

# April 13, 2011 RESERVOIR LEVEL AND SNOW UPDATE

The snow season is likely finished now, and the three basins, while a little better than last week, are all below average to a greater or lesser extent. The latest NRCS water supply forecast for New Mexico is not good. The median prediction (50% chance of exceedance) for runoff at San Marcial for Mar-Jul has continued to decline since the beginning of the year, and is now at only 190,000 ac-ft, which is 33% of the long term average. The Apr-Jul forecast is for 165,000 ac-ft. Storage in Elephant Butte/Caballo has continued its recent decline and is now well below 500,000 ac-ft, but with Caballo now filled to 46,000 ac-ft, up from its low this year of 22,000 ac-ft. There is a 50% chance of snow tonight, but not much chance the rest of the week.

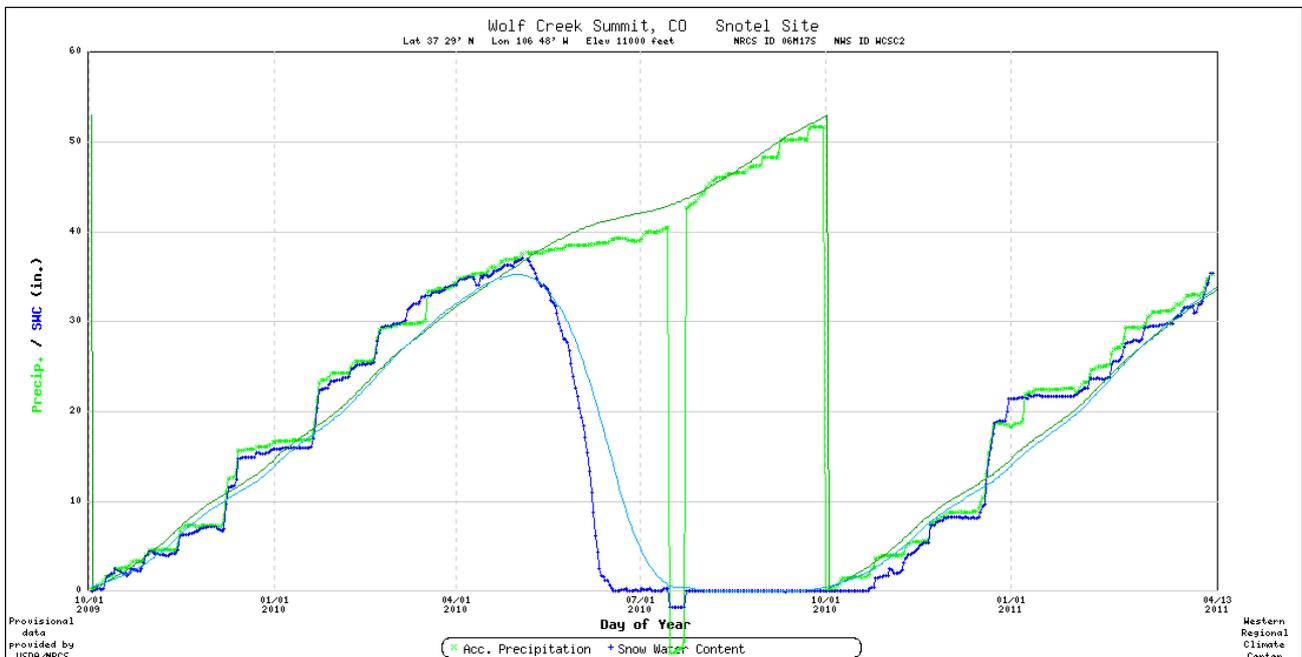
## COMBINED STORAGE Elephant Butte and Caballo

April 11, 2011 479,605 acre-feet

SNOW - PRECIPITATION UPDATE  
Based on Mountain Data from NRCS SNOTEL Sites  
As of Wednesday April 13, 2011

BASIN	ELEV. (Ft)	SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT % Avg	TOTAL PRECIPITATION % Avg
UPPER RIO GRANDE BASIN			
Basin wide percent of average		90	95
RIO CHAMA BASIN			
Basin wide percent of average		79	78
SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAIN RANGE BASINS			
Basin wide percent of average		38	79

## WOLF CREEK



## FORECAST

UPPER RIO GRANDE VALLEY/EASTERN SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS BELOW 10000 FT-  
INCLUDING...CREEDE...SOUTH FORK  
814 PM MDT TUE APR 12 2011

WEDNESDAY

MOSTLY SUNNY. ISOLATED RAIN SHOWERS IN THE AFTERNOON. HIGHS 42 TO 58. SOUTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 15 MPH. CHANCE OF PRECIPITATION 10 PERCENT.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

MOSTLY CLOUDY. CHANCE OF RAIN AND SNOW SHOWERS. SNOW ACCUMULATION UP TO 1 INCH. LOWS 20 TO 32. SOUTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 15 MPH INCREASING TO 15 TO 25 MPH AFTER MIDNIGHT. GUSTS UP TO 40 MPH. CHANCE OF PRECIPITATION 50 PERCENT.

THURSDAY

WEST WINDS 15 TO 30 MPH. PARTLY SUNNY. SLIGHT CHANCE OF RAIN AND SNOW SHOWERS IN THE MORNING...THEN SLIGHT CHANCE OF RAIN SHOWERS AND SNOW IN THE AFTERNOON. HIGHS 33 TO 46. CHANCE OF PRECIPITATION 10 PERCENT.

THURSDAY NIGHT

PARTLY CLOUDY. A 10 PERCENT CHANCE OF RAIN AND SNOW SHOWERS UNTIL MIDNIGHT. LOWS 17 TO 25. WEST WINDS 10 TO 25 MPH WITH GUSTS TO AROUND 40 MPH.

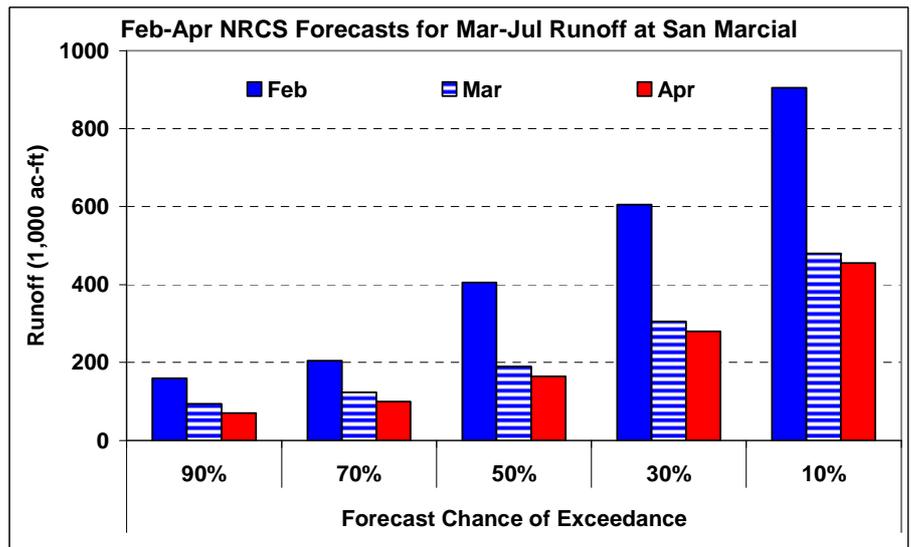
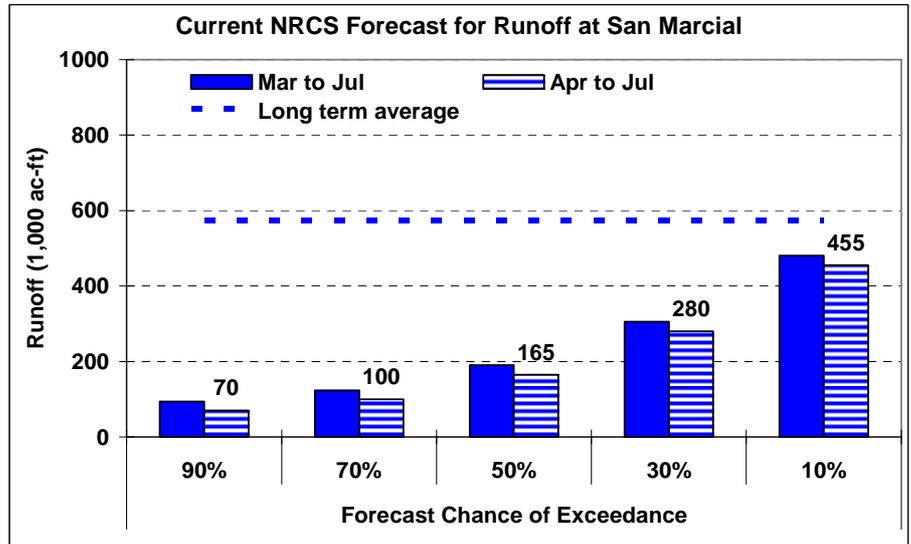
FRIDAY THROUGH SATURDAY  
PARTLY CLOUDY. HIGHS 42 TO 59. LOWS 21 TO 31.

SATURDAY NIGHT THROUGH  
MONDAY

MOSTLY CLOUDY WITH A 10 PERCENT CHANCE OF RAIN AND SNOW SHOWERS. LOWS 24 TO 34. HIGHS 44 TO 56.

MONDAY NIGHT AND TUESDAY

MOSTLY CLOUDY WITH A 20 PERCENT CHANCE OF RAIN AND SNOW SHOWERS. LOWS 24 TO 33. HIGHS 45 TO 56.



NRCS Water Supply Outlook Report for NEW MEXICO as of April 1, 2011

The "La Nina" pattern has maintained a death grip on New Mexico through March, with the majority of the state seeing well below average snowfall and precipitation in general. Warm and windy conditions dominated for most of the month, intensifying the already dry conditions. Unfortunately, the meager snowpack which was in place when March began was further reduced by these factors as well; with a combination of sublimation and early melting occurring. With the dry soil conditions going into the snow season, runoff levels from the melt-out are also being reduced due to infiltration into the soil profile. Overall, it would appear that New Mexico is set up for a very dry spring. This will not only affect runoff and water users; it will also mean higher fire danger for residents

around the state. With the snow season basically over, hopes for a recovery this spring are extremely slim.

#### SNOWPACK

The "La Nina" which has been in place for several months continued to have an influence on the weather patterns in March, with much of the state receiving well below average snowfall and precipitation. As with the last few months, the southern end of the state seemed to see these effects multiplied. Basically all of the snowpack in the southern mountains is already gone, and the central and northern mountains are seeing daily decreases as well. Warm temperatures and wind have dominated through the month of March, and the snowpack statewide is showing the effects. Due to the dry conditions in place, the potential for a well below average runoff season is almost certain, especially in the southern part of the state. Even northern basins are seeing the effects of the dry conditions with significantly reduced runoff expected in these areas as well. The Animas/San Juan Basin is the only one in the state seeing close to average snowpack numbers, and most of that snowpack is in southern Colorado. In addition to reduced runoff numbers, the dry conditions and low snowpack totals this winter are going to impact the fire season. Residents around the state should be prepared for an early and active fire season, with fires already springing up around the state. There is not much indication that we will see a substantial shift in the storm track in the near future, so the dry conditions may continue into coming months.

#### PRECIPITATION

March precipitation was significantly below average for most of the state, with most basins receiving less than 50 percent of average. In line with the pattern so far this year, the southern basins (Mimbres, Hondo, and San Francisco/Upper Gila) saw almost no precipitation for March. The Animas/San Juan and Zuni/Bluewater Basins were fair, with 55 to 65 percent of average for the month. For the water year, the state as a whole is below average. The Animas/San Juan Basin is the only one close to average with 96 percent so far. Most other basins in the state are ranging from around 50 to 75 percent of average precipitation for the water year thus far. Again, the probability seems fairly high for below average precipitation to continue into coming months.

#### RESERVOIRS

With another month of well below average snowfall for New Mexico in March, the prospects for near normal runoff this year are almost non-existent. The southern basins are already mostly melted out and are expected to see well below average runoff, and with no reservoir storage in these basins, the impacts will be immediately evident. The northern basins, which provide most of the reservoir storage in the state, are also forecast to be significantly below average overall, so the potential for building any reservoir storage during this runoff season is poor. In addition to the very low runoff forecasts for the year, reservoir storage in New Mexico remains below average for much of the state. It is highly unlikely we will see any improvement in these storage levels this year. Water managers need to be planning on a well below average runoff and reservoir storage for the most part.

#### STREAMFLOW

Streamflow conditions in New Mexico are near to somewhat below normal for the most part. Most gauging stations in the state are currently recording in the 25th to 74th percentile which is considered normal. As the month of March progressed, quite a few stream reaches fell to below normal flow levels, which does not bode well for our runoff season. With a below average snowpack in place, along with dry ground conditions going into the snow season, the potential to see well below normal streamflow conditions is only going to worsen.