

April 1, 2024

Snowpack - Slightly above normal !

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Kremmling Field Office snow surveyors Kara Vigneau and Emma Geverd took the April 1 snow survey measurements during the last days of March. Snowpack for Middle Park and the upper Colorado River Basin stands at 107% of median. We were only 58% back in the drought year of 2012. Snow density is averaging 32%, which means that for every foot of snow there are 3.8 inches of water and that's about normal for April 1st. From this point on, spring runoff will be highly dependent on melting conditions (i.e., temperature and wind), as well as additional spring snow accumulation and/or rainfall. Irrigators, water users and river runners can anticipate near average stream and river flows for the upcoming summer.

Reported median readings for the major river basins in Colorado are near normal as well: Colorado River Basin 106%; Gunnison River Basin, 105%; South Platte River Basin, 110%; Yampa and White River Basins, 100%; Arkansas River Basin, 118%; Upper Rio Grande Basin, 111%; San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basins 105%; and Laramie and North Platte River Basins, 103%.

Most of the snow courses around Middle Park have been read since the 1940s. Snow course readings are taken at the end of each month, beginning in January and continuing through April. March is historically the snowiest month, and the April 1 readings are the most critical for predicting runoff and summer water supplies, as most of our high country snowpack peaks around that time. Manual snow courses will be read for the final time this year at the end of April.

For further information, including real-time snow and precipitation data for SNOTEL (automated Snow Telemetry) sites, visit <http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/index.html>.



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NRCS Kremmling Field Office snow survey for April 1, 2024, compared to long-term median.

Snow course or SNOTEL	Last year		This year		30-year median (1991 - 2020)		Percent of median	
	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content
	------(inches)-----						-----(%)-----	
Arapaho Ridge st				20.1		20.5		98%
Berthoud Summit st				21.1		18		117%
Buffalo Park st				14.1		13.7		103%
Columbine st				26.2		21.8		120%
Copper Mountain st				13.7		14.2		96%
Corral Creek sc				10.2		10.2		100%
Elliot Ridge st				22.3		18.5		121%
Fremont Pass st				15.3		15.2		101%
Gore Pass sc				13		10		130%
Granby sc				9.5		8.2		116%
Grizzly Peak st				16.2		16.2		100%
Jones Pass st				15.3		13.7		112%
Lake Irene st				20.2		22.6		89%
Lynx Pass st				10.7		10.4		103%
Middle Fork Camp sc				12.3		10.6		116%
Phantom Valley st				9		9.4		96%
Summit Ranch st				11.7		10.8		108%
Willow Creek Pass sc				13.2		12.2		108%
<i>Average</i>								107%

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NRCS Kremmling Field Office snow survey April 1 moisture content records.

Snow course or SNOTEL (SC or ST)	Highest Apr. 1 moisture content			Lowest Apr. 1 moisture content		
	(inches)	(%)	(year)	(inches)	(%)	(year)
Arapaho Ridge ST (read since 2003)	26.9	117%	2008	14.8	65%	2010
Berthoud Summit ST	25.3	138%	1996	10.9	59%	2002
Buffalo Park ST (read since 1996)	17.7	123%	1996	8.0	56%	2002
Columbine ST	37.9	152%	1984	12.0	48%	1981
Copper Mountain ST	18.1	129%	2008	7.9	56%	1981
Corral Creek SC (read since 1995)	16.9	116%	1996	8.0	55%	2002
Fremont Pass ST	21.9	135%	1978	10.0	62%	1966
Gore Pass SC	16.6	157	2011	4.3	41%	1966
Granby SC	14.8	206%	2014	0.0	0%	2004
Grizzly Peak ST	27.7	151%	1996	8.7	47%	1981
Jones Pass ST (read since 2000)	19.2	119%	2006	9.7	60%	2002
Lake Irene ST	37.6	146%	1962	11.8	46%	1977
Lynx Pass ST	20.8	163%	1962	6.0	47%	1977
Middle Fork Campground SC	17.0	168%	1996	5.8	57%	1981
Phantom Valley ST	14.9	160%	1996	1.1	12%	2004
Stillwater Creek ST (read since 1986)	12.8	164%	1965	1.1	14%	2012
Summit Ranch ST	17.0	153%	1996	5.9	53%	2012
Willow Creek Pass SC	20.5	164%	1952	6.6	53%	2012

Mark Volt taking April 1 snow measurements on Gore Pass

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Kara Vigneau measuring snow on Gore Pass

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