



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
P.O. Box 2890  
Washington, D.C. 20013

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Date: **February 10, 2004**

Subject: **February 1, 2004 Western Snowpack Conditions and Water Supply Forecasts**

The following information is provided for your use in describing climate and water supply conditions in the West as of February 1, 2004.

## **OVERVIEW**

As of February 1, 2004 a majority of basins in the Pacific Northwest, northern Rockies of Montana and Idaho and central California are forecast to receive average, or slightly above average, spring and summer streamflows. Conversely, many basins in Arizona, New Mexico, the south Platte River of Colorado, and the Bear River of southeastern Idaho are forecast to receive well below average spring streamflows, less than 50% of average.

Most basins in the Intermountain West and eastern slopes of the Rockies in Wyoming and Colorado are forecast to receive below average spring and summer streamflow, 50% to 90% of average.

Reservoir storage for all western states except California is running below historic February averages, with Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming reporting the largest storage deficits.

## **SNOWPACK**

The February 1, 2004 snowpack map clearly reflects the below average snowpacks in the Southwest (Figure 1). Most Southwest basin snowpacks are less than 70% of average, with several basins reporting snowpacks less than 50% of average in Arizona. In contrast, northern Nevada, southwestern Idaho, northern California and much of Oregon report above average snowpacks, ranging from 110% to over 150% of average. Rocky Mountain snowpacks range from 70% along the Front Range of Colorado and Wyoming to 110% of average in Montana.

Central Alaska snowpacks are in the 70% to 90% range, western Alaska snowpacks vary from 50% to 70% of average, northern slope snowpacks range from 90% to 110% of average, and southern coastal basin snowpacks vary from 90% to 130% of average.

A map containing a daily update of the westwide snowpack may be obtained from the following URL - [http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/water/w\\_qnty.html](http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/water/w_qnty.html)

## **SEASONAL PRECIPITATION**

Seasonal precipitation (October 1, 2003 to January 31, 2004) reflects a similar pattern to the snowpack westwide (Figure 2). The Pacific Northwest totals are significantly above average, ranging from 110% to >150% of average, while the Southwest and eastern Colorado report well below average precipitation, ranging from <50% to 70% of average. The rest of the West

reports near, or slightly below average totals, ranging from 70% to 110% of average. Alaska precipitation is above average in most western basins, near average to slightly below in central and southern Alaska, and below average in southeastern basins.

Western Washington above average totals of greater than 150% of average reflect a very wet October. Low seasonal totals, less than 70% of average, in the Southwest reflect a continued lack of significant storm systems moving through the area.

### **SPRING AND SUMMER STREAMFLOW FORECASTS**

As of February 1, 2004 a majority of basins in the Pacific Northwest, northern Rockies of Montana and Idaho and central California are forecast to receive average, or slightly above average, spring and summer streamflows (Figure 3). Conversely, many basins in Arizona, New Mexico, the south Platte River of Colorado, and the Bear River of southeastern Idaho are forecast to receive well below average spring streamflows, less than 50% of average.

Most basins in the Intermountain West and eastern slopes of the Rockies in Wyoming and Colorado are forecast to receive below average spring and summer streamflow, 50% to 90% of average. Alaska water supply forecasts are issued starting April 1st.

Specific state streamflow summaries can be obtained from the Internet location - <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/cgi-bin/bor.pl>

### **RESERVOIR STORAGE**

As of February 1, 2004, reservoir storage for all western states except California is running below historic February averages, with Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming reporting the largest storage deficits (Figure 4). Low storage values reflect carryover dryness of the continuing drought in the Intermountain West, Southwest, and southern Rockies and last water year's below average seasonal runoff.

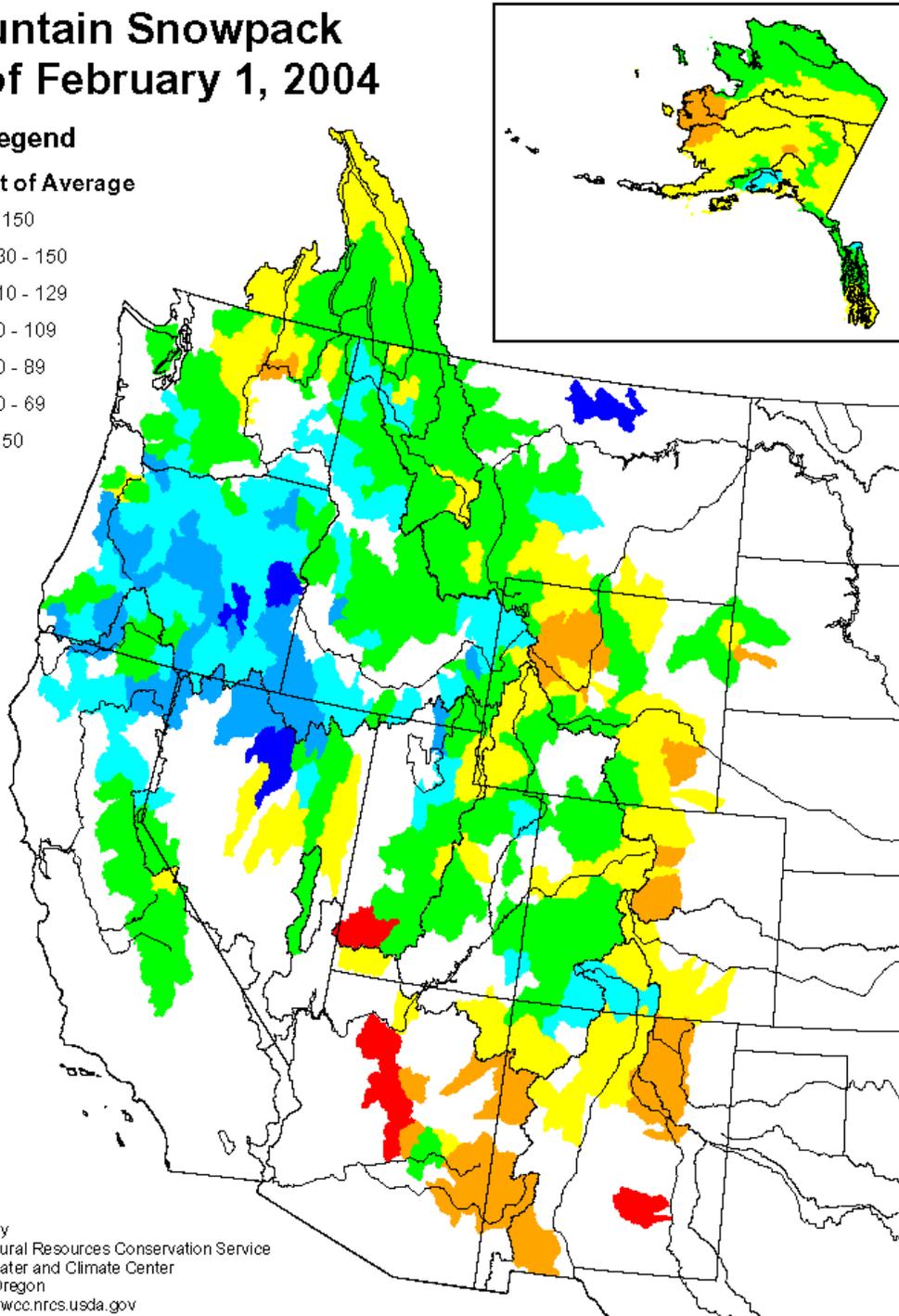
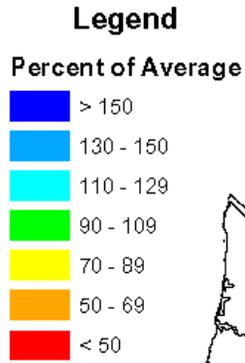
### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

The National Water and Climate Center Homepage provides the latest available snowpack and water supply information. Please visit us at <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

/s/ RON MARLOW

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# Mountain Snowpack as of February 1, 2004



Prepared by  
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
National Water and Climate Center  
Portland, Oregon  
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

**Figure 1. Mountain Snowpack, February 1, 2004**

# Seasonal Precipitation, October 2003 - January 2004

(Averaged by Hydrologic Unit)

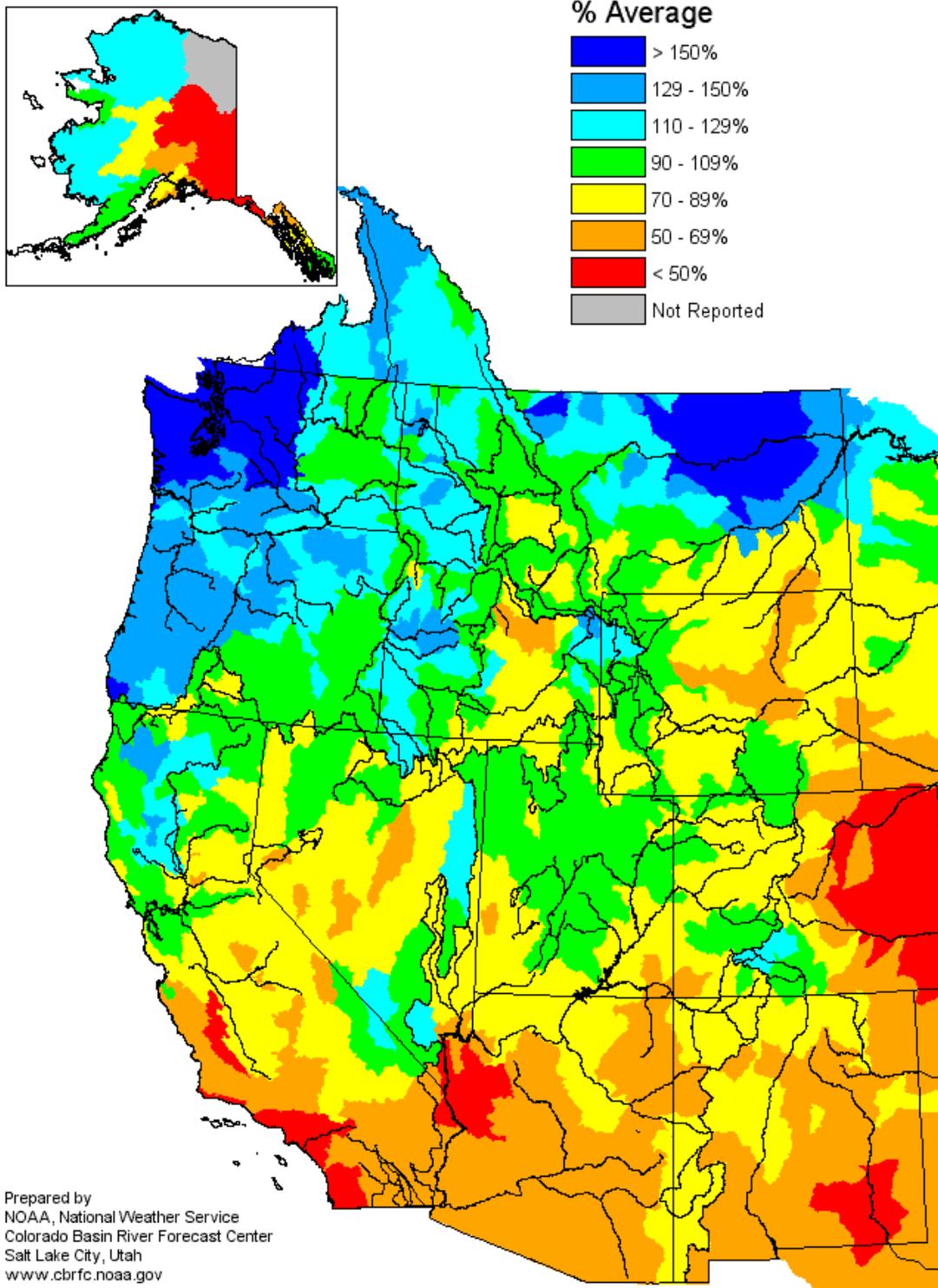
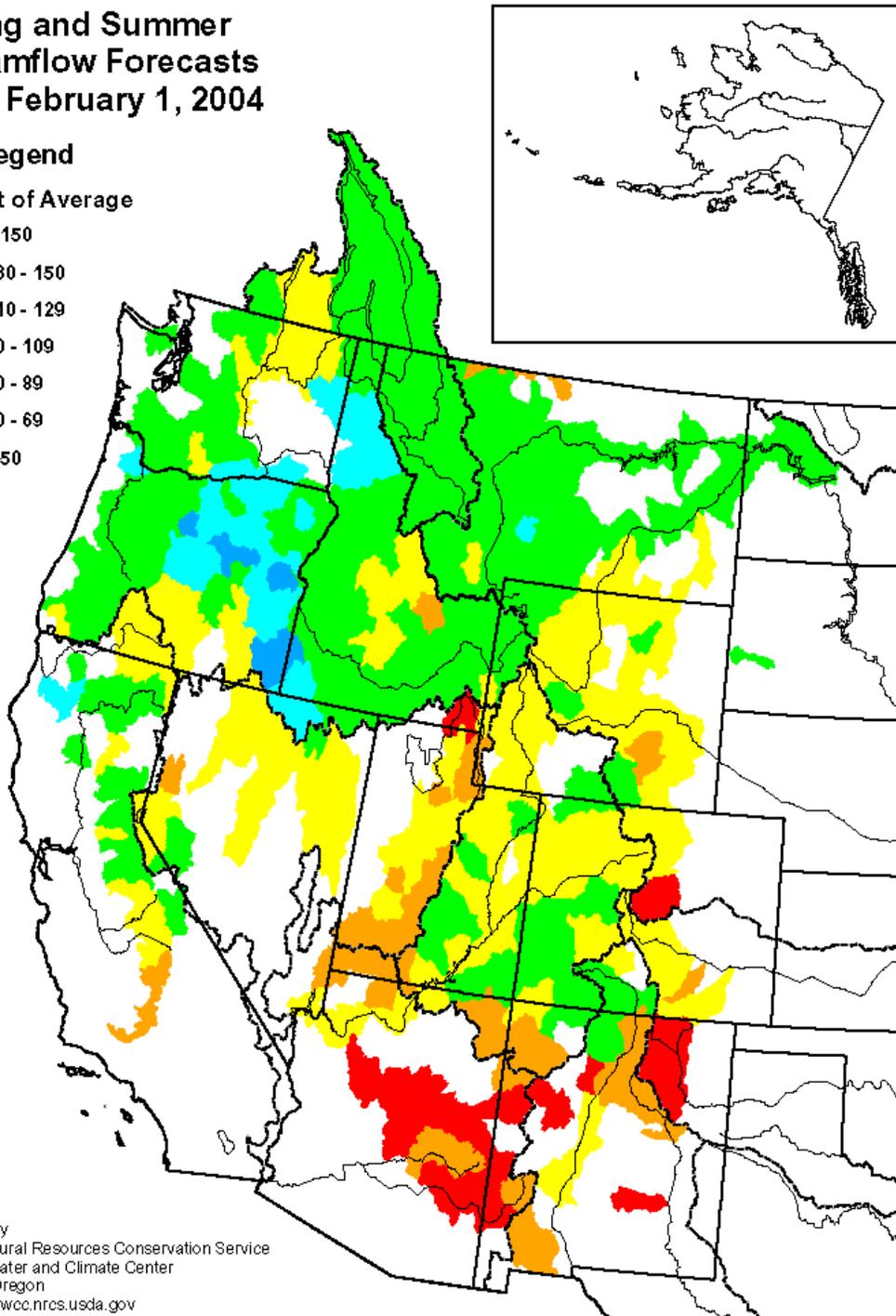
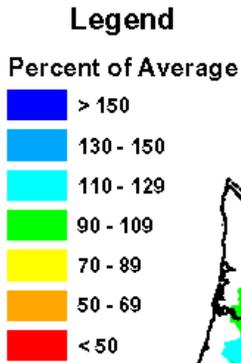


Figure 2. Seasonal Precipitation, October 1, 2003 to January 31, 2004

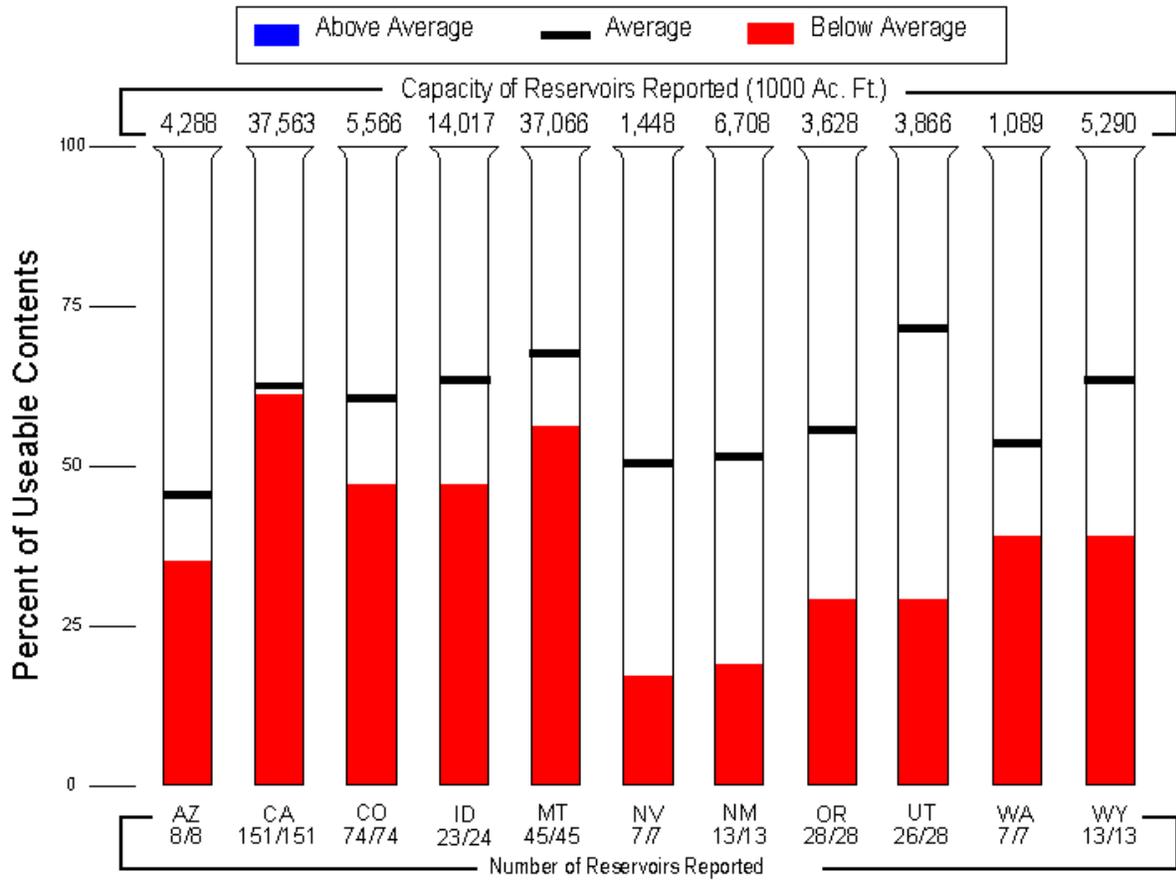
### Spring and Summer Streamflow Forecasts as of February 1, 2004



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**Figure 3. Seasonal Water Supply Forecasts - February 1, 2004**  
(Alaska Water Supply Forecasts Begin on April 1, 2004)

## Reservoir Storage as of February 1, 2004



Prepared by: USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Water and Climate Center, Portland, OR  
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

**Figure 4. Current Reservoir Storage - February 1, 2004**