



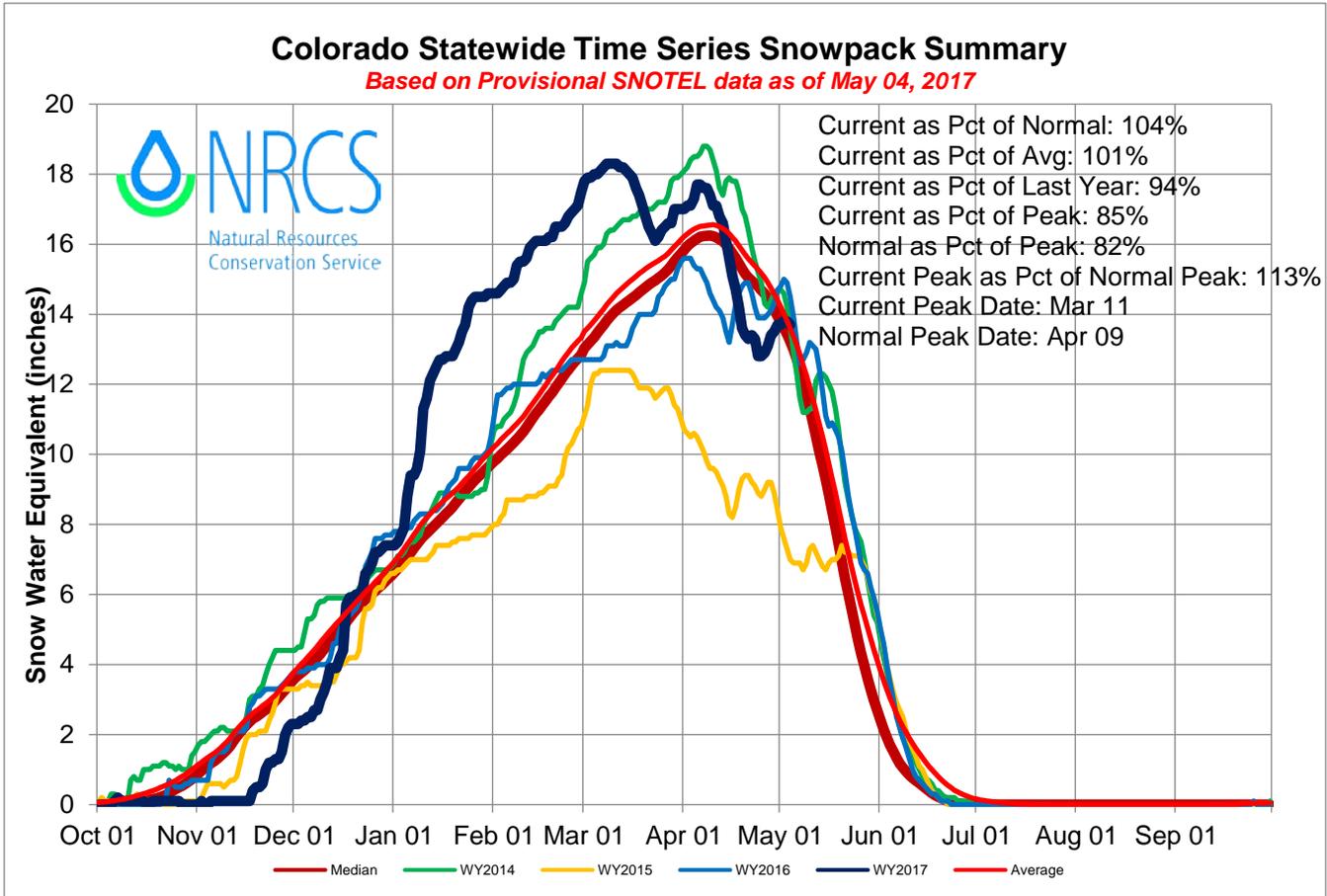
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News Release

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Traditionally Wet March & April Disappoint

Denver, CO – May 4th, 2017 – March and April are typically the two wettest and most pivotal months of the year in the mountains of Colorado, however this year those two months fell short. “Combined, March and April yielded 76% of normal precipitation,” said Brian Domonkos, Colorado Snow Survey Supervisor with the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service Colorado Snow Survey Program. Year-to-date precipitation is down over the last three months at 108% of normal on May 1, 2017. After impressive midwinter snowpack numbers dwindled this spring due to these dry conditions, statewide snowpack according to combined SNOTEL and Snow Course data now sits at 95% of normal. However, additional snow accumulation since May 1 has improved conditions slightly in most basins. The precipitation this week delivered the greatest improvements in those high elevation basins where the least amount of snowmelt has occurred, such as in the North and South Platte River basins.



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Helping People Help the Land



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Domonkos points out, “Snowfall between December and January this year was nearly twice the normal amount and was the real driving force behind many basins achieving above normal peaks, which ultimately balanced out the water year starting on October 1, 2016.” Snowpack peaks in the southern half of Colorado were between 120% and 130% of their typical snowpack peak. Northern basins saw lesser peaks this year - yet all still respectable. Only the North Platte River basin peaked below the normal value. The Upper Rio Grande and combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan River basins reached the greatest snowpack peak since 2008. In general snowpack contribution to water supply should be near normal across the state.

Statewide reservoir storage between this year and last year remain at some of the best levels in over a decade and the state’s reservoirs are poised in a strong position to provide water this summer. Streamflow forecasts are not quite as strong in various areas of the state. The potential for below normal streamflow exists in scattered locations across the state such as the Yampa and White and portions of the South Platte. Elsewhere forecasts are largely near normal across the state with the exception on the opposite extreme being the Gunnison Basin where a number of forecasts are near 140% of normal. Specific forecasts can be found online or in the [Colorado Water Supply Outlook Report](#).

Colorado’s Snowpack and Reservoir Storage as of May 1, 2017

BASIN	% MEDIAN SNOWPACK	% LAST YR.’S SNOWPACK	% AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE	LAST YEAR’S % AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE
GUNNISON	108	106	126	117
COLORADO	93	85	113	115
SOUTH PLATTE	93	84	106	108
NORTH PLATTE	97	84	----	----
YAMPA/WHITE	79	71	114	115
ARKANSAS	115	106	106	125
RIO GRANDE	88	106	98	91
SMDASJ*	109	128	113	106
STATEWIDE	95	91	112	113

*Combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan Basins

For more detailed and the most up to date information about Colorado snowpack and supporting water supply related information, refer to the Colorado Snow Survey website at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/co/snow/>

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