

Mar 20, 2012 RESERVOIR LEVEL AND SNOW UPDATE

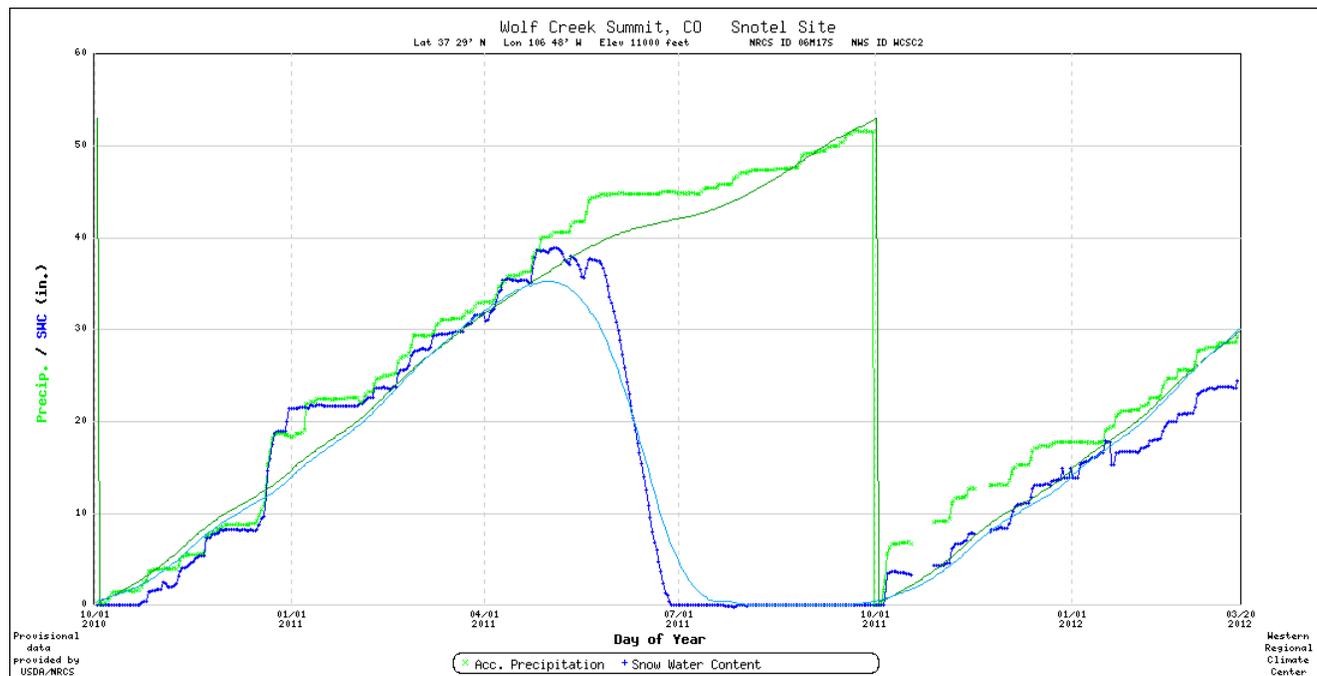
Recent snowfall helped the snowpack a little, but it continues to be below 80% of average in the Upper Rio Grande and Rio Chama basins. Without a much larger than average increase in the snowpack in the coming 2-4 weeks, the season will end with a snowpack that is below average. There is not much chance of snow in the forecast for this week. The March NRCS runoff forecast for March to July runoff at San Marcial is little changed from that of the February forecast. At the 50% chance of exceedance the forecast is for 400,000 ac-ft, well below the long term average of 573,000 ac-ft. Storage in Elephant Butte/Caballo is now about 400,000 ac-ft, with the rate of increase during the past week down a little at under 1,000 ac-ft per day.

COMBINED STORAGE Elephant Butte and Caballo March 18, 2012 399,560 acre-feet

S N O W - P R E C I P I T A T I O N U P D A T E
Based on Mountain Data from NRCS SNOTEL Sites
As of Tuesday March 20, 2012

BASIN Data Site Name	ELEV. (Ft)	SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT %	TOTAL PRECIPITATION %
		Avg	Avg
UPPER RIO GRANDE BASIN			
	Basin wide percent of average	77	97
RIO CHAMA BASIN			
	Basin wide percent of average	70	79
SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAIN RANGE BASINS			
	Basin wide percent of average	85	107

WOLF CREEK



FORECAST

UPPER RIO GRANDE VALLEY/EASTERN SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS BELOW 10000 FT-
INCLUDING...CREEDE...SOUTH FORK
347 AM MDT TUE MAR 20 2012

TODAY

PARTLY SUNNY WITH A 20 PERCENT CHANCE OF SNOW SHOWERS. HIGHS 29 TO 36. NORTH WINDS 10 TO 15 MPH.

TONIGHT

PARTLY CLOUDY. LOWS 9 TO 19. NORTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 15 MPH.

WEDNESDAY

MOSTLY SUNNY. HIGHS 39 TO 48. NORTH WINDS 10 TO 15 MPH.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

PARTLY CLOUDY. LOWS 16 TO 27. NORTHWEST WINDS 10 TO 15 MPH.

THURSDAY

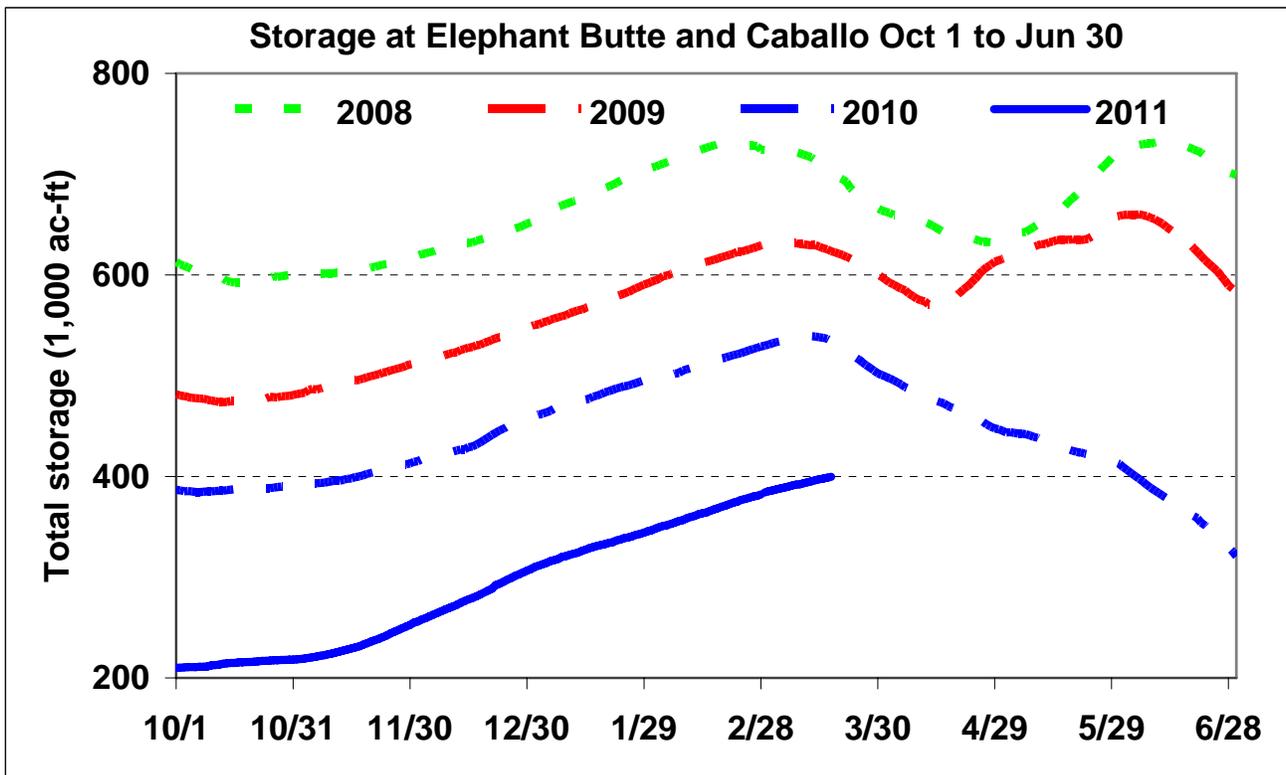
SUNNY. HIGHS 45 TO 53. WEST WINDS UP TO 10 MPH.

THURSDAY NIGHT THROUGH SATURDAY NIGHT

MOSTLY CLEAR. LOWS 19 TO 34. HIGHS 49 TO 59.

SUNDAY THROUGH MONDAY

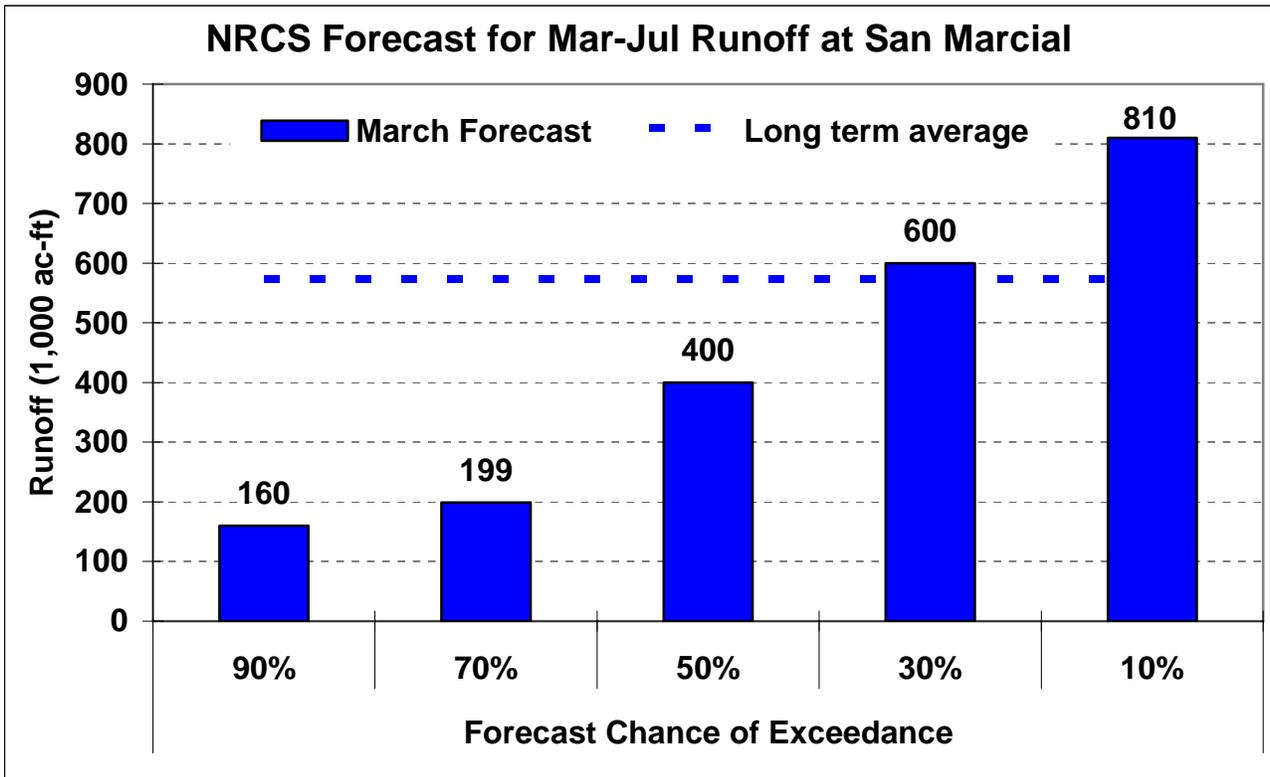
PARTLY CLOUDY. HIGHS 46 TO 60. LOWS 22 TO 33.



NEW MEXICO Water Supply Outlook Report as of March 1, 2012

The influence of the current "La Nina" pattern continued through most of February, with much of the state seeing below average snowfall and precipitation. This impact was most notable in the southern mountains and valleys, as is typical for "La Nina". A few disturbances clipped New Mexico during the past month, dropping some much needed snow in the northern mountains, helping many basins maintain a fair snowpack compared to average. These storms also brought along strong winds for much of the state, increasing odds of snowpack sublimation, especially at lower elevations. If this pattern continues through the spring, as is typical for most years, significant snowpack could be lost to sublimation. Runoff forecasts for most of the state are currently somewhat below normal for this time of year. Most basins are expecting 70 to 90 percent of normal runoff. Although these forecasts are not nearly as low as last year, irrigators and water managers

statewide should be planning for lower than average runoff, and possibly reduced irrigation allocations. It remains possible to pick up some significant snow in March, especially in the northern mountains, but whether or not the storm track will favor New Mexico is unclear.



SNOWPACK

It seems that the "La Nina" which has been in place for several months continued to have an influence on the weather patterns in February, with much of the state receiving well below average snowfall. This year's weather pattern has been similar to last year, although the "La Nina" impact has not been nearly as strong. The southern part of the state has seen very little snow since December, leading to lower than average snowpack for many areas. The northern mountains have been brushed by several storms which dropped some snow, but have not received the typical heavy February blast of snow. The "La Nina" pattern continues to weaken, so the potential remains to pick up some much needed snowpack this spring. Unfortunately, the winds from these storms have been prevalent, which could lead to issues with sublimation of the snowpack as the temperatures start to warm up. Whether or not New Mexico will be able to make up some lost ground on snowpack numbers in March remains to be seen, but most models do not look overly promising in this respect.

PRECIPITATION

February precipitation was significantly below average for much of the state, with many southern basins receiving only 38 to 52 percent of average. The northern basins fared much better, with the Canadian and Animas/San Juan River Basins receiving over 120 percent of normal precipitation in February. The Rio Grande Basin was also good, with 96 percent of average for the month. For the water year, the state as a whole is near to somewhat above average. The San Francisco/Upper Gila Basin is the only exception, with 85 percent of average so far. Most other basins in the state are ranging from around 99 to 121 percent of average precipitation for the water year thus far. Much of this precipitation was received as rain early in the season, so it is not all reflected in the current snowpack numbers.

RESERVOIRS

With less than stellar snowpack in place for most of New Mexico, the prospects for an average runoff this year are not great. Reservoir storage levels have dropped compared to last year nearly state-wide. The northern basins, which provide most of the reservoir storage in the state, are forecast to see somewhat below average runoff overall, so the potential for building any reservoir storage during this runoff season is poor. Reservoir storage in New Mexico remains below average for the most part, with several notable reservoirs currently holding less than 30 percent of normal storage levels. This will continue to make it tough to catch up, especially in a below average runoff year. March still has some potential to build snowpack, but the chances of ending up at or above average are pretty low. Water managers need to be planning on another below average runoff season for the most part.

RIO GRANDE BASIN as of March 1, 2012

Streamflow forecasts for the Rio Grande Basin range from 91 to 92 percent of average for the Red River below the Fish Hatchery near Questa and the Rio Hondo near Valdez, to 70 percent of average for the Rio Grande at San Marcial. Flows for the Rio Grande at Otowi Bridge are forecast to be around 78 percent of average, while El Vado Reservoir Inflow is expected to be around 72 percent of average. Precipitation for February was near normal, at 96 percent, compared to 65 percent last year. Year-to-date precipitation is also average at 99 percent, compared to last year's 75 percent. Snowpack in the basin is also somewhat below average at 84 percent, up from last year's 70 percent at this time. Total reservoir storage in the basin is 930,300 acre-feet, down somewhat from last year's 1,107,500 acre-feet. This is just under half of the 30 year average of 1,962,900 acre-feet. Abiquiu is the only reservoir in the basin which has above average storage for February. Elephant Butte storage has continued to decline this year, with storage of 367,100 acre-feet as opposed to 504,800 acre-feet at this time last year. Current storage equates to 28 percent of the February average of 1,299,600 acre-feet in Elephant Butte.