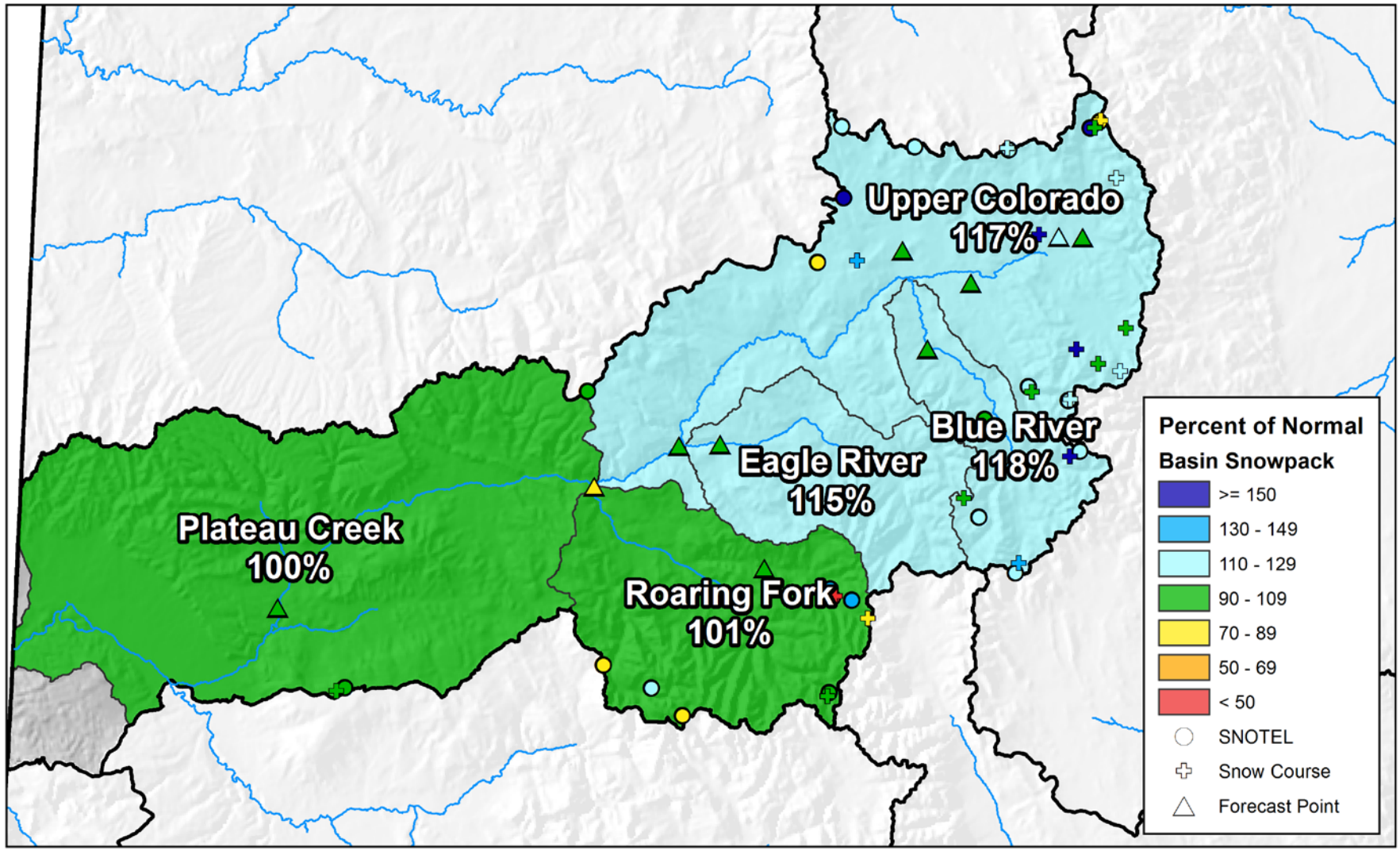
Snowpack in the Colorado River basin is above normal at 112% of the median. Precipitation for April was 101% of average which brings water year-to-date precipitation to 100% of average. Reservoir storage at the end of April was 115% of average compared to 130% last year. Current streamflow forecasts range from 115% of average for the inflow to Willow Creek Reservoir to 80% for the Roaring Fork at Glenwood Springs.







Upper Colorado River Basin Snowpack and Streamflow Forecasts
May 1, 2016



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Upper Colorado River Basin
Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2016

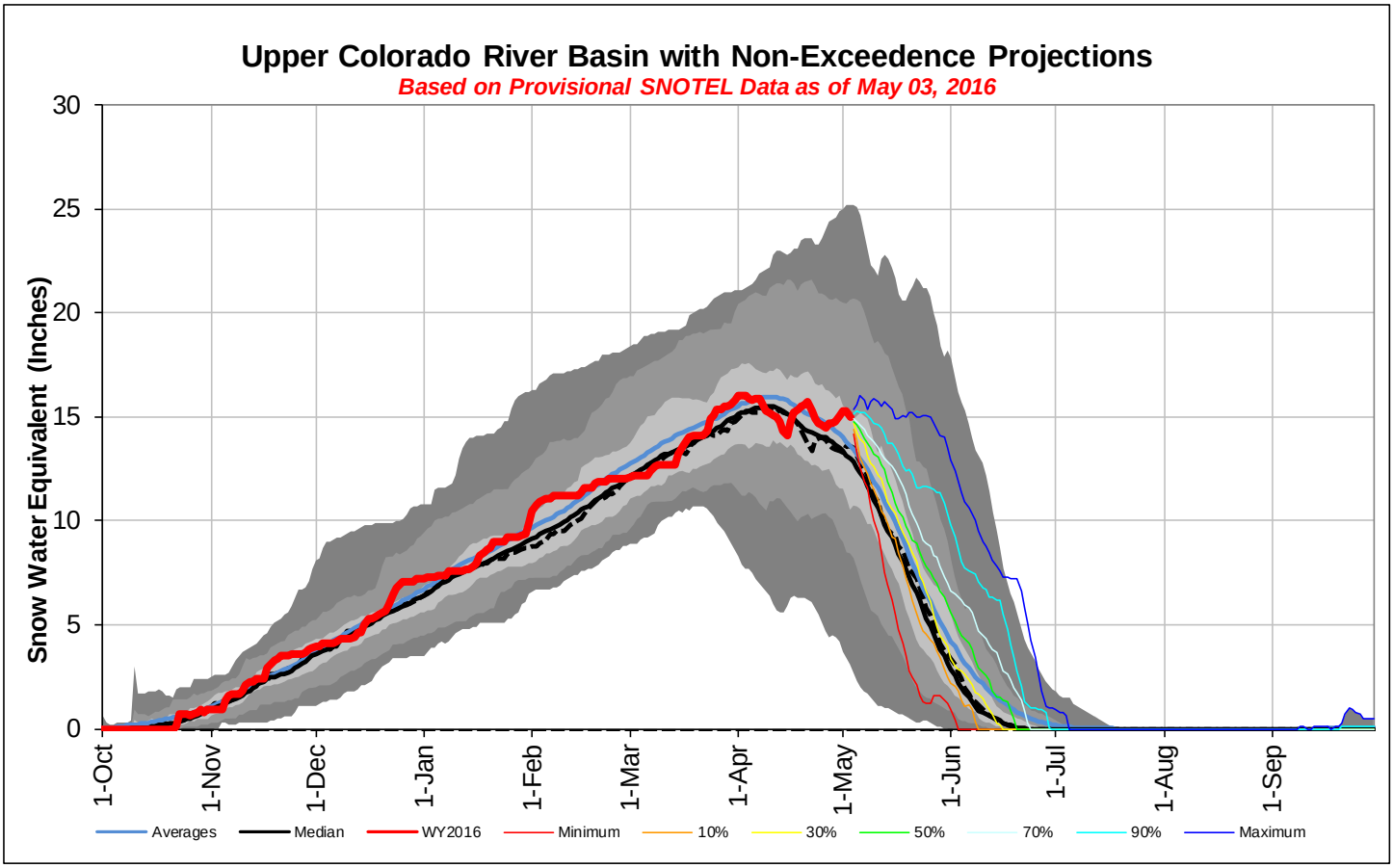
Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

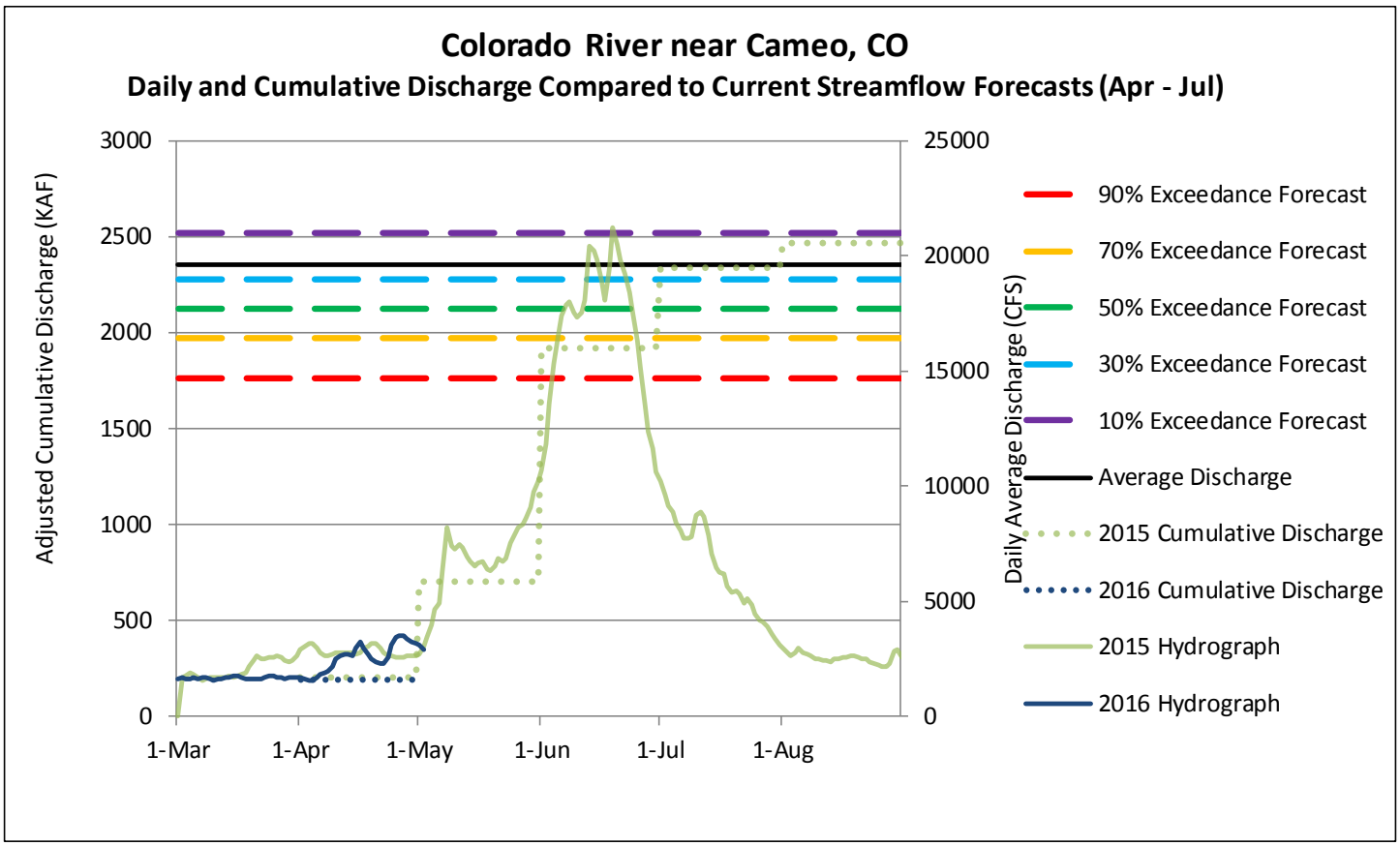
UPPER COLORADO RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Lake Granby Inflow [2]								
	APR-JUL	180	200	215	98%	230	255	220
	MAY-JUL	163	184	199	97%	215	240	205
Willow Ck Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	39	48	54	115%	61	71	47
	MAY-JUL	34	43	49	114%	56	66	43
Williams Fk bl Williams Fk Reservoir[2]								
	APR-JUL	82	93	102	105%	111	125	97
	MAY-JUL	75	86	95	106%	104	118	90
Wolford Mtn Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	42	49	54	100%	60	68	54
	MAY-JUL	35	42	47	102%	53	61	46
Dillon Reservoir Inflow[2]								
	APR-JUL	149	167	180	110%	194	215	163
	MAY-JUL	139	157	170	111%	184	205	153
Green Mountain Reservoir Inflow[2]								
	APR-JUL	240	275	300	109%	325	360	275
	MAY-JUL	220	255	280	110%	305	340	255
Eagle R bl Gypsum [2]								
	APR-JUL	260	300	325	97%	355	405	335
	MAY-JUL	240	280	305	98%	335	385	310
Colorado R nr Dotsero [2]								
	APR-JUL	1140	1310	1430	102%	1560	1770	1400
	MAY-JUL	1020	1190	1310	102%	1440	1650	1280
Ruedi Reservoir Inflow [2]								
	APR-JUL	113	127	137	99%	147	164	139
	MAY-JUL	106	120	130	100%	140	157	130
Roaring Fk at Glenwood Springs[2]								
	APR-JUL	455	510	550	80%	590	655	690
	MAY-JUL	410	465	505	79%	545	610	640
Colorado R nr Cameo [2]								
	APR-JUL	1760	1970	2120	90%	2280	2520	2350
	MAY-JUL	1570	1780	1930	90%	2090	2330	2150

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of April, 2016	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Dillon Reservoir	234.4	242.2	208.7	249.1
Green Mountain Reservoir	59.2	64.9	59.5	146.8
Homestake Reservoir	41.3	20.8	19.5	43.0
Lake Granby	305.9	416.9	262.4	465.6
Ruedi Reservoir	70.0	75.8	62.6	102.0
Shadow Mountain Reservoir	17.1	17.2	17.2	18.4
Vega Reservoir	17.1	18.8	18.3	32.9
Williams Fork Reservoir	76.7	83.7	60.8	97.0
Willow Creek Reservoir	6.1	6.0	6.6	9.1
Wolford Mountain Reservoir	47.1	49.8	47.7	65.9
Basin-wide Total	874.9	996.1	763.3	1229.8
# of reservoirs	10	10	10	10

Watershed Snowpack Analysis May 1, 2016	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
BLUE RIVER BASIN	8	118%	95%
HEADWATERS COLORADO RIVER	35	117%	72%
MUDDY CREEK BASIN	4	131%	63%
EAGLE RIVER BASIN	5	115%	52%
PLATEAU CREEK BASIN	3	108%	52%
ROARING FORK BASIN	10	101%	62%
WILLIAMS FORK BASIN	5	114%	69%
WILLOW CREEK BASIN	4	136%	72%
UPPER COLORADO RIVER BASIN	48	112%	68%



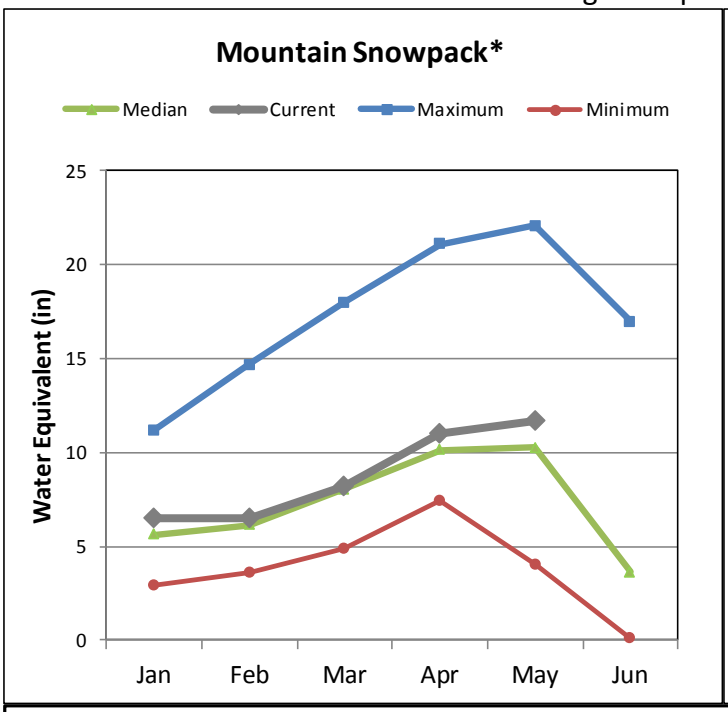


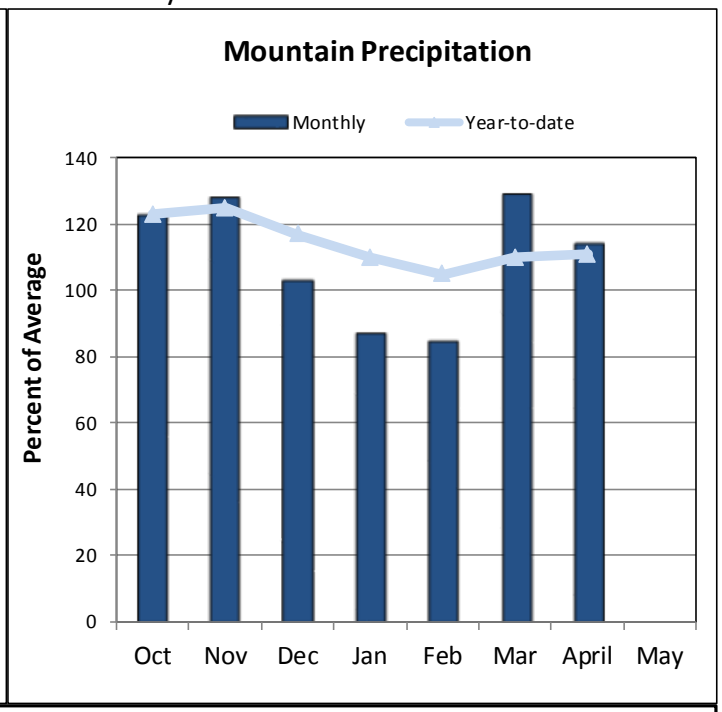
Please refer to the sections at the end of this report for further explanation concerning these graphs.

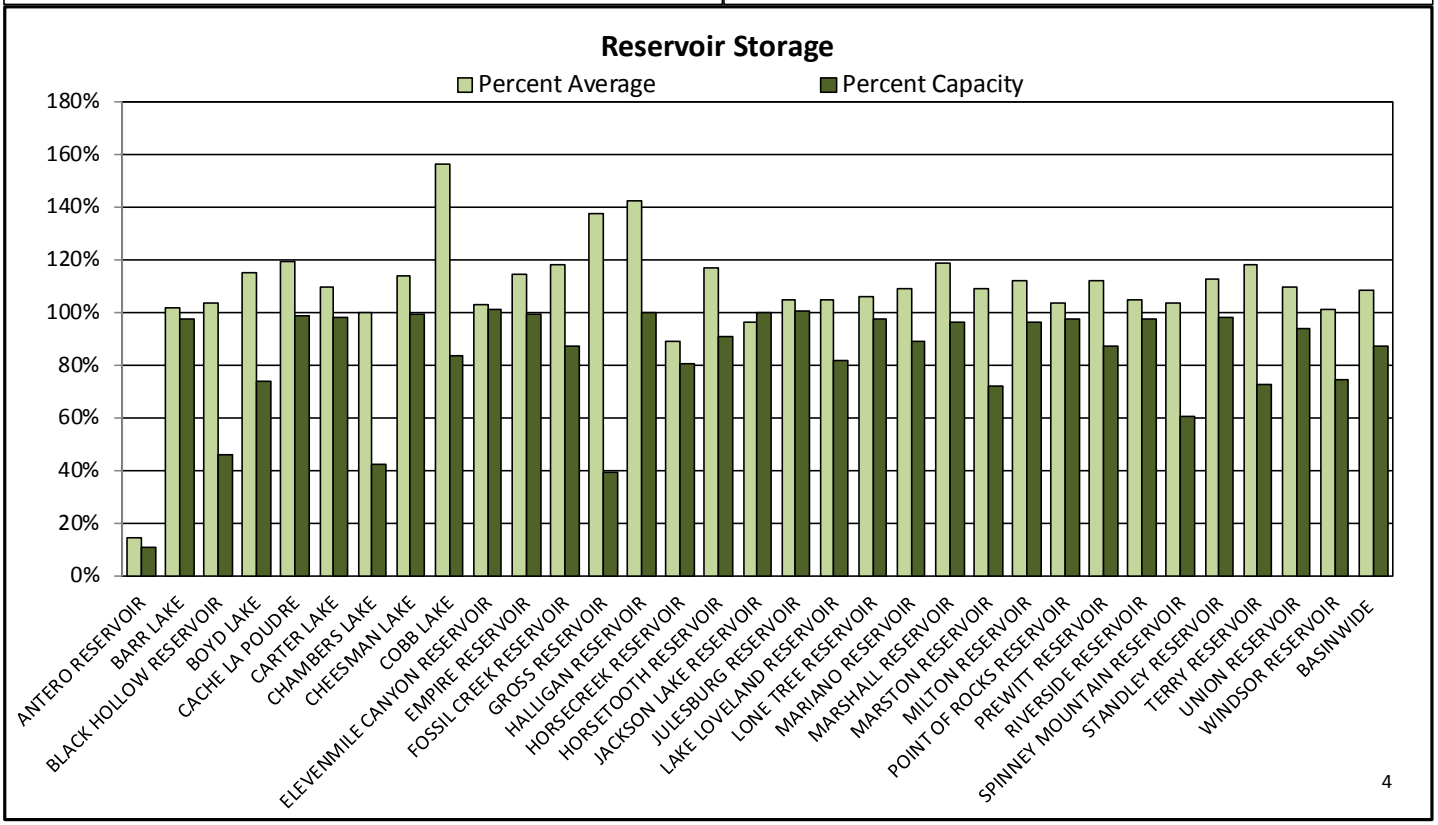
SOUTH PLATTE RIVER BASIN

May 1, 2016

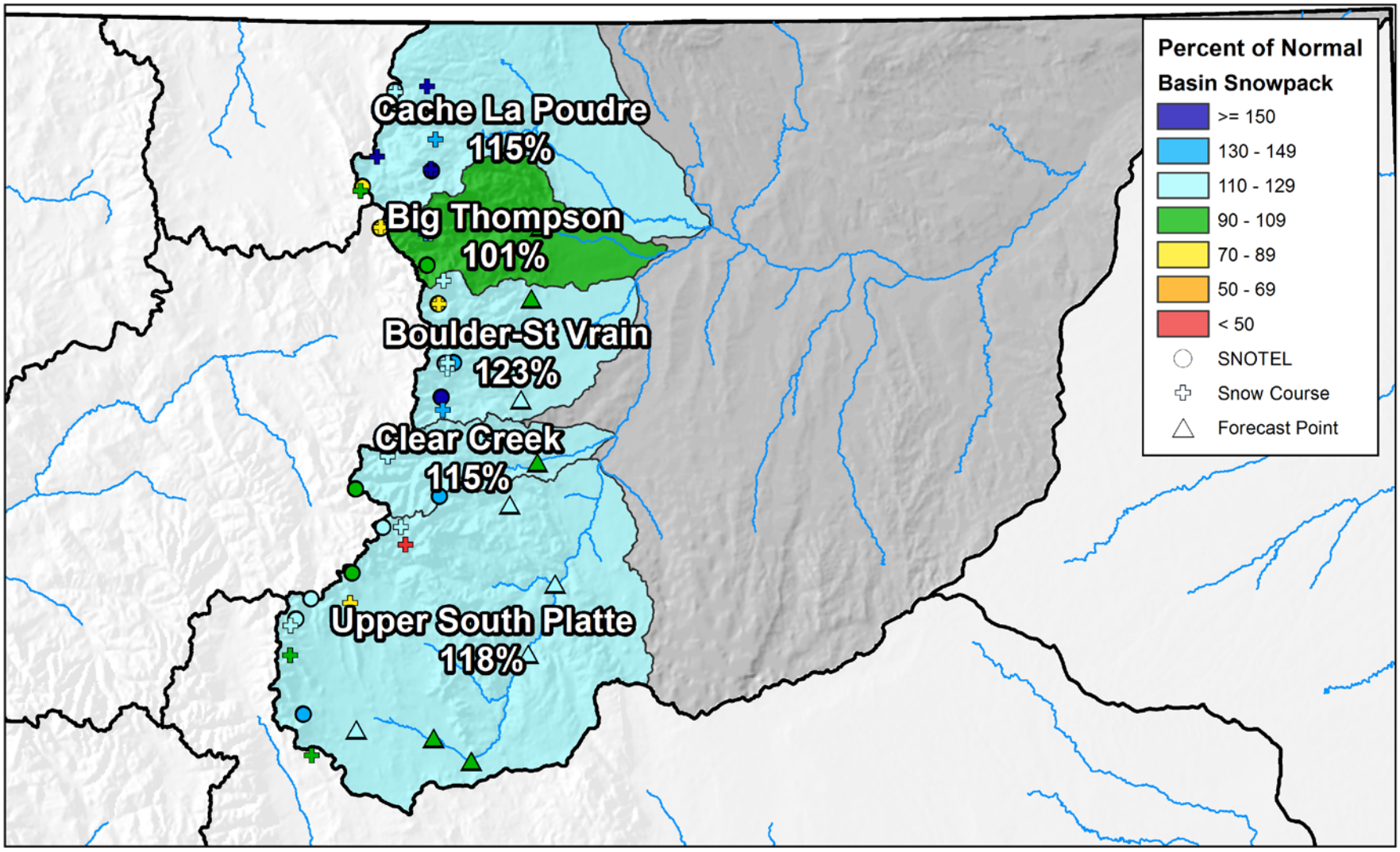
Snowpack in the South Platte River basin is above normal at 114% of the median. Precipitation for April was 114% of average which brings water year-to-date precipitation to 110%. Reservoir storage at the end of April was 108% of average compared to 113% last year. Streamflow forecasts range from 115% of average for Boulder Creek near Orodell to 99% for the Big Thompson at the canyon mouth.







South Platte River Basin Snowpack and Streamflow Forecasts
May 1, 2016



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South Platte River Basin
Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2016

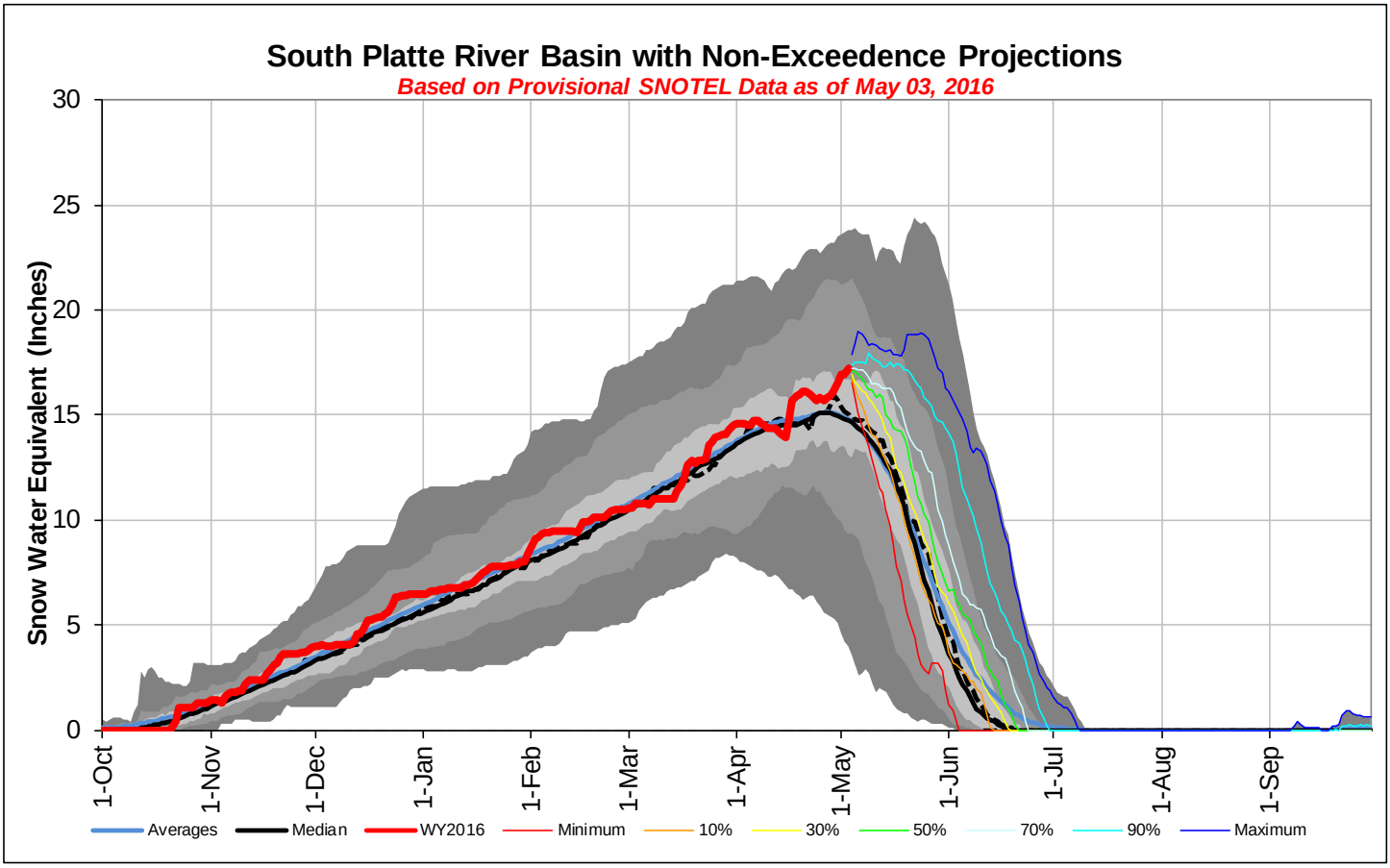
Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

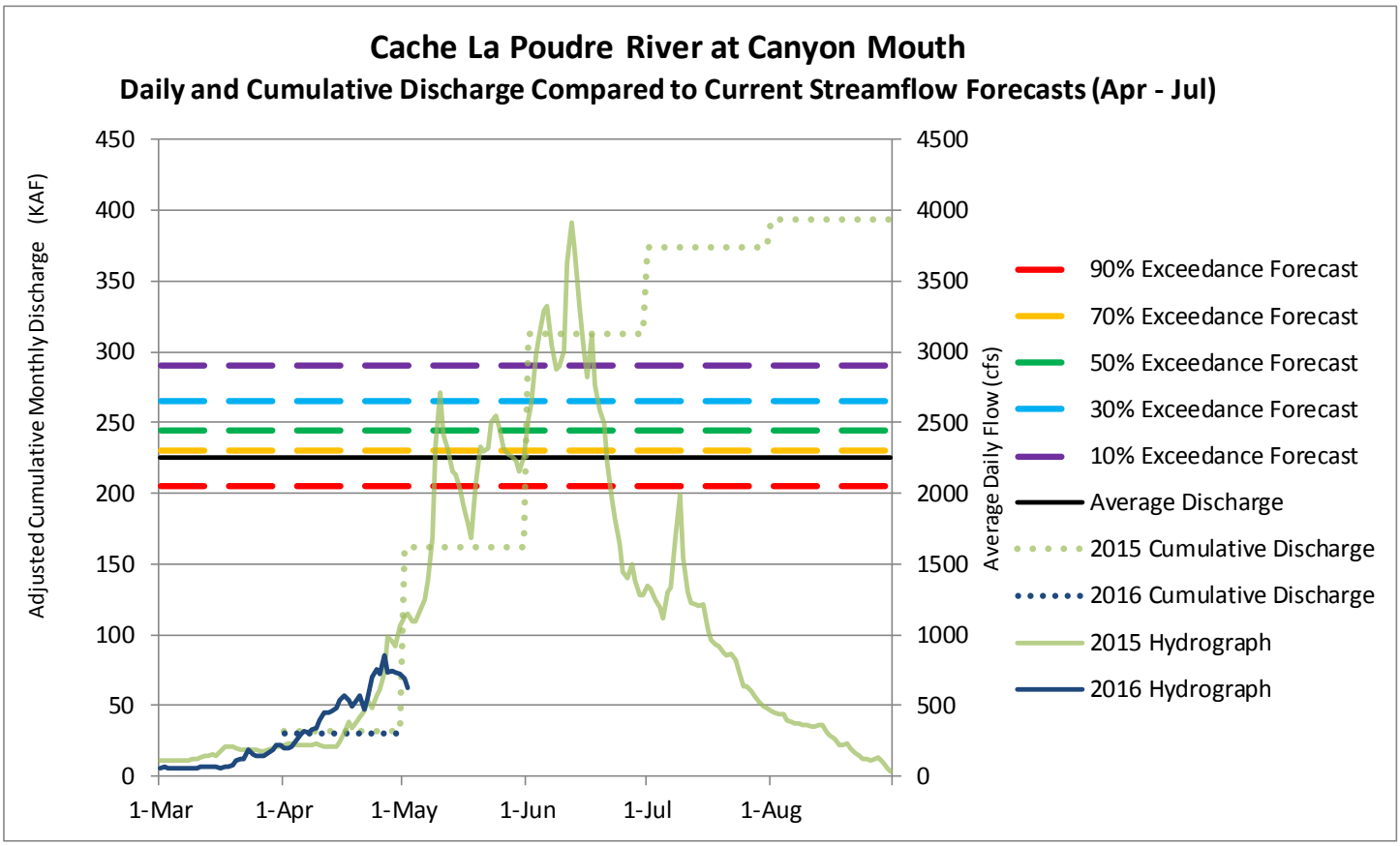
SOUTH PLATTE RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Antero Reservoir Inflow[2]								
	APR-JUL	13.3	15.3	16.6	114%	17.9	19.9	14.5
	APR-SEP	16.2	18.6	20	112%	22	25	17.8
	MAY-JUL	11.4	13.4	14.7	112%	16	18	13.1
	MAY-SEP	14.3	16.7	18.4	112%	20	23	16.4
Spinney Mountain Reservoir Inflow[2]								
	APR-JUL	37	45	52	108%	58	69	48
	APR-SEP	46	57	65	107%	75	89	61
	MAY-JUL	33	41	48	109%	54	65	44
	MAY-SEP	42	53	61	109%	71	85	56
Elevenmile Canyon Reservoir Inflow[2]								
	APR-JUL	40	48	55	110%	62	73	50
	APR-SEP	49	61	70	109%	80	95	64
	MAY-JUL	35	43	50	111%	57	68	45
	MAY-SEP	44	56	65	112%	75	90	58
Cheesman Lake Inflow[2]								
	APR-JUL	76	95	109	109%	124	149	100
	APR-SEP	94	119	138	110%	159	192	126
	MAY-JUL	62	81	95	110%	110	135	86
	MAY-SEP	80	105	124	110%	145	178	113
South Platte R at South Platte[2]								
	APR-JUL	143	178	205	114%	235	280	180
	APR-SEP	178	220	250	111%	285	335	225
	MAY-JUL	113	148	175	112%	205	250	156
	MAY-SEP	148	189	220	107%	255	305	205
Bear Ck ab Evergreen								
	APR-JUL	11.8	15.4	18.3	112%	22	27	16.4
	APR-SEP	14.2	19.1	23	110%	28	35	21
	MAY-JUL	9.8	13.4	16.3	115%	19.6	25	14.2
	MAY-SEP	12.2	17.1	21	111%	26	33	18.9
Clear Ck at Golden								
	APR-JUL	93	103	110	105%	118	130	105
	APR-SEP	110	123	132	103%	142	157	128
	MAY-JUL	86	96	103	103%	111	123	100
	MAY-SEP	103	116	125	102%	135	150	123
St. Vrain Ck at Lyons[2]								
	APR-JUL	75	84	90	102%	97	107	88
	APR-SEP	86	97	105	102%	113	126	103
	MAY-JUL	69	78	84	105%	91	101	80
	MAY-SEP	80	91	99	104%	107	120	95
Boulder Ck nr Orodell[2]								
	APR-JUL	53	58	62	115%	66	72	54
	APR-SEP	60	66	71	113%	76	84	63
	MAY-JUL	49	54	58	114%	62	68	51
	MAY-SEP	56	62	67	114%	72	80	59
South Boulder Ck nr Eldorado Springs[2]								
	APR-JUL	35	40	44	113%	48	54	39
	APR-SEP	39	45	49	114%	54	61	43
	MAY-JUL	30	35	39	111%	43	49	35
	MAY-SEP	34	40	44	113%	49	56	39
Big Thompson R at Canyon Mouth[2]								
	APR-JUL	74	83	89	99%	95	104	90
	APR-SEP	85	97	106	99%	115	127	107
	MAY-JUL	68	77	83	98%	89	98	85
	MAY-SEP	79	91	100	98%	109	121	102
Cache La Poudre at Canyon Mouth[2]								
	APR-JUL	205	230	245	109%	265	290	225
	APR-SEP	220	250	270	108%	290	320	250
	MAY-JUL	175	200	215	102%	235	260	210
	MAY-SEP	190	220	240	102%	260	290	235

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of April, 2016	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Antero Reservoir	2.1	16.1	14.7	19.9
Barr Lake	29.3	29.3	28.8	30.1
Black Hollow Reservoir	3.0	4.3	2.9	6.5
Boyd Lake	35.6	30.7	30.9	48.4
Cache La Poudre	10.0	10.6	8.4	10.1
Carter Lake	106.8	103.5	97.5	108.9
Chambers Lake	3.7	7.4	3.7	8.8
Cheesman Lake	78.4	78.4	69.0	79.0
Cobb Lake	18.6	19.6	11.9	22.3
Elevenmile Canyon Reservoir	99.4	99.5	96.6	98.0
Empire Reservoir	36.3	36.5	31.7	36.5
Fossil Creek Reservoir	9.7	10.1	8.2	11.1
Gross Reservoir	11.7	12.0	8.5	29.8
Halligan Reservoir	6.4	6.4	4.5	6.4
Horsecreek Reservoir	11.8	12.8	13.3	14.7
Horsetooth Reservoir	136.1	146.5	116.6	149.7
Jackson Lake Reservoir	26.1	26.1	27.1	26.1
Julesburg Reservoir	20.6	20.5	19.6	20.5
Lake Loveland Reservoir	8.4	8.8	8.0	10.3
Lone Tree Reservoir	8.5	8.3	8.0	8.7
Mariano Reservoir	4.8	5.1	4.4	5.4
Marshall Reservoir	9.6	9.6	8.1	10.0
Marston Reservoir	9.4	0.0	8.6	13.0
Milton Reservoir	22.7	22.5	20.2	23.5
Point Of Rocks Reservoir	69.0	74.6	66.5	70.6
Prewitt Reservoir	24.6	28.6	22.0	28.2
Ralph Price Reservoir	6.4	14.2		16.2
Riverside Reservoir	54.5	55.8	52.0	55.8
Spinney Mountain Reservoir	29.7	42.0	28.7	49.0
Standley Reservoir	41.2	41.2	36.6	42.0
Terry Reservoir	5.8	7.4	4.9	8.0
Union Reservoir	12.2	11.8	11.1	13.0
Windsor Reservoir	11.3	14.2	11.2	15.2
Basin-wide Total	957.2	1000.2	884.2	1079.5
# of reservoirs	32	32	32	32

Watershed Snowpack Analysis May 1, 2016	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
BIG THOMPSON BASIN	7	101%	95%
BOULDER CREEK BASIN	6	124%	103%
CACHE LA POUDRE BASIN	10	115%	87%
CLEAR CREEK BASIN	4	115%	90%
SAINT VRAIN BASIN	2	93%	106%
UPPER SOUTH PLATTE BASIN	16	118%	107%
SOUTH PLATTE RIVER BASIN	45	114%	96%



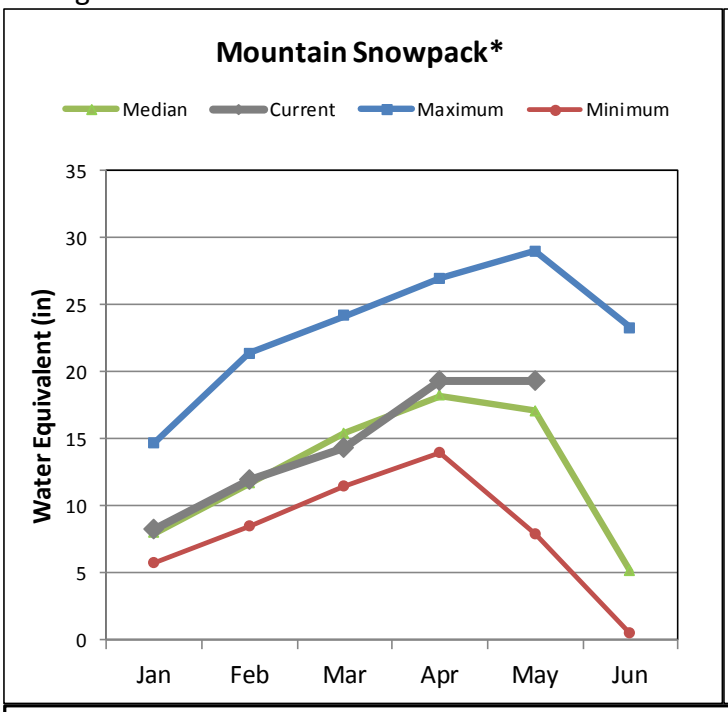


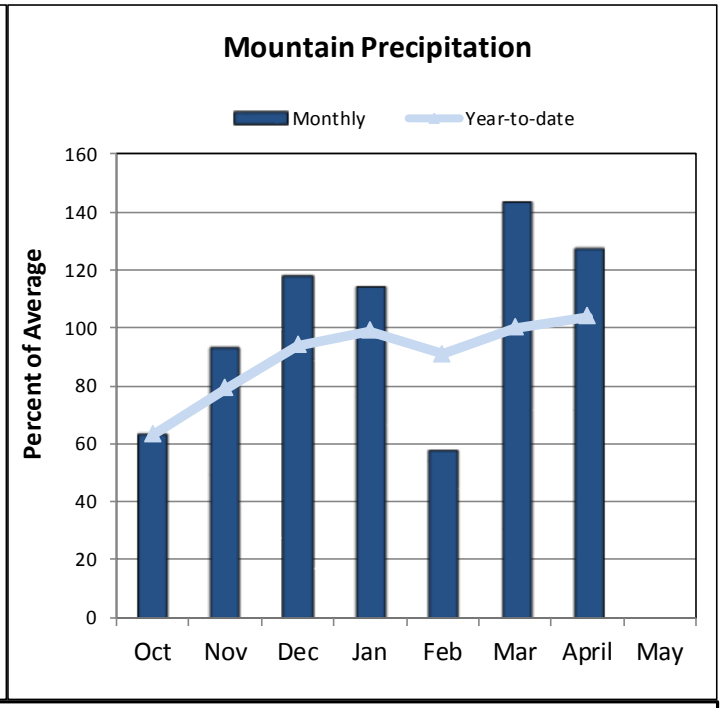
Please refer to the sections at the end of this report for further explanation concerning these graphs.

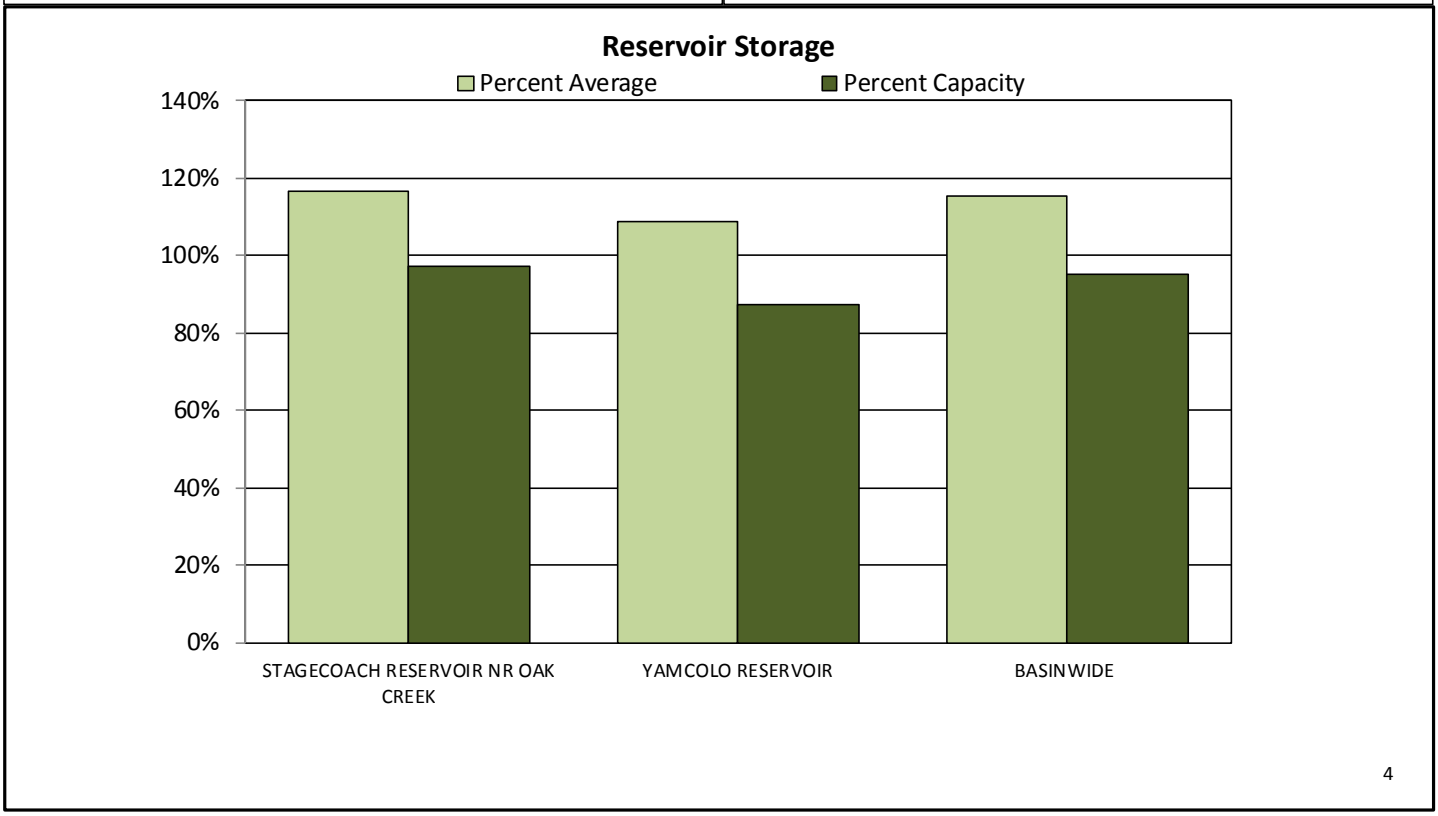
YAMPA, WHITE, NORTH PLATTE AND LARAMIE RIVER BASINS

May 1, 2016

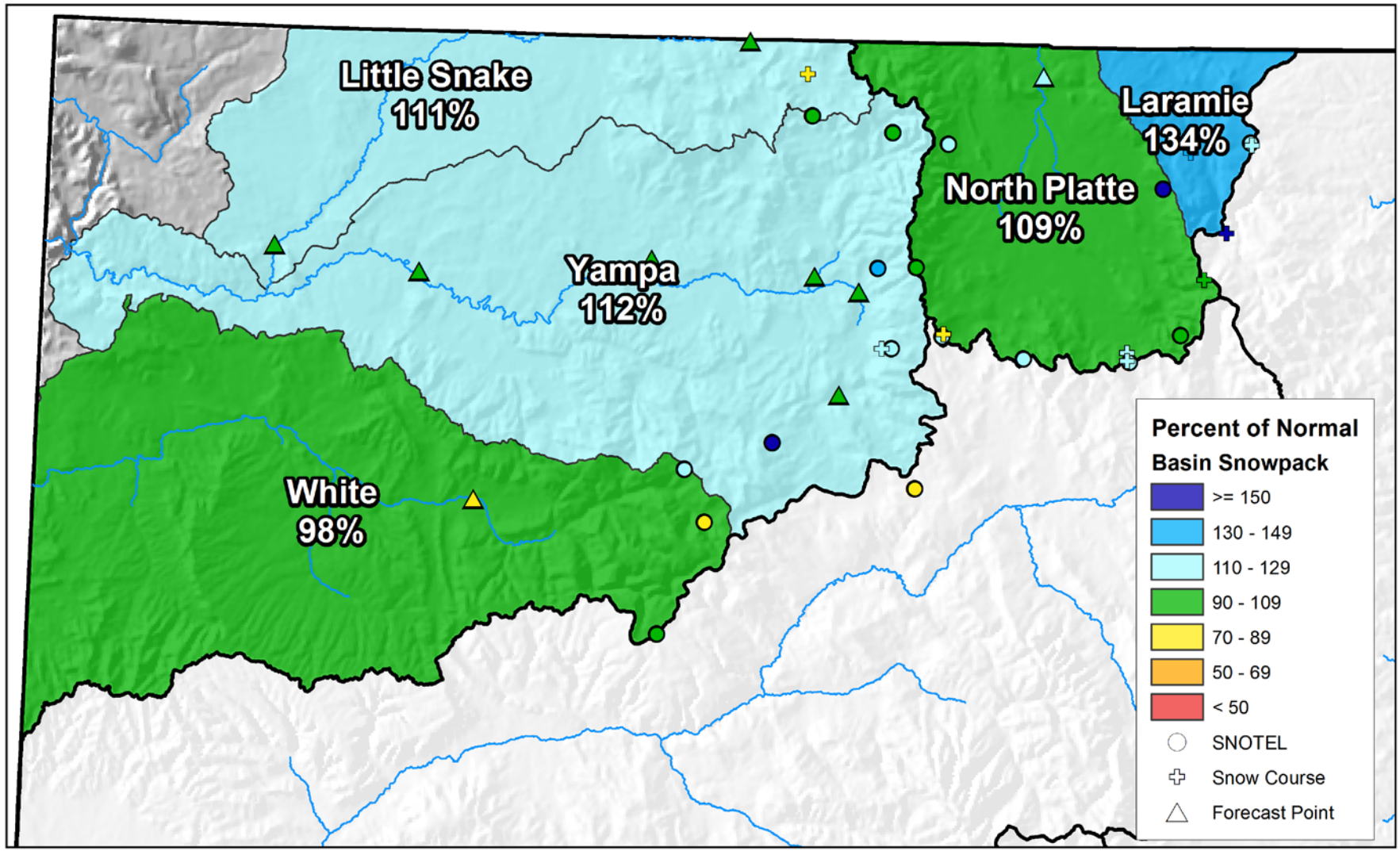
Snowpack in the Yampa, White & North Platte basins is above normal at 113% of the median. Precipitation for April was 127% of average and water year-to-date precipitation is at 104% of average. Reservoir storage at the end of April was 115% of average compared to 120% last year. Streamflow forecasts range from 130% of average for the Laramie River near Woods to 82% for the White River near Meeker.







Yampa, White, and North Platte River Basins Snowpack and Streamflow Forecasts
May 1, 2016



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Yampa-White-North Platte River Basins
Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2016

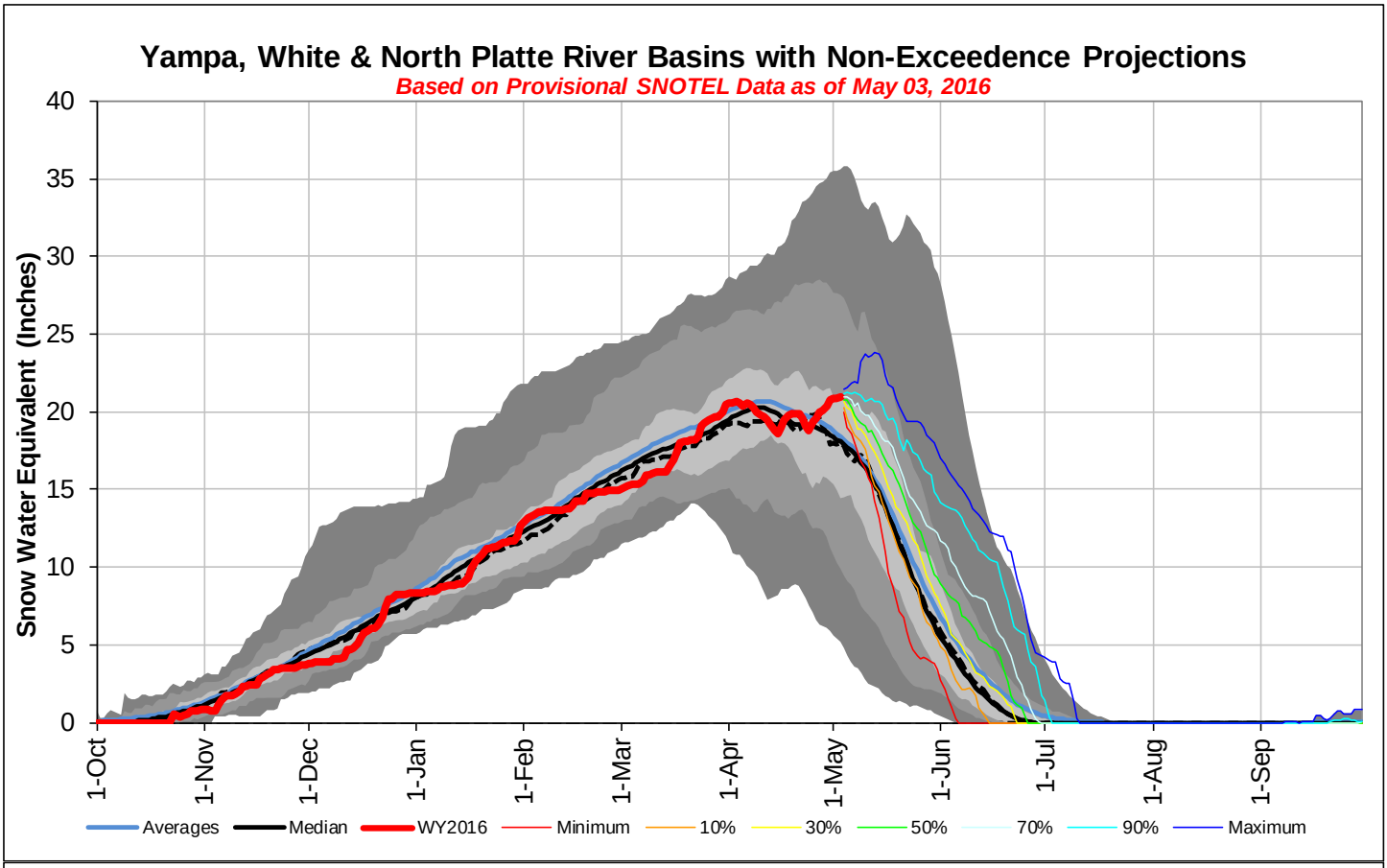
Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

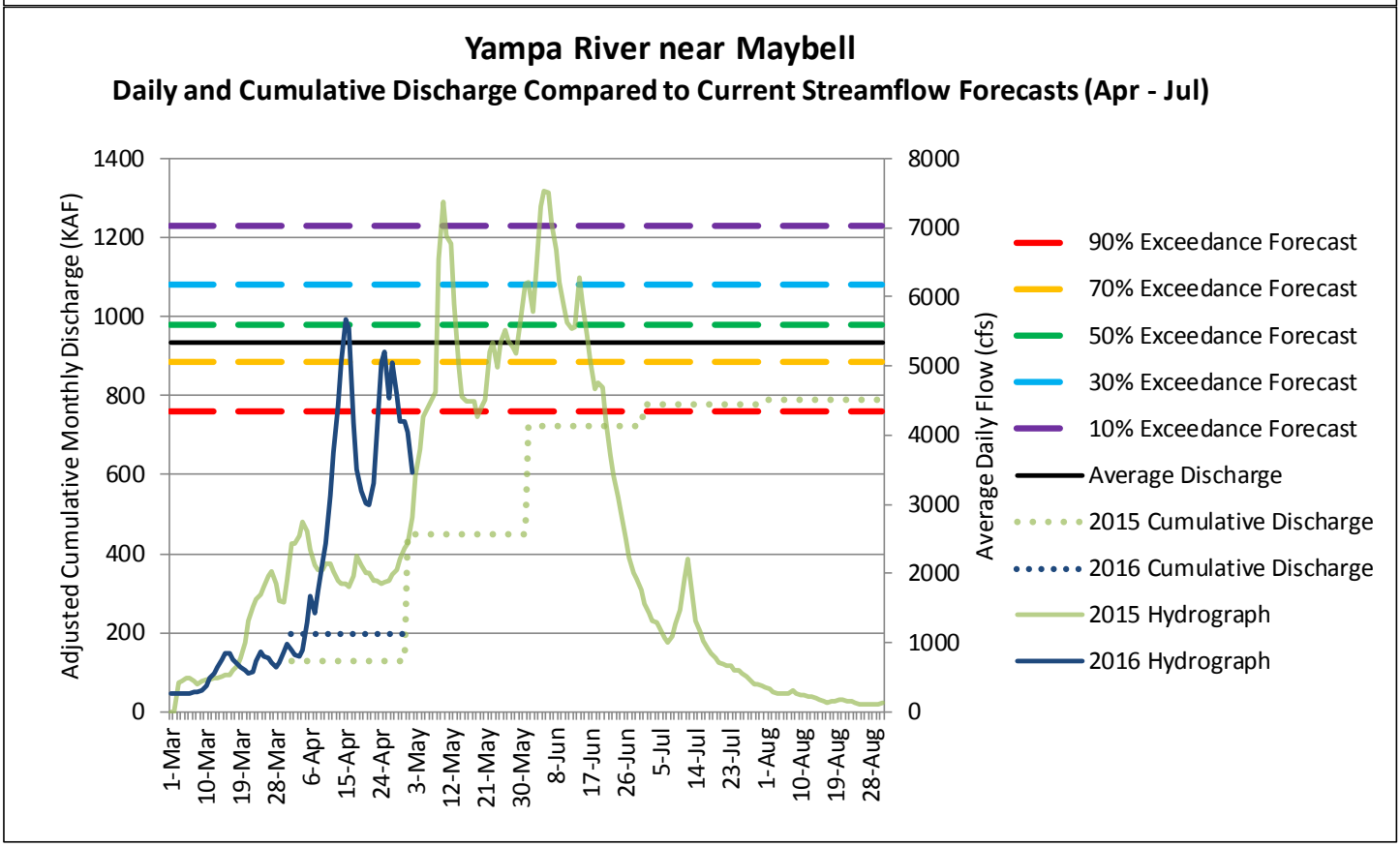
YAMPA-WHITE-NORTH PLATTE RIVER BASINS	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
North Platte R nr Northgate								
	MAY-JUL	154	200	235	126%	270	315	187
	MAY-SEP	171	225	265	126%	305	360	210
Laramie R nr Woods[2]								
	MAY-JUL	106	126	140	130%	154	174	108
	MAY-SEP	115	138	153	129%	168	191	119
Yampa R ab Stagecoach Reservoir [2]								
	APR-JUL	16.7	20	23	100%	27	32	23
	MAY-JUL	8.4	12.1	15	94%	18.2	24	16
Yampa R at Steamboat Springs[2]								
	APR-JUL	225	255	275	106%	295	330	260
	MAY-JUL	169	199	220	100%	240	275	220
Elk R nr Milner								
	APR-JUL	265	315	350	109%	390	450	320
	MAY-JUL	215	265	300	103%	340	400	290
Elkhead Ck ab Long Gulch								
	APR-JUL	51	62	71	97%	82	98	73
	MAY-JUL	30	41	50	100%	61	77	50
Yampa R nr Maybell[2]								
	APR-JUL	760	885	980	105%	1080	1230	935
	MAY-JUL	560	685	780	101%	880	1030	775
Little Snake R nr Slater[2]								
	APR-JUL	116	132	144	92%	157	177	156
	MAY-JUL	94	110	122	88%	135	155	138
Little Snake R nr Dixon[2]								
	APR-JUL	205	260	300	87%	345	415	345
	MAY-JUL	153	205	245	83%	290	360	295
Little Snake R nr Lily[2]								
	APR-JUL	230	290	335	97%	385	470	345
	MAY-JUL	167	230	275	95%	325	410	290
White R nr Meeker								
	APR-JUL	172	205	230	82%	255	300	280
	MAY-JUL	137	171	195	80%	220	265	245

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of April, 2016	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Stagecoach Reservoir nr Oak Creek	35.5	36.4	30.4	36.5
Yamcolo Reservoir	7.6	8.4	7.0	8.7
Basin-wide Total	43.1	44.8	37.4	45.2
# of reservoirs	2	2	2	2

Watershed Snowpack Analysis May 1, 2016	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
LARAMIE RIVER BASIN	5	134%	80%
NORTH PLATTE RIVER BASIN	12	111%	61%
LARAMIE & NORTH PLATTE RIVER BASINS	17	115%	65%
ELK RIVER BASIN	2	97%	34%
YAMPA RIVER BASIN	11	113%	46%
WHITE RIVER BASIN	4	98%	60%
YAMPA & WHITE RIVER BASINS	14	107%	47%
LITTLE SNAKE RIVER BASIN	9	111%	47%
YAMPA-WHITE-NORTH PLATTE RIVER BASINS	36	113%	55%



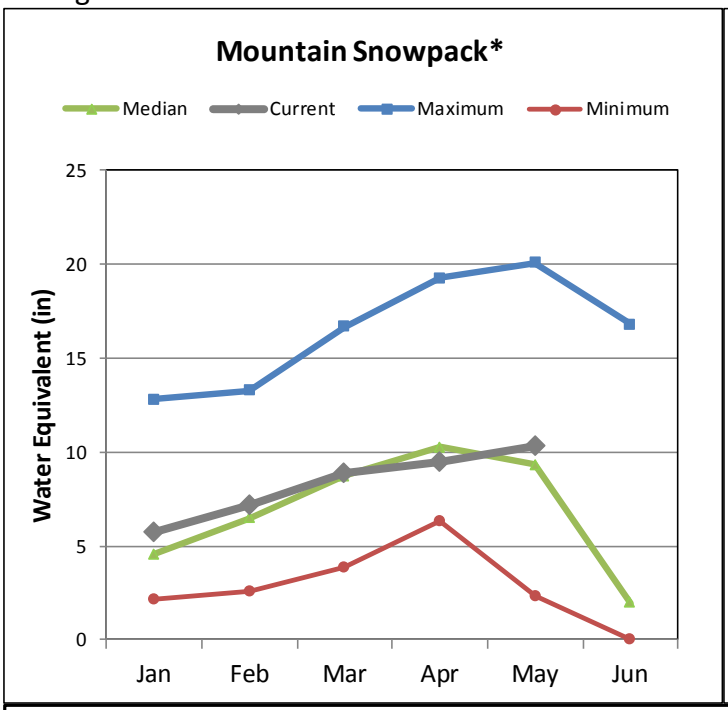


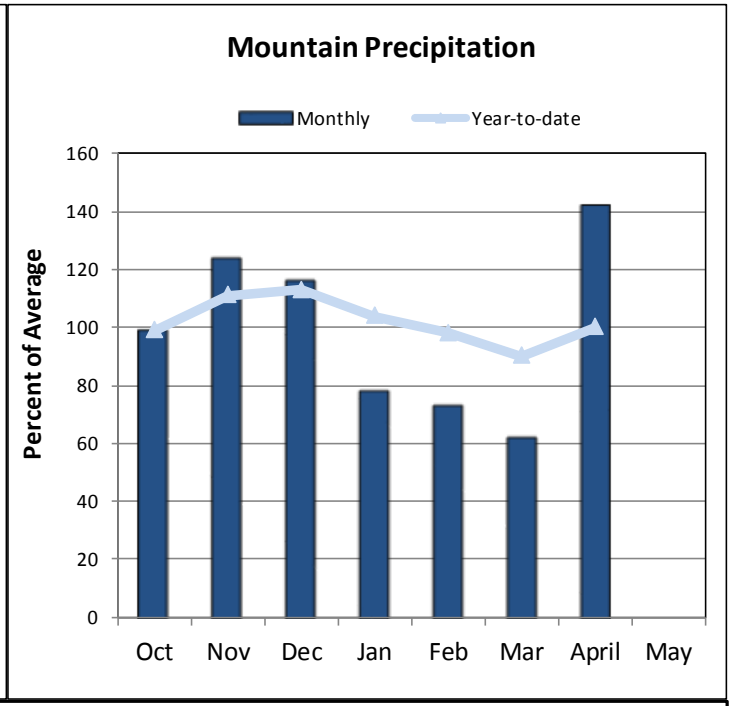
Please refer to the sections at the end of this report for further explanation concerning these graphs.

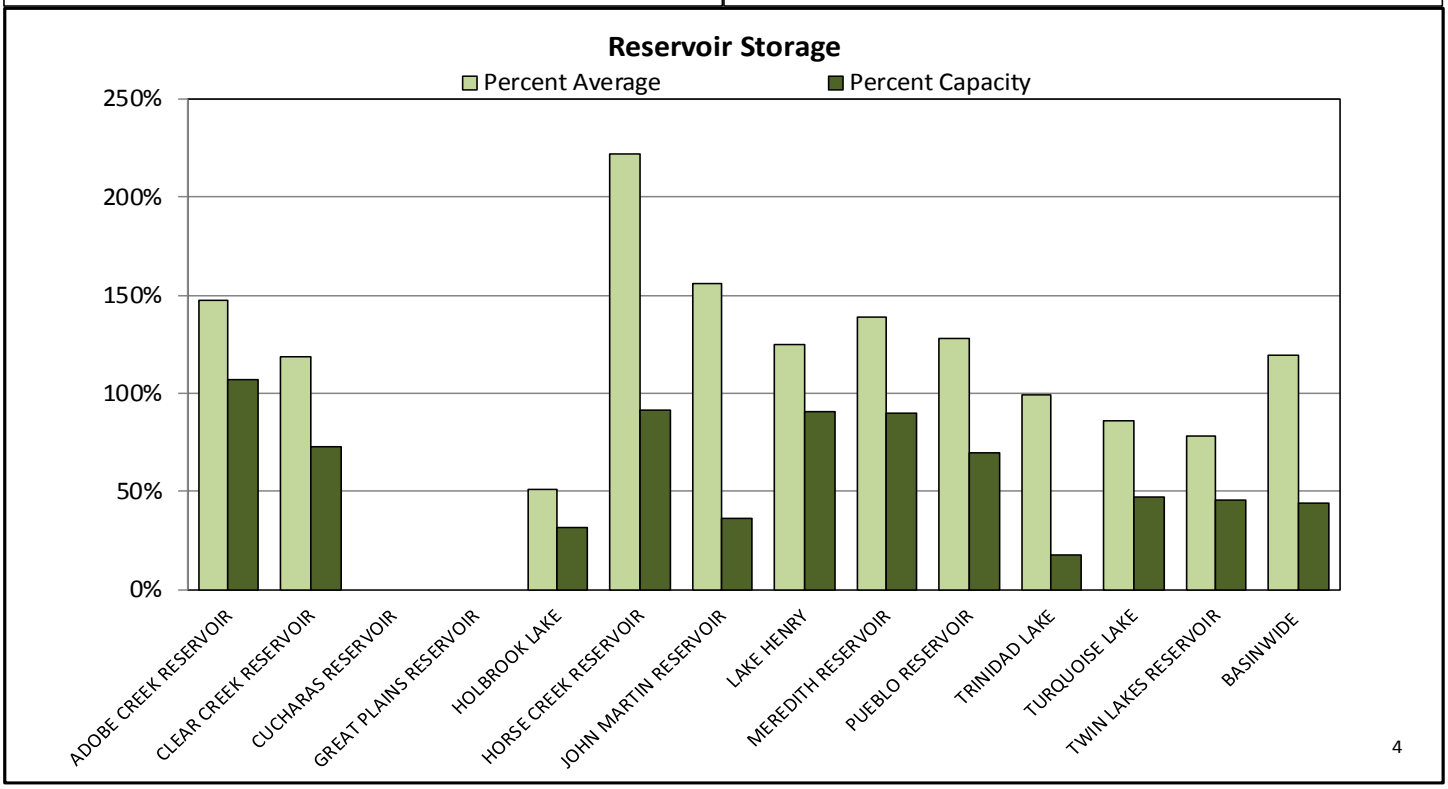
ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN

May 1, 2016

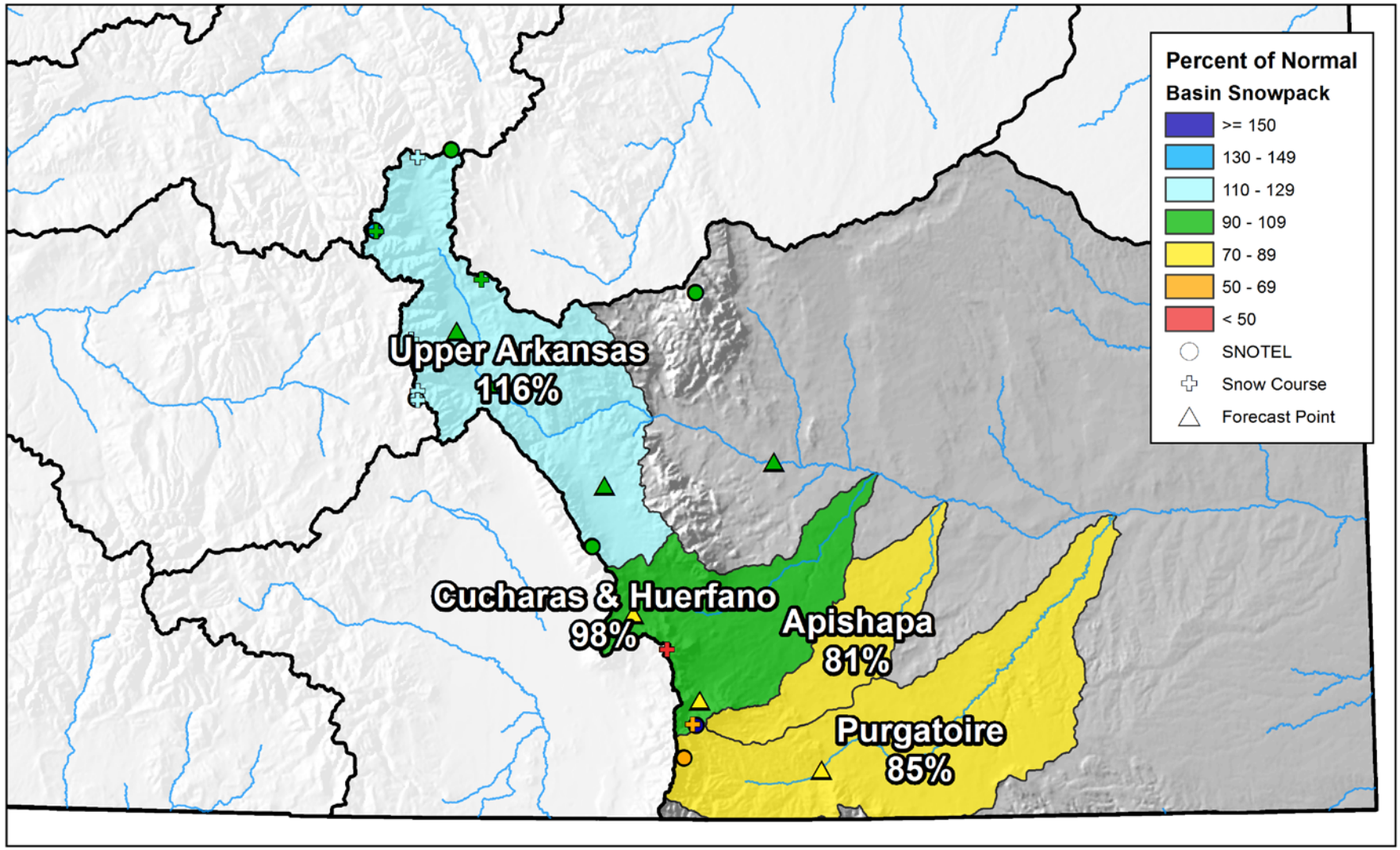
Snowpack in the Arkansas River basin is above normal at 110% of the median. Precipitation for April was 142% of average which brings water year-to-date precipitation to 100% of average. Reservoir storage at the end of April was 120% of average compared to 79% last year. Current streamflow forecasts range from 98% of average for the Arkansas at Salida to 77% for the Cucharas River near La Veta.







Arkansas River Basin Snowpack and Streamflow Forecasts
May 1, 2016



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Arkansas River Basin
Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2016

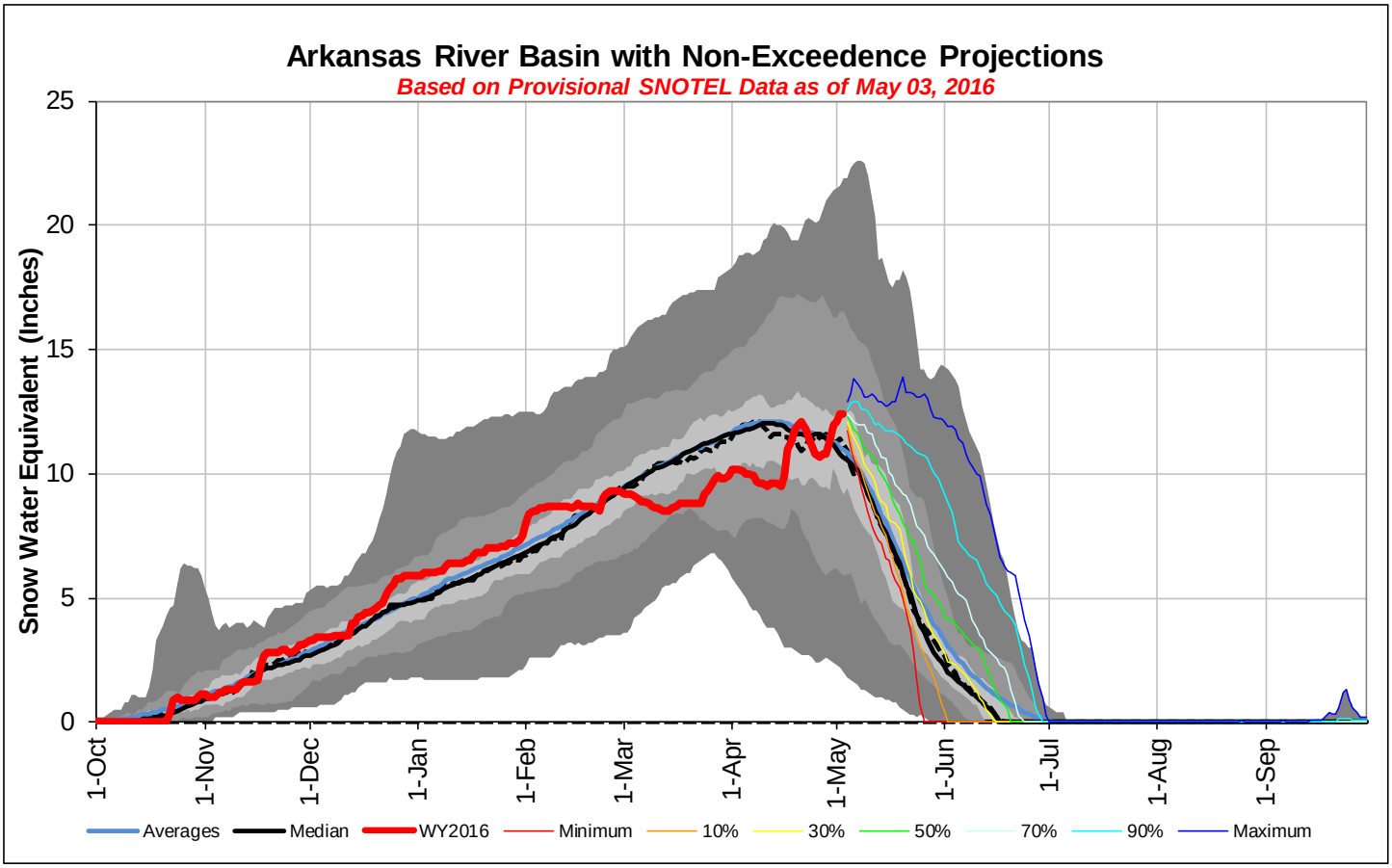
Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

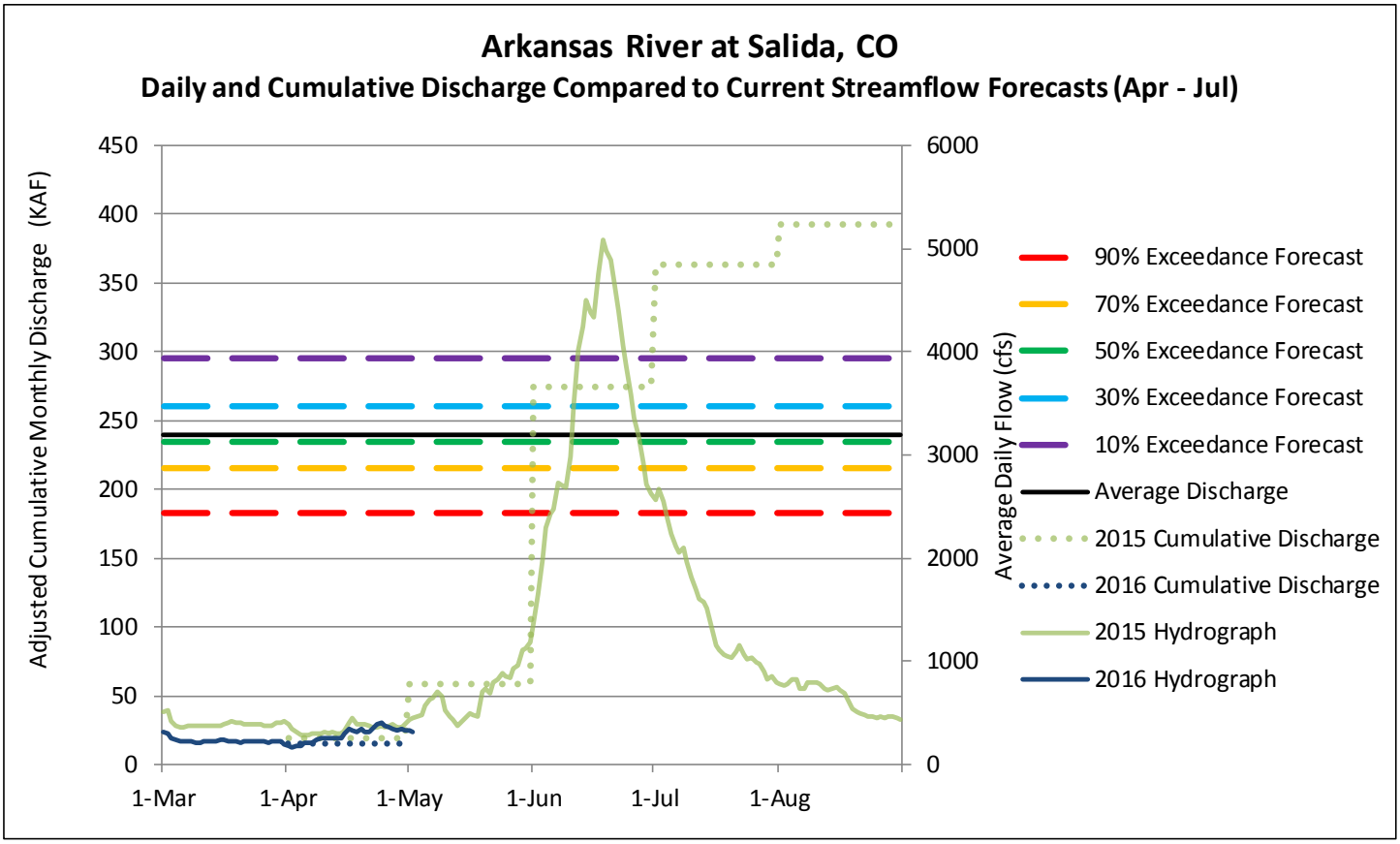
ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Chalk Ck nr Nathrop								
	APR-JUL	11.8	16.4	20	95%	24	31	21
	APR-SEP	13.2	19.2	24	92%	29	38	26
	MAY-JUL	10.6	15.2	18.9	90%	23	30	21
	MAY-SEP	12	18	23	88%	28	37	26
Arkansas R at Salida[2]								
	APR-JUL	183	215	235	98%	260	295	240
	APR-SEP	215	255	290	98%	325	375	295
	MAY-JUL	167	198	220	96%	245	280	230
	MAY-SEP	199	240	275	98%	310	360	280
Grape Ck nr Westcliffe								
	APR-JUL	8.6	11.6	13.9	87%	16.5	21	15.9
	APR-SEP	11.2	14.9	17.8	91%	21	26	19.6
	MAY-JUL	6.8	9.8	12.1	95%	14.7	18.9	12.7
	MAY-SEP	9.4	13.1	16	98%	19.2	24	16.4
Pueblo Reservoir Inflow[2]								
	APR-JUL	230	300	350	97%	405	495	360
	APR-SEP	270	360	430	95%	505	630	455
	MAY-JUL	200	270	320	97%	375	465	330
	MAY-SEP	240	330	400	94%	475	600	425
Huerfano R nr Redwing								
	APR-JUL	6.8	8.6	10	84%	11.5	13.9	11.9
	APR-SEP	9.1	11.4	13	86%	14.8	17.7	15.2
	MAY-JUL	5.8	7.6	9	84%	10.5	12.9	10.7
	MAY-SEP	8.1	10.4	12	86%	13.8	16.7	14
Cucharas R nr La Veta								
	APR-JUL	7.1	8.4	9.4	77%	10.4	12	12.2
	APR-SEP	7.9	9.7	11	78%	12.3	14.5	14.1
	MAY-JUL	6.2	7.5	8.5	79%	9.5	11.1	10.8
	MAY-SEP	7	8.8	10.1	80%	11.4	13.6	12.7
Trinidad Lake Inflow[2]								
	MAR-JUL	21	27	31	84%	36	43	37
	APR-SEP	24	33	39	83%	46	58	47
	MAY-JUL	16.2	22	26	87%	31	38	30
	MAY-SEP	21	30	36	86%	43	55	42

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of April, 2016	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Adobe Creek Reservoir	66.5	33.6	45.2	62.0
Clear Creek Reservoir	8.3	8.7	7.0	11.4
Cucharas Reservoir			6.5	40.0
Great Plains Reservoir	0.0	0.0	36.3	150.0
Holbrook Lake	2.2	2.0	4.3	7.0
Horse Creek Reservoir	24.6	0.0	11.1	27.0
John Martin Reservoir	224.5	46.2	143.9	616.0
Lake Henry	8.5	8.4	6.8	9.4
Meredith Reservoir	37.8	36.4	27.3	42.0
Pueblo Reservoir	235.2	232.7	192.4	354.0
Trinidad Lake	30.1	22.0	30.4	167.0
Turquoise Lake	60.3	62.9	70.4	127.0
Twin Lakes Reservoir	39.2	38.2	50.1	86.0
Basin-wide Total	737.2	491.1	625.2	1658.8
# of reservoirs	12	12	12	12

Watershed Snowpack Analysis May 1, 2016	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
UPPER ARKANSAS BASIN	9	116%	103%
CUCHARAS & HUERFANO BASINS	5	98%	56%
PURGATOIRE RIVER BASIN	2	85%	5%
ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN	16	110%	89%



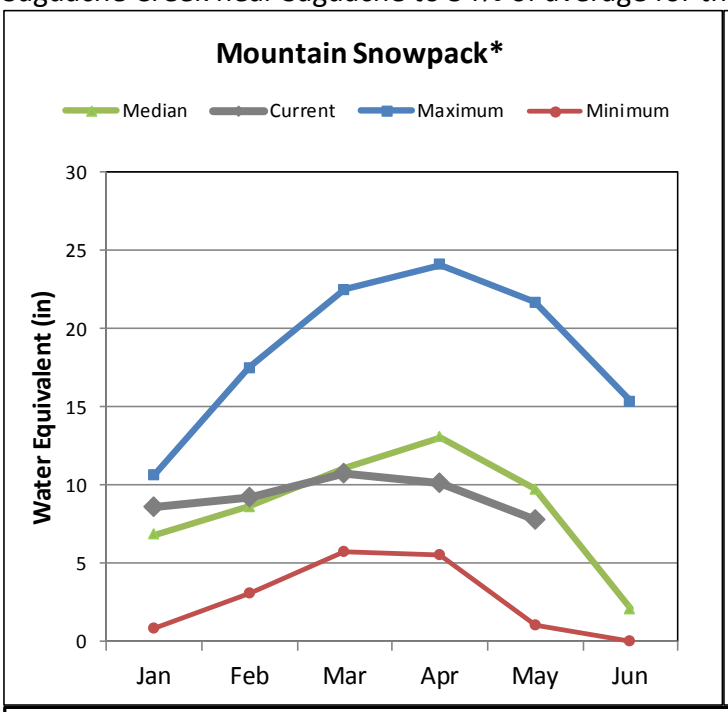


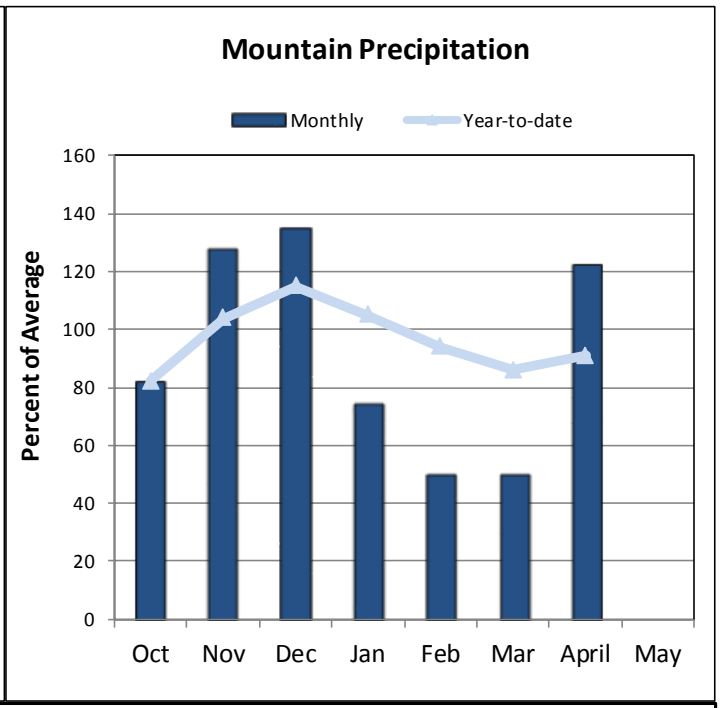
Please refer to the sections at the end of this report for further explanation concerning these graphs.

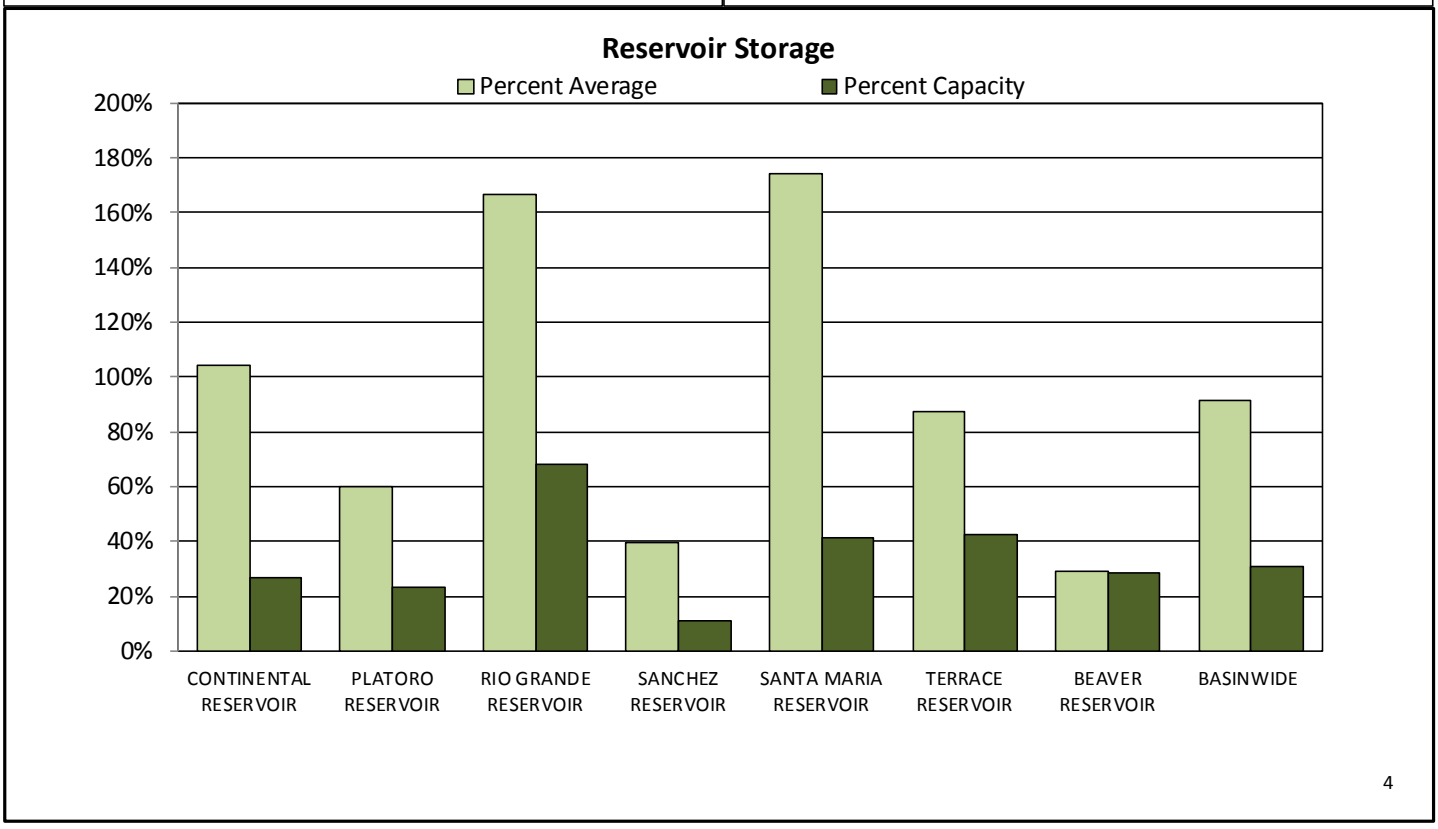
UPPER RIO GRANDE RIVER BASIN

May 1, 2016

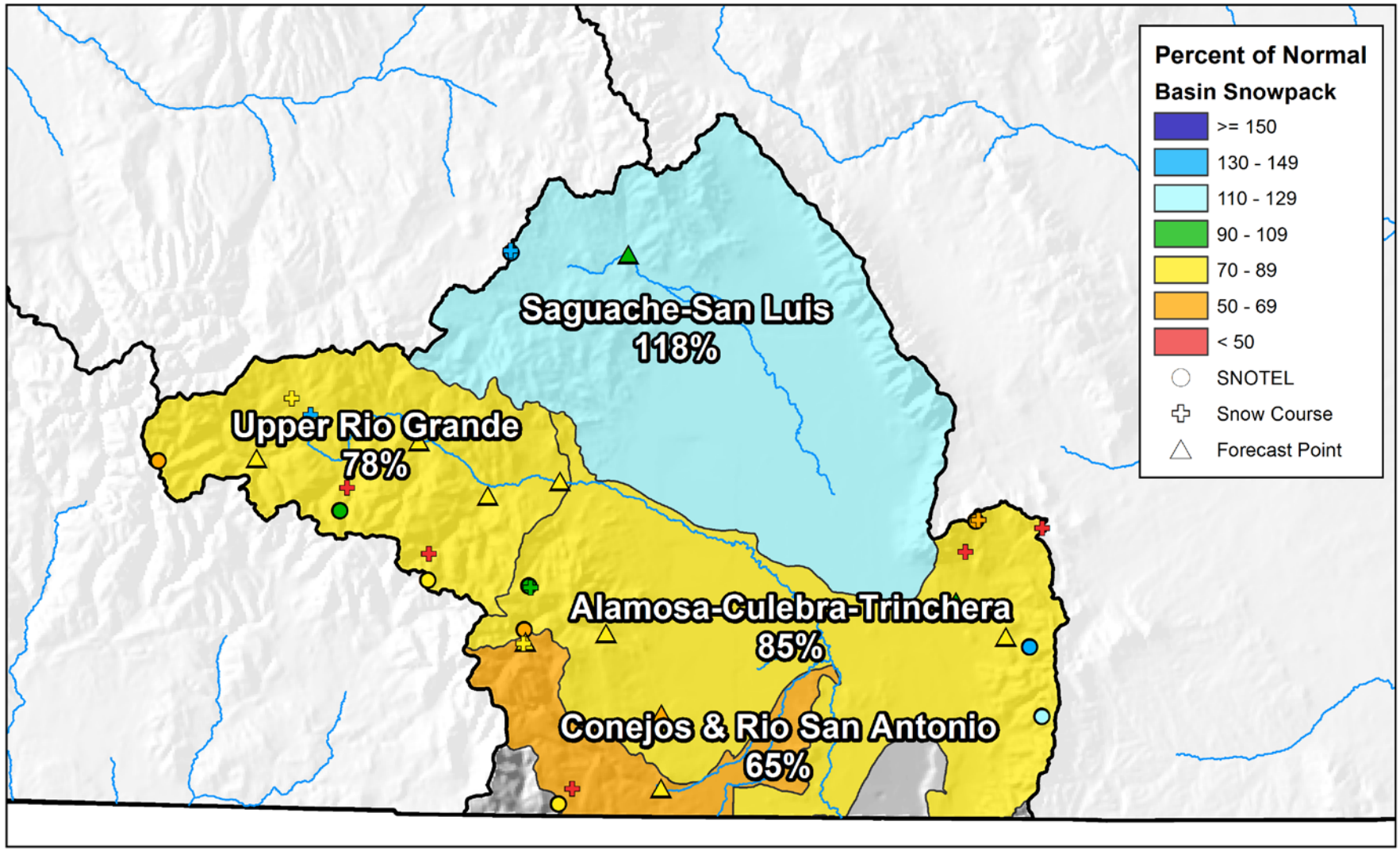
Snowpack in the Upper Rio Grande River basin is below normal at 77% of median. Precipitation for April was 122% of average which brings water year-to-date precipitation to 91% of average. Reservoir storage at the end of April was 91% of average compared to 76% last year. Streamflow forecasts range from 106% of average for Saguache Creek near Saguache to 54% of average for the San Antonio River at Ortiz.







Upper Rio Grande River Basin Snowpack and Streamflow Forecasts
May 1, 2016



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Upper Rio Grande Basin
Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2016

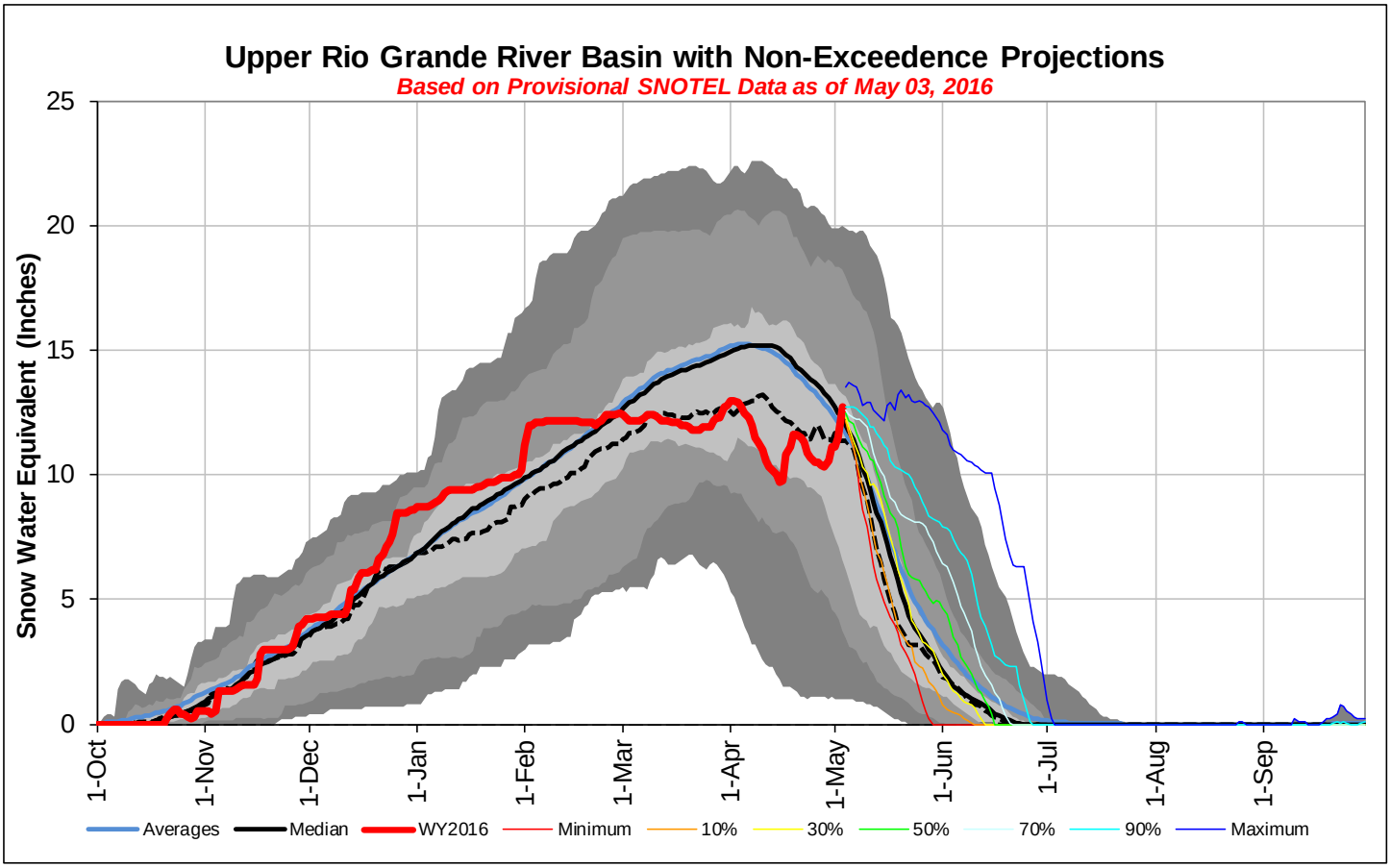
Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

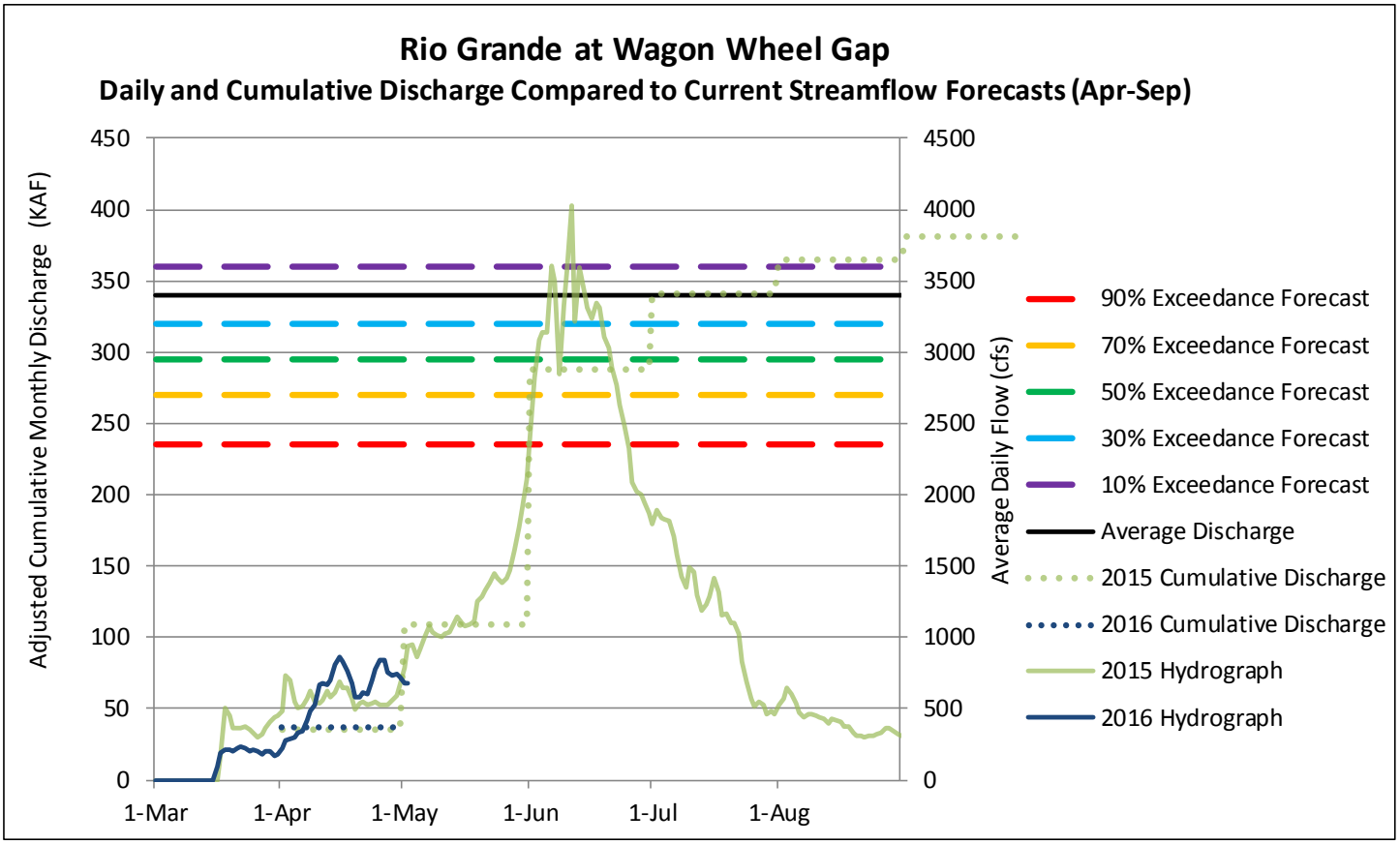
UPPER RIO GRANDE BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Rio Grande at Thirty Mile Bridge[2]								
	APR-JUL	72	83	90	80%	99	111	113
	APR-SEP	78	92	103	80%	113	130	129
	MAY-JUL	63	74	81	76%	90	102	106
	MAY-SEP	69	83	94	77%	104	121	122
Rio Grande at Wagon Wheel Gap[2]								
	APR-SEP	235	270	295	87%	320	360	340
	MAY-SEP	200	235	260	83%	285	325	315
SF Rio Grande at South Fork[2]								
	APR-SEP	89	98	105	83%	111	122	127
	MAY-SEP	71	80	87	77%	93	104	113
Rio Grande nr Del Norte [2]								
	APR-SEP	365	410	445	86%	480	530	515
	MAY-SEP	305	350	385	82%	420	470	470
Saguache Ck nr Saguache								
	APR-SEP	23	29	34	106%	39	47	32
	MAY-SEP	19.3	25	30	103%	35	43	29
Alamosa Ck ab Terrace Reservoir								
	APR-SEP	39	46	51	75%	56	64	68
	MAY-SEP	34	41	46	74%	51	59	62
La Jara Ck nr Capulin								
	MAR-JUL	3.3	4.3	5.1	57%	6	7.5	8.9
	MAY-JUL	1.91	2.9	3.7	66%	4.6	6.1	5.6
Trinchera Ck ab Turners Ranch								
	APR-SEP	8.3	9.8	10.9	87%	12	13.9	12.6
	MAY-SEP	7.7	9.2	10.3	89%	11.4	13.3	11.6
Sangre de Cristo Ck [2]								
	APR-SEP	6.7	9.9	12.5	77%	15.5	21	16.3
	MAY-SEP	4.9	8.1	10.7	84%	13.7	18.8	12.7
Ute Ck nr Fort Garland								
	APR-SEP	7.3	9.8	11.8	92%	13.9	17.5	12.8
	MAY-SEP	6.6	9.1	11.1	96%	13.2	16.8	11.6
Platoro Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	37	42	45	80%	49	54	56
	APR-SEP	40	46	50	81%	54	61	62
	MAY-JUL	34	39	42	79%	46	51	53
	MAY-SEP	37	43	47	80%	51	58	59
Conejos R nr Mogote [2]								
	APR-SEP	120	137	149	77%	162	182	194
	MAY-SEP	105	122	134	76%	147	167	177
San Antonio R at Ortiz								
	APR-SEP	6.5	7.6	8.5	54%	9.4	11	15.6
	MAY-SEP	3.2	4.3	5.2	55%	6.1	7.7	9.4
Los Pinos R nr Ortiz								
	APR-SEP	42	47	51	70%	54	60	73
	MAY-SEP	31	36	40	66%	43	49	61
Culebra Ck at San Luis								
	APR-SEP	10.6	14.7	18	78%	22	28	23
	MAY-SEP	9.8	13.9	17.2	82%	21	27	21
Costilla Reservoir Inflow								
	MAR-JUL	6.4	8	9.2	83%	10.5	12.5	11.1
	MAY-JUL	4.9	6.5	7.7	87%	9	11	8.9
Costilla Ck nr Costilla [2]								
	MAR-JUL	14.1	17.9	21	81%	24	30	26
	MAY-JUL	9.2	13	16	82%	19.2	25	19.6

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of April, 2016	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Beaver Reservoir	1.3	0.0	4.4	4.5
Continental Reservoir	7.2	8.6	6.9	27.0
Platoro Reservoir	14.1	11.9	23.5	60.0
Rio Grande Reservoir	34.7	31.2	20.8	51.0
Sanchez Reservoir	11.4	4.0	29.0	103.0
Santa Maria Reservoir	18.7	16.0	10.7	45.0
Terrace Reservoir	7.6	6.8	8.7	18.0
Basin-wide Total	94.9	78.5	104.0	308.5
# of reservoirs	7	7	7	7

Watershed Snowpack Analysis May 1, 2016	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
ALAMOSA CREEK BASIN	3	74%	16%
CONEJOS & RIO SAN ANTONIO BASINS	4	65%	19%
CULEBRA & TRINCHERA BASINS	6	92%	32%
HEADWATERS RIO GRANDE RIVER BASIN	13	78%	27%
UPPER RIO GRANDE BASIN	25	77%	25%



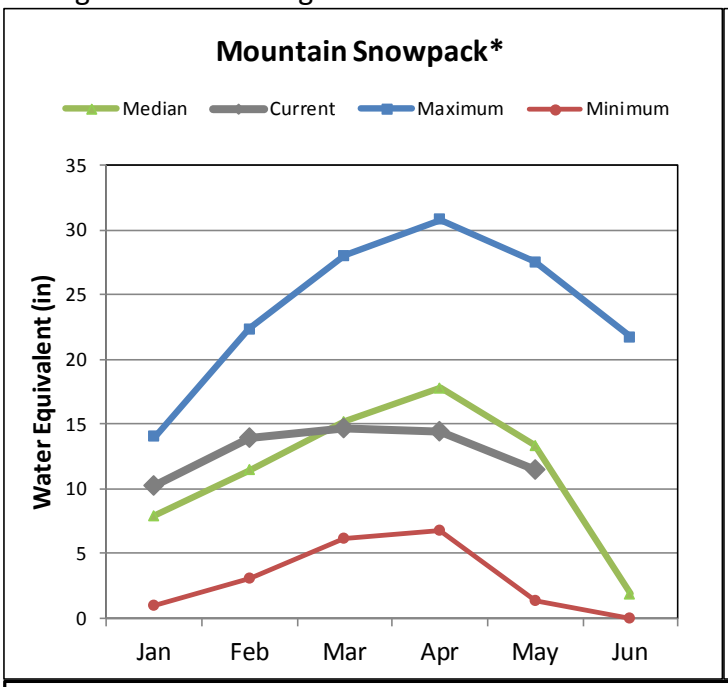


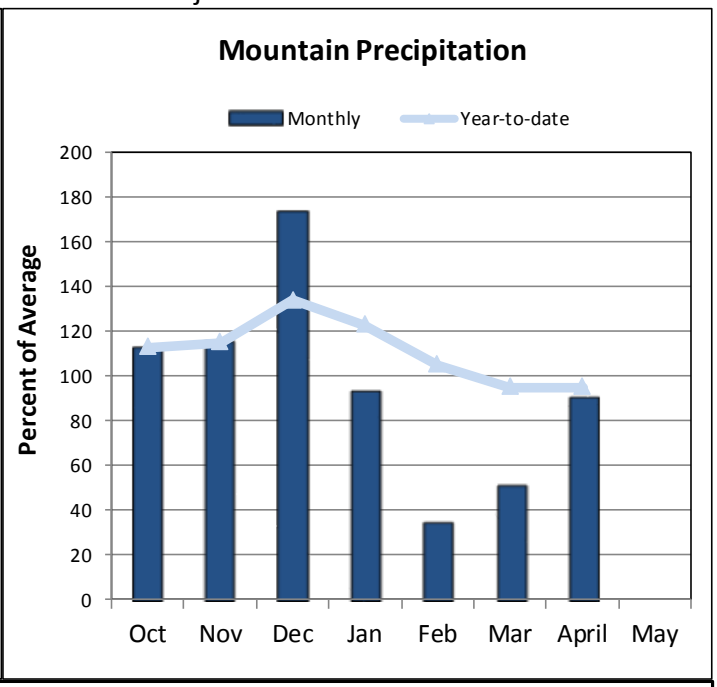
Please refer to the sections at the end of this report for further explanation concerning these graphs.

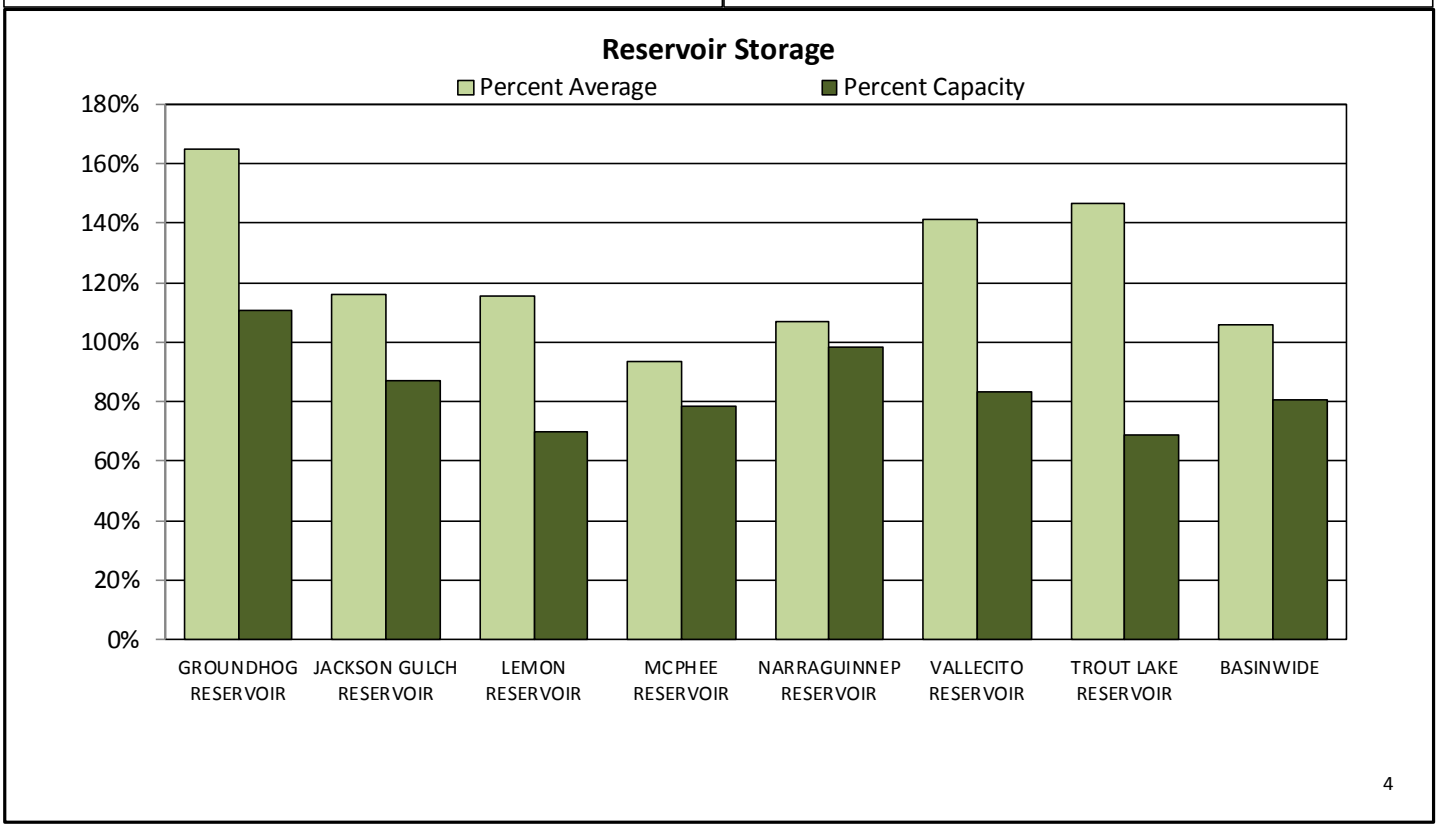
SAN MIGUEL, DOLORES, ANIMAS, AND SAN JUAN RIVER BASINS

May 1, 2016

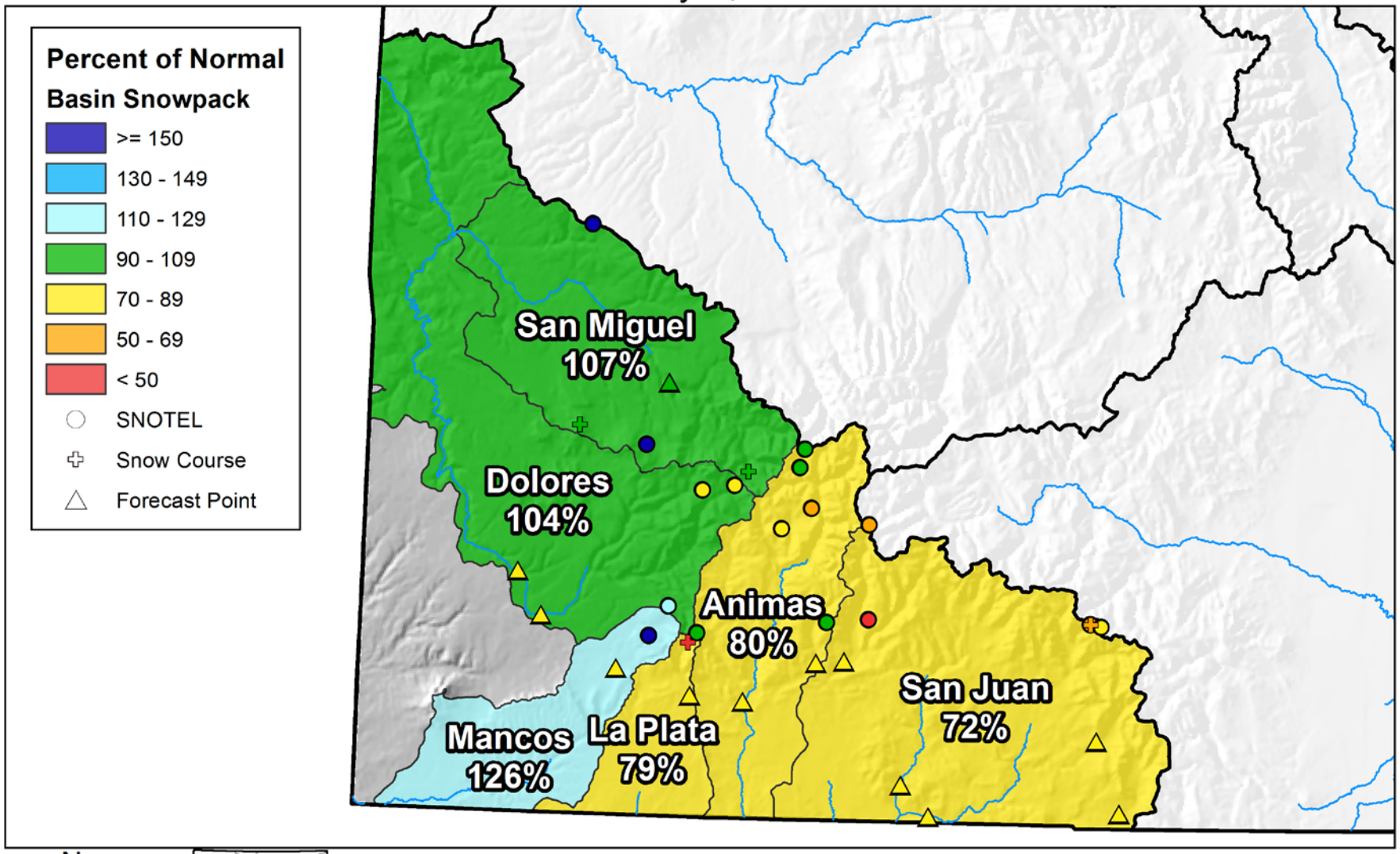
Snowpack in the combined southwest river basins is below normal at 85% of median. Precipitation for April was 91% of average which brings water year-to-date precipitation to 95% of average. Reservoir storage at the end of April was 106% of average compared to 85% last year. Current streamflow forecasts range from 95% of average for the San Miguel at Placerville to 69% for the inflow to Navajo Reservoir.







San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basins
Snowpack and Streamflow Forecasts
May 1, 2016



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San Miguel-Dolores-Animas-San Juan River Basins
Streamflow Forecasts - May 1, 2016

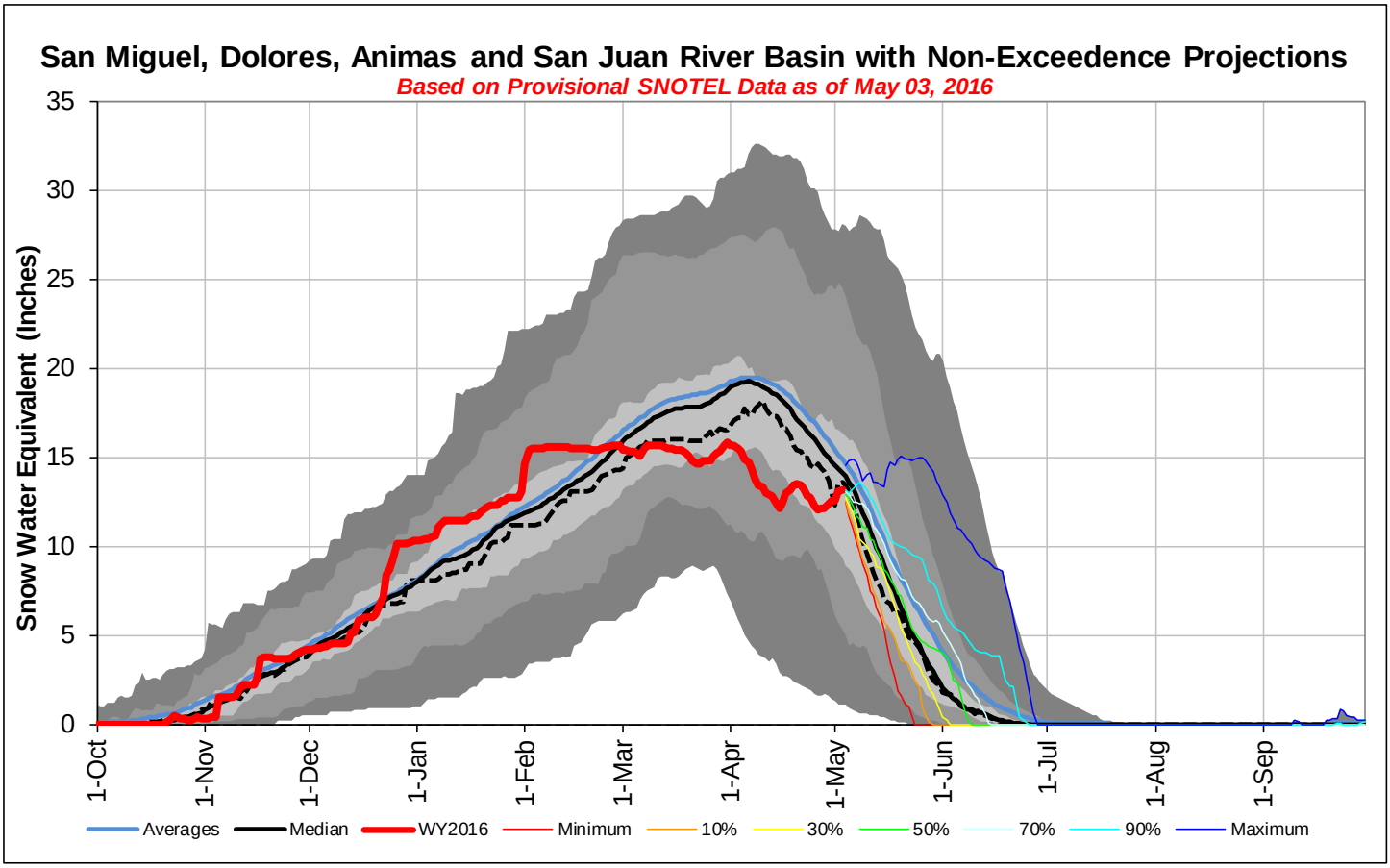
Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

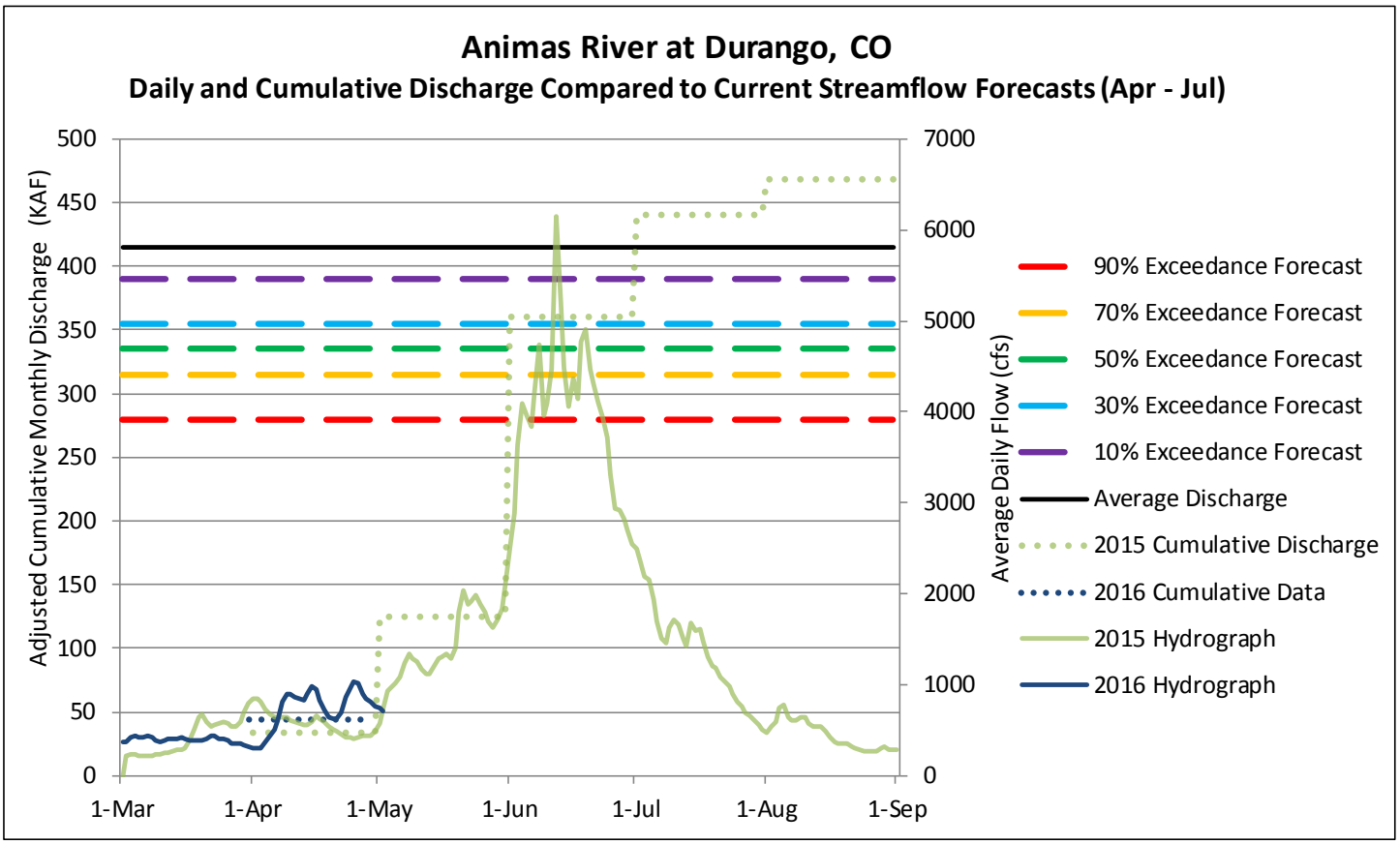
SAN MIGUEL-DOLORES-ANIMAS-SAN JUAN RIVER BASINS	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Dolores R at Dolores								
	APR-JUL	163	187	205	84%	225	250	245
	MAY-JUL	126	150	168	84%	188	215	200
McPhee Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	174	198	215	73%	235	260	295
	MAY-JUL	129	153	170	77%	188	215	220
San Miguel R nr Placerville								
	APR-JUL	96	111	122	95%	133	151	128
	MAY-JUL	83	98	109	96%	120	138	113
Cone Reservoir Inlet								
	MAY-JUL	1.84	2.2	2.5	93%	2.9	3.4	2.7
Gurley Reservoir Inlet								
	MAY-JUL	9.2	11.4	13	91%	14.7	17.5	14.3
Lilylands Reservoir Inlet								
	MAY-JUL	0.83	1.2	1.5	90%	1.83	2.4	1.67
Rio Blanco at Blanco Diversion [2]								
	APR-JUL	33	37	41	76%	44	50	54
	MAY-JUL	26	30	34	76%	37	43	45
Navajo R at Oso Diversion [2]								
	APR-JUL	39	45	49	75%	53	60	65
	MAY-JUL	31	37	41	76%	45	52	54
San Juan R nr Carracas [2]								
	APR-JUL	225	255	275	72%	300	335	380
	MAY-JUL	168	199	220	73%	245	280	300
Piedra R nr Arboles								
	APR-JUL	128	146	160	76%	174	197	210
	MAY-JUL	88	106	120	78%	134	157	153
Vallecito Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	131	144	154	79%	164	179	194
	MAY-JUL	106	119	129	75%	139	154	171
Navajo Reservoir Inflow [2]								
	APR-JUL	415	470	510	69%	550	615	735
	MAY-JUL	310	365	405	72%	445	510	565
Animas R at Durango								
	APR-JUL	280	315	335	81%	355	390	415
	MAY-JUL	235	270	290	79%	310	345	365
Lemon Reservoir Inflow								
	APR-JUL	35	40	44	80%	48	54	55
	MAY-JUL	30	35	39	80%	43	49	49
La Plata R at Hesperus								
	APR-JUL	14.2	15.9	17.1	74%	18.3	20	23
	MAY-JUL	11.2	12.9	14.1	77%	15.3	17.3	18.2
Mancos R nr Mancos [2]								
	APR-JUL	23	25	27	87%	29	32	31
	MAY-JUL	16.2	18.8	21	88%	23	26	24

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of April, 2016	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Groundhog Reservoir	24.4	19.7	14.8	22.0
Jackson Gulch Reservoir	8.7	5.4	7.5	10.0
Lemon Reservoir	27.9	28.5	24.1	40.0
Mcphee Reservoir	299.2	208.6	319.4	381.0
Narraguinnep Reservoir	18.7	17.9	17.5	19.0
Trout Lake Reservoir	2.2	0.0	1.5	3.2
Vallecito Reservoir	104.9	108.2	74.2	126.0
Basin-wide Total	486.0	388.3	459.0	601.2
# of reservoirs	7	7	7	7

Watershed Snowpack Analysis May 1, 2016	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
ANIMAS RIVER BASIN	11	80%	45%
DOLORES RIVER BASIN	6	104%	37%
SAN MIGUEL RIVER BASIN	5	107%	40%
SAN JUAN RIVER BASIN	4	72%	23%
SAN MIGUEL-DOLORES-ANIMAS-SAN JUAN RIVER BASINS	24	85%	36%





Please refer to the sections at the end of this report for further explanation concerning these graphs.

How to Read Non-Exceedance Projections Graphs

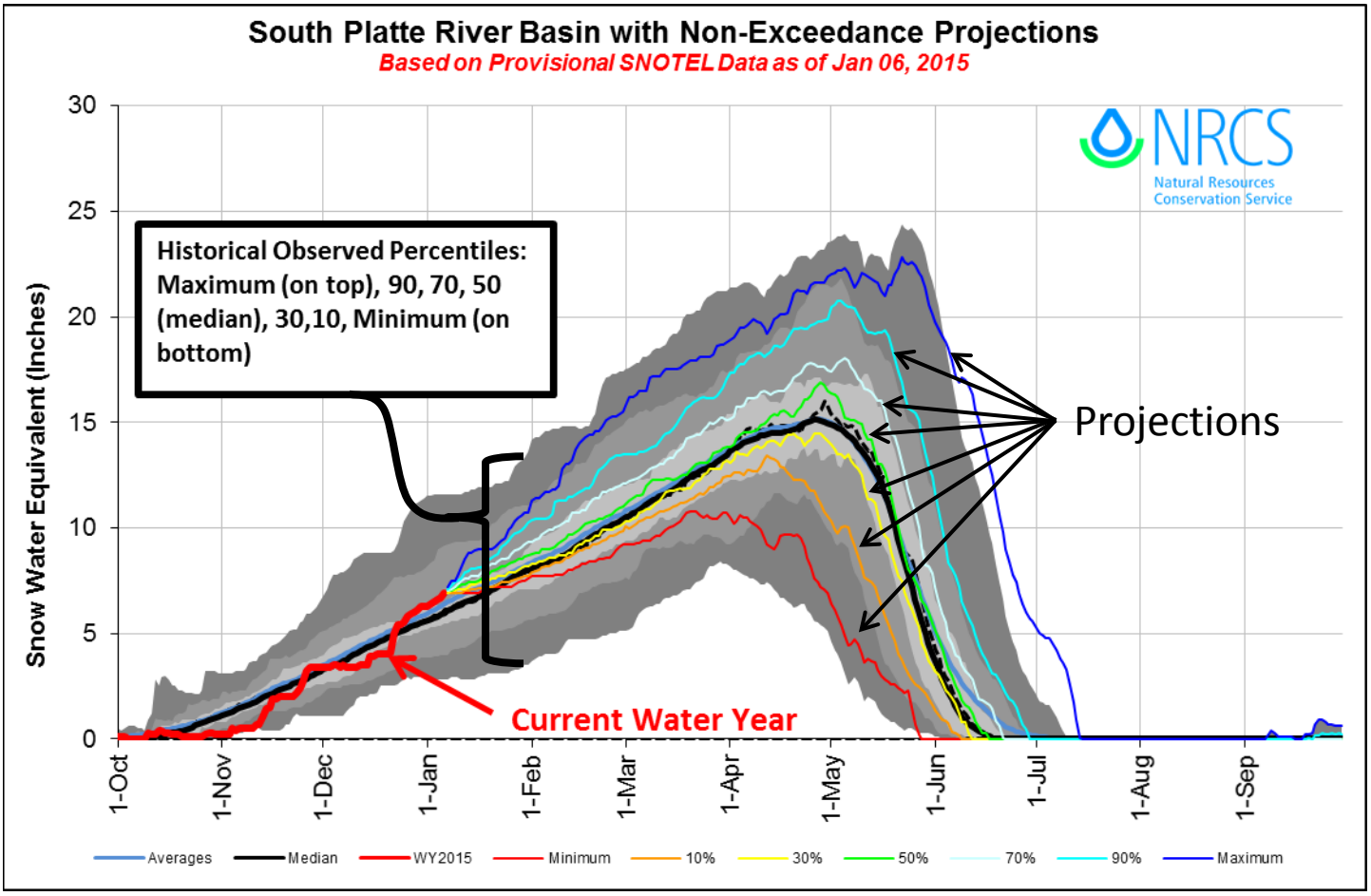
The graphs show snow water equivalent (SWE) projections (in inches) for the October 1 through September 30 water year. Basin "observed" SWE values are computed using SNOTEL sites which are characteristic of the snowpack of the particular basin. The SWE observations at these sites are averaged and normalized to produce these basin snowpack graphs. This new graph format uses non-exceedance projections.

Current water year is represented by the heavy red line terminating on the last day the graphic was updated.

Historical observed percentile range is shown as a gray background area on the graph. Shades of gray indicate maximum, 90 percentile, 70 percentile, 50 percentile (solid black line), 30 percentile, 10 percentile, and minimum for the period of record.

Projections for maximum, 90 percent, 70 percent, 50 percent (most probabilistic snowpack projection, based on median), 30 percent, 10 percent, and minimum exceedances are projected forward from the end of the current line as different colored lines.

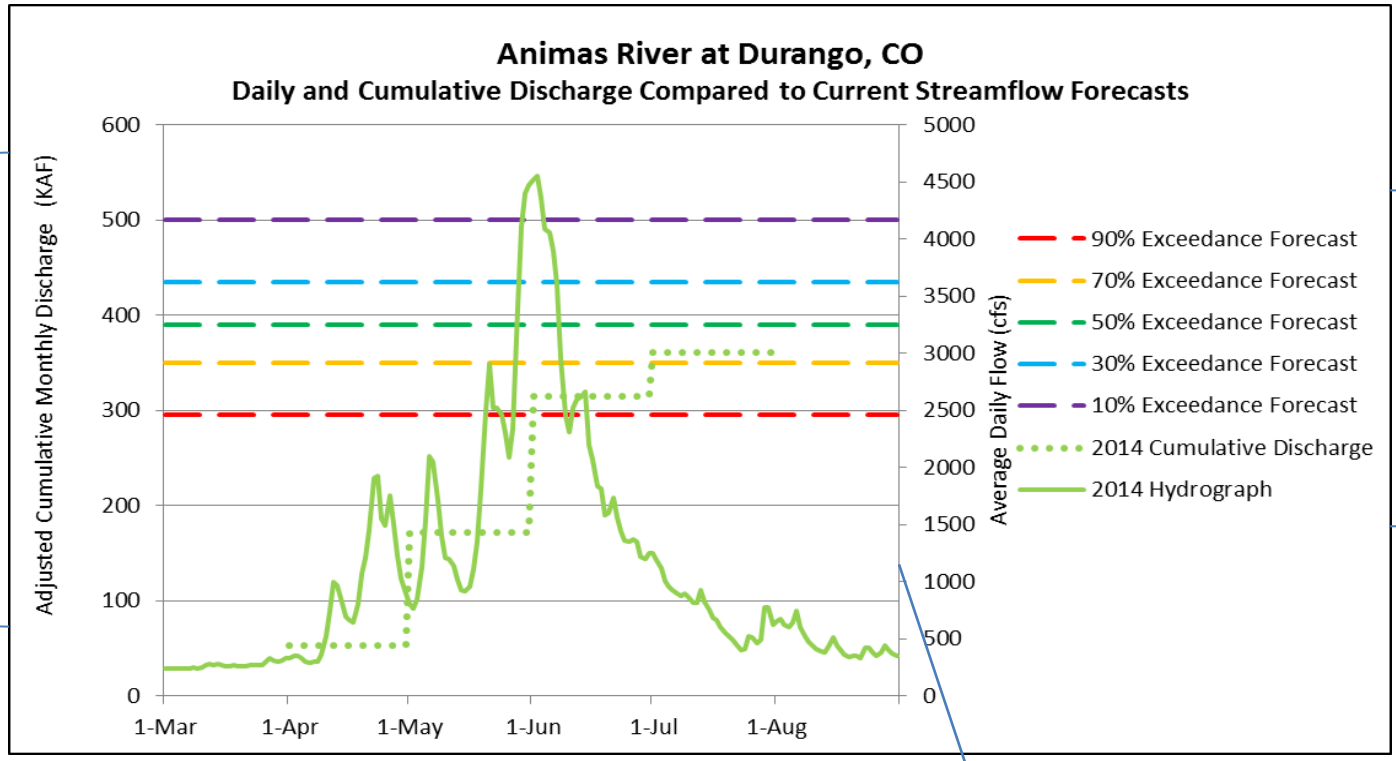
For more detailed information on these graphs visit:
http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs144p2_062291.pdf



Explanation of Flow Comparison Charts

The flow comparison charts were developed to provide a quick comparison between the previous years' observed hydrograph, cumulative seasonal discharge, the current streamflow forecasts, and the current years' observed discharge (both hydrograph and cumulative discharge, as the season progresses). Forecast points for these products were generally chosen to be lower in the basin to best represent the basin-wide streamflow response for the season; the true degree of representativeness will vary between basins. When making comparisons of how the shape of the hydrograph relates to the monthly (and seasonal) cumulative discharges it is important to note that the hydrograph represents observed daily flows at the forecast point while the cumulative values may be adjusted for changes in reservoir storage and diversions to best represent what would be "natural flows" if these impoundments and diversions did not exist. This product can provide additional guidance regarding how to most wisely utilize the five exceedance forecasts based on past observations, current trends, and future uncertainty for a wide variety of purposes and water users.

The left y-axis represents values of adjusted cumulative discharge (KAF). This axis is to be used for comparing the current and previous years to the current five volumetric seasonal exceedance forecasts. This graphic only displays the previous years data but data for the current water year will be added as the season progresses.



The legend displays the symbology and color schemes for the various parameters represented. Exceedance forecasts represent total cumulative discharge for the April through July time period with the exception of the Rio Grande at Wagon Wheel Gap (Apr-Sep).

The right y-axis represents observed daily average discharge at the forecast point of interest. This graphic only displays the previous years data but data for the current water year will be added as the Season progresses.

How Forecasts Are Made

For more water supply and resource management information, contact:

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Denver, CO 80225-0426
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Most of the annual streamflow in the western United States originates as snowfall that has accumulated in the mountains during the winter and early spring. As the snowpack accumulates, hydrologists estimate the runoff that will occur when it melts. Measurements of snow water equivalent at selected manual snow courses and automated SNOTEL sites, along with precipitation, antecedent streamflow, and indices of the El Niño / Southern Oscillation are used in computerized statistical and simulation models to prepare runoff forecasts. Unless otherwise specified, all forecasts are for flows that would occur naturally without any upstream influences.

Forecasts of any kind, of course, are not perfect. Streamflow forecast uncertainty arises from three primary sources: (1) uncertain knowledge of future weather conditions, (2) uncertainty in the forecasting procedure, and (3) errors in the data. The forecast, therefore, must be interpreted not as a single value but rather as a range of values with specific probabilities of occurrence. The middle of the range is expressed by the 50% exceedance probability forecast, for which there is a 50% chance that the actual flow will be above, and a 50% chance that the actual flow will be below, this value. To describe the expected range around this 50% value, four other forecasts are provided, two smaller values (90% and 70% exceedance probability) and two larger values (30%, and 10% exceedance probability). For example, there is a 90% chance that the actual flow will be more than the 90% exceedance probability forecast. The others can be interpreted similarly.

The wider the spread among these values, the more uncertain the forecast. As the season progresses, forecasts become more accurate, primarily because a greater portion of the future weather conditions become known; this is reflected by a narrowing of the range around the 50% exceedance probability forecast. Users should take this uncertainty into consideration when making operational decisions by selecting forecasts corresponding to the level of risk they are willing to assume about the amount of water to be expected. If users anticipate receiving a lesser supply of water, or if they wish to increase their chances of having an adequate supply of water for their operations, they may want to base their decisions on the 90% or 70% exceedance probability forecasts, or something in between. On the other hand, if users are concerned about receiving too much water (for example, threat of flooding), they may want to base their decisions on the 30% or 10% exceedance probability forecasts, or something in between. Regardless of the forecast value users choose for operations, they should be prepared to deal with either more or less water. (Users should remember that even if the 90% exceedance probability forecast is used, there is still a 10% chance of receiving less than this amount.) By using the exceedance probability information, users can easily determine the chances of receiving more or less water.

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In addition to the water supply outlook reports, water supply forecast information for the Western United States is available from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the National Weather Service monthly, January through June. The information may be obtained from the Natural Resources Conservation Service web page at http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wsf/westwide.html

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Colorado
Water Supply Outlook Report
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Lakewood, CO