

**MONTHLY REPORT TO THE
COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

January 13, 2022

COLORADO RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS REPORT

As of January 10, 2022, the surface water elevation of Lake Powell was 3,535.65 feet with 6.60 million-acre feet (MAF) of storage, or 27% of capacity. The surface water elevation of Lake Mead was 1,066.69 feet with 8.94 MAF of storage, or 34% of capacity. As of January 9, 2022, the total System storage was 22.00 MAF, or 37% of capacity, which is about 5.44 MAF less than the total System storage at this same time last year.

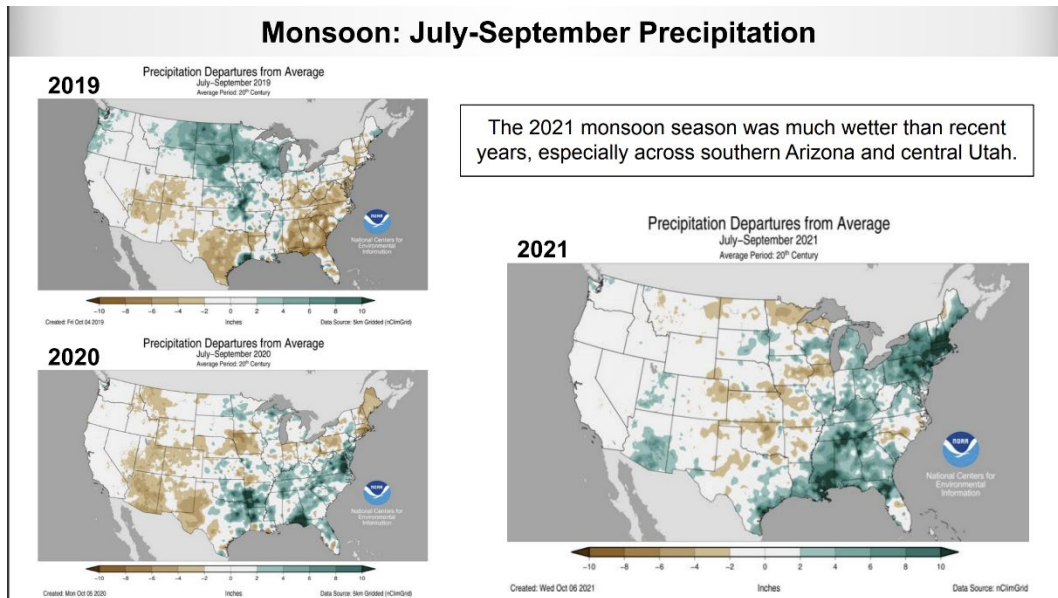
As of January 9th, the Upper Basin reservoirs, excluding Lake Powell, were 59% of capacity at Fontenelle Reservoir in Wyoming; 77% of capacity at Flaming Gorge Reservoir in Wyoming and Utah; 91% of capacity at Morrow Point and 28% of capacity at Blue Mesa Reservoir in Colorado; and 51% of capacity at Navajo Reservoir in New Mexico.

As of January 5th, the December observed inflow into Lake Powell was 0.27 MAF (83% of normal) and the January forecasted inflow is 0.27 MAF (79% of normal). The preliminary forecasted unregulated inflow into Lake Powell for Water Year (WY) 2022 is 8.77 MAF (91% of normal). The forecasted April through July 2022 unregulated inflow into Lake Powell is 6.30 MAF (99% of normal). To date, WY-2022 (WY-22) precipitation is 132% of normal and the current Basin snowpack is 133% of normal.

Colorado Basin River Forecast Center Webinar

On January 7th, the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center (CBRFC) held a webinar to review the Basin's current water supply conditions and forecasts. CBRFC provided a brief review of precipitation conditions of Water Year-2021, noting that the 2021 monsoonal season was much wetter than past few years. Figure 1 displays monsoonal precipitation between July and September from 2019 to 2021.

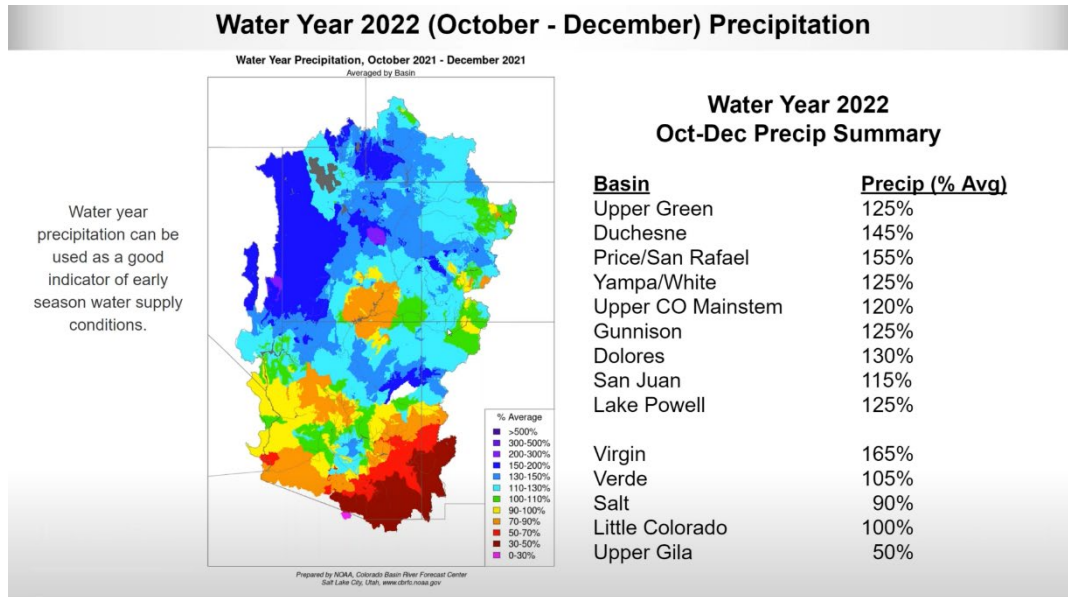
Figure 1: Monsoon: July – September Precipitation (2019-2021)



CBRFC provided a precipitation summary for the first three months of WY-2022. While 2021 began with 45% of the Intermountain West in Exceptional (D4) Drought, it ended without any D4 drought and only 26% of the region still in Extreme (D3) Drought. The summer monsoon and December precipitation greatly improved drought conditions west of the Continental Divide. It was noted that precipitation conditions in October were above average, while November and the first week of December was very dry throughout the Basin and included very warm temperatures. During the second week of December, the Basin experienced cooler temperatures and wetter conditions and was impacted by multiple storm systems. The CBRFC noted several SNOTEL sites in Utah, western Colorado and a few in central Arizona ranked fifth wettest on record.

WY-2022 precipitation conditions through December for the Upper Basin ranged from 115% in the San Juan Basin to 155% of average in the Price/San Rafael Basin. In the Lower Basin WY-2022 precipitation conditions ranged from 50% in the Gila to 165% of average in the Virgin River Basin. Figure 2 displays WY-22 precipitation from October to December 2021.

Figure 2: Water Year 2022 (October – December) Precipitation



Modeled Fall soil moisture conditions continue to show deficits going into the snow accumulation season. However, some improvement in soil moisture conditions have been noted across Utah and Arizona. As of January 7th, early SNOTEL data shows that snow water equivalent (SWE) in the Upper Basin ranges from 130% in the Upper Green, Upper Colorado Mainstem, Dolores, and San Juan Basin to 160% of median in the Duchesne Basin, while SWE in the Lower Basin, ranges from 90% in the Upper Gila to 180% of median in the Virgin River Basin.

The January 1st water supply forecasts for April to July runoff volumes for the Upper Colorado River Basin ranges from 75% to 140% of normal and 40% to 155% of normal in the Lower Basin.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

Glen Canyon Dam Operational Update

The Bureau of Reclamation announced on January 7th that it would be altering the monthly release volumes at Glen Canyon Dam in response to record-low reservoir levels at Lake Powell. The monthly volume of water released from Glen Canyon Dam is being adjusted to hold back 350 KAF of water in Lake Powell from January to April when inflow to the reservoir is low. The same amount of water (350 KAF) will then be released to Lake Mead between June and September

after the spring runoff occurs. The annual volume of water released from Glen Canyon Dam is unchanged by these operational adjustments.

If future projections indicate the monthly adjustments are insufficient to protect Lake Powell's elevation, Reclamation will consider additional water releases from the Colorado River Storage Project initial units of Flaming Gorge, Blue Mesa and Navajo reservoirs. Meanwhile, Reclamation and the Upper Basin states continue to work on a process to develop an annual Drought Response Operations Plan and expect to have it completed in April 2022.

California Water Resilience Portfolio

On January 11th, 2022, the State of California released the 2021 California Water Resilience Portfolio Progress Report. The report provides a progress update on the Newsom Administration's water policy blueprint to build climate resilience in the face of more extreme cycles of wet and dry. The report summarizes work done on each of 142 separate actions called for in the Water Resilience Portfolio released in 2019. The portfolio was developed by the California Natural Resources Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, and California Department of Food and Agriculture in response to Governor Newsom's April 2019 Executive Order calling for a suite of actions that would help California communities, the economy, and the environment address long-standing water challenges while adapting water systems to a changing climate. Additional information about the Water Resilience Portfolio can be found at the link below.

https://resources.ca.gov/Initiatives/Building-Water-Resilience/portfolio?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Governor Newsom's Proposed Fiscal Year 2022/2023 California State Budget

The Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Governor's Budget proposes spending \$286.4 billion in total state funds, consisting of approximately \$213.1 billion from the General Fund, \$65.3 billion from special funds, and \$8 billion from bond funds. The plan suggests spending \$22.5 billion to address the burgeoning climate crisis in the state, allocating \$6.1 billion to electric vehicle related initiatives. The budget proposes \$750 million for combating drought, to "prepare for the long-term realities of a world that's being re-plumbed," Newsom said. This includes spending on water conservation and efficiency, groundwater replenishment, and assistance to small farmers. Additional details on the proposed budget can be found at the link below.

<https://www.ebudget.ca.gov/budget/2022-23/#/Home>

Appointment of Upper Colorado River Commission Executive Director

The four Upper Division States Commissioners recently appointed Mr. Charles R. Cullom as the Executive Director for the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC). The UCRC and the executive director position were established as part of the 1948 Upper Colorado River Compact. Mr. Cullom fills the position that was held by Ms. Amy I. Haas, who has taken a position with the State of Utah managing the Colorado River Authority of Utah. Prior to his appointment at the UCRC, Mr. Cullom spent many years working for the Central Arizona Water Conservation District as its Colorado River Programs Manager. The UCRC office is located in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Washington, D.C. Report

Appropriations

The federal government is currently operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) that expires on February 18th. This is the second CR that Congress has passed in FY-2022. This week, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell stated that Republicans are willing to negotiate a FY-2022 funding package before the February 18th deadline, so long as their main demands are met, including “basic traditional riders, no poison pills, and parity for defense and non-defense.”

Infrastructure

Ms. Winnie Stachelberg has been named as the Interior Department infrastructure coordinator and will be responsible for overseeing overall Departmental spending. Most agencies within the Department have also named officials in charge of coordinating infrastructure spending. At Reclamation, Mat Maucieri will hold that role. Reclamation, which received most of the \$8.3 billion in Western Water funding from the bill, is required to submit a spending plan to Congress outlining how it intends to spend its share of the funding by January 15th.

Additionally, Reclamation has initiated the first application period for Extraordinary Maintenance (XM) projects that will address aging water and power infrastructure across the West. More information regarding this program may be found at <https://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/#/news-release/4066>.

Build Back Better Act

On Sunday, December 19th, Senator Manchin (D-WV) went on Fox News to announce that he did not support the proposed Build Back Better Act, essentially blocking the Democrats’ hope of passing the massive \$1.75 trillion piece of legislation. Some lawmakers have not given up on getting something done and plan to start over with a new proposal in the new year. Sen. Manchin has expressed an openness to continuing to work on the climate component of the bill.
