



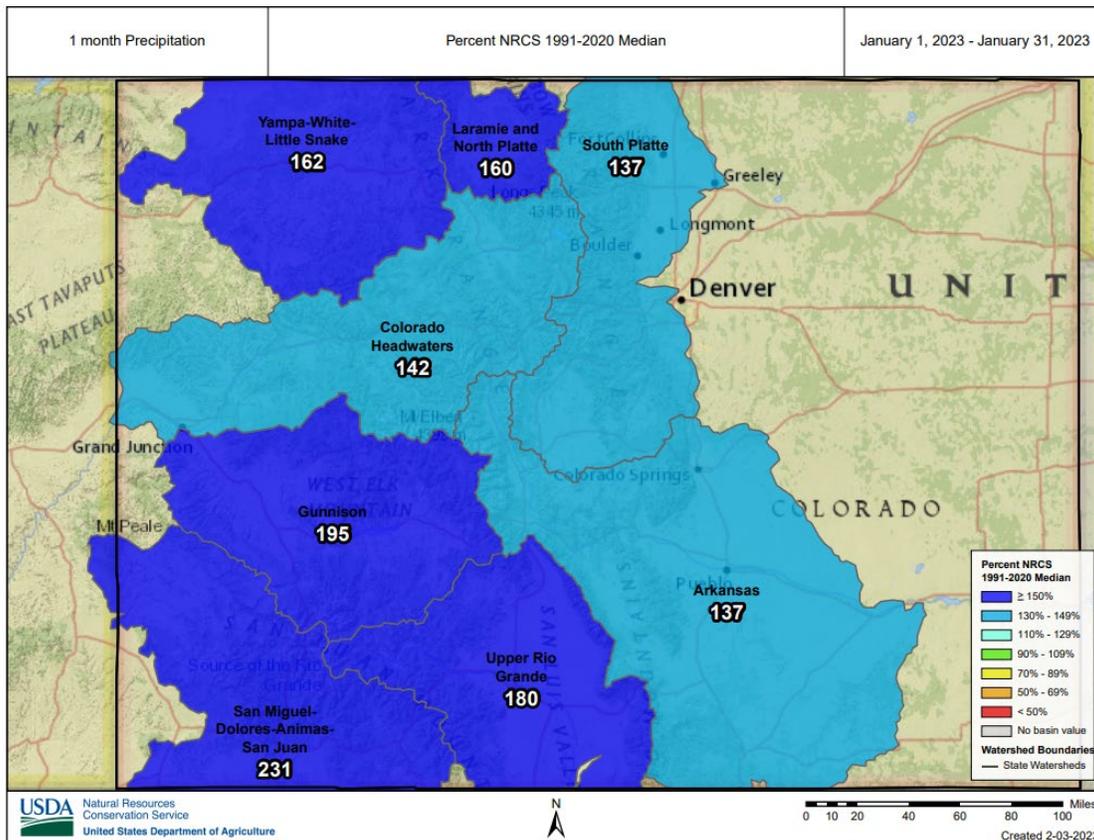
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# News Release

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## January Brings Substantial Snow Accumulations Across Colorado Mountains

**Denver, CO – February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023** – A consistent series of storms throughout the month of January brought substantial snow accumulation to most mountainous regions of Colorado helping to boost the seasonal snowpack. All major basins received well above normal precipitation in January ranging from 137 percent of normal in the Arkansas and South Platte River basins to a high of 231 percent of normal in the combined San Miguel-Dolores-Animas-San Juan River basins. NRCS Hydrologist Karl Wetlaufer comments that “The precipitation over the last five weeks that has greatly improved the snowpack across most of the state is welcomed news from a water supply standpoint. This is particularly true in western Colorado river basins which have had several years of below normal streamflow volumes resulting from snowmelt runoff.” Currently the Arkansas is the only basin in the state holding a below normal snowpack at 79 percent of normal. The snowpack in other major basins ranges from 101 percent of normal in the Rio Grande River basin to 148 percent in the combined Yampa-White-Little Snake River basin.





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Following the trend of January precipitation, the most significant increases in streamflow forecasts over the past month were seen in river basins of western Colorado, as well as the North Platte and Rio Grande River basins. The combined Yampa-White-Little Snake River basin, which had the highest forecasts last month, also had the largest increase in streamflow forecasts with February 1<sup>st</sup> forecasts for 164 percent of normal April-July flows. Streamflow forecasts in the South Platte and Arkansas basin observed the least change since January 1<sup>st</sup>. Wetlaufer continued further “In addition to above normal snowpack, we had a particularly wet summer which helped improve soil moisture conditions significantly going into winter. This should help a higher percentage of spring snowmelt make it to stream channels as opposed to being absorbed by dry soils, as it has in recent years.”

Current reservoir storage across the state reflects streamflow runoff trends over the last several years, and in some cases also impacted by reservoir management needs in the broader region. The Gunnison and combined basins of southwestern Colorado continue to have the lowest reservoir storages relative to normal in the state due to extended drought conditions and management priorities. While no major basin in the state is currently holding very much above normal reservoir storage, all others are holding much closer to or slightly above normal volumes. “If current trends in snowpack and streamflow forecasts continue, abundant runoff could even the playing field across the major basins of Colorado with respect to reservoir storage.” concluded Wetlaufer.

## Colorado’s Snowpack and Reservoir Storage as of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Basin	% MEDIAN SNOWPACK	LAST YEAR’S % MEDIAN SNOWPACK	% MEDIAN RESERVOIR STORAGE	LAST YEAR’S % MEDIAN RESERVOIR STORAGE
GUNNISON	142	117	67	59
COLORADO HEADWATERS	127	108	99	82
SOUTH PLATTE	117	113	91	107
LARAMIE-NORTH PLATTE	135	115	----	----
YAMPA-WHITE-LITTLE SNAKE	150	101	92	79
ARKANSAS	88	88	94	92
UPPER RIO GRANDE	111	88	107	93
SMDASJ*	146	100	67	64
STATEWIDE	127	104	88	82

\* San Miguel-Dolores-Animas-San Juan River basin

\* \*For more detailed information about February mountain snowpack refer to the [February 1st, 2022 Colorado Water Supply Outlook Report](#). For the most up to date information about Colorado snowpack and water supply related information, refer to the [Colorado Snow Survey website](#).