

March 1, 2016

Snowpack in Middle Park and statewide about Normal

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Kremmling Field Office snow surveyors Mark Volt and Vance Fulton took the March 1st. snow survey measurements during the last days of February.....And even with the recent warm weather, the survey shows that we are in pretty good shape up high. Valley snowpack has decreased significantly during February.

Snowpack in the high elevation mountains above Middle Park now ranges from 86% to 125% of the 30-year average, with the overall average for Middle Park at 104%. Last year at this time we were at 102% of average. Snow density is 28%, which means that for one foot of snow there is 3.4 inches of water, which is pretty normal for March 1st.

Reported readings for the major river basins in Colorado are as follows: Colorado River Basin 100%; Gunnison River Basin, 100%; South Platte River Basin,100%; Yampa and White River Basins, 93%; Arkansas River Basin, 99%; Upper Rio Grande Basin, 100%; San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basins 98%; and the Laramie and North Platte River Basins, 92% of average for this time of year.

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.

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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NEWS RELEASE

NRCS Kremmling Field Office snow survey for March 1, 2016, compared to long-term average.

Snow course or SNOTEL (SC or ST)	Last year		This year		30-year average (1971 - 2000)		Percent of average	
	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content
							------(%)-----	
Arapaho Ridge ST		14.4		16.7		16.6		101%
Berthoud Summit ST		15.4		13.7		13.8		99%
Buffalo Park ST		12.0		12.3		9.3		134%
Columbine ST		17.2		17.8		19.7		90%
Copper Mountain ST		12.6		11.6		10.8		107%
Corral Creek SC	38	9.4	38	10.8	48	11.2	79%	96%
Elliot Ridge ST				12.7	<i>New site</i>		<i>New site</i>	
Fremont Pass ST		14.6		11.8		11.7		101%
Gore Pass SC	34	8.2	37	10.3	34	8.6	100%	95%
Granby SC	31	6.0	31	8.1	26	6.5	119%	124%
Grizzly Peak ST		14.3		13.2		13.1		101%
Jones Pass ST		12.3		12		9.6		125%
Lake Irene ST		18.3		15.7		19.2		92%
Lynx Pass ST		9.2		9.6		8.8		109%
Middle Fork Camp SC	37	8.3	34	8.4	36	8.7	94%	97%
Phantom Valley ST		8.4		7.1		8.2		87%
Stillwater Creek ST		7.0		7.7		6.6		117%
Summit Ranch ST		8.9		8.8		8.6		102%
Willow Creek Pass SC	35	8.0	39	8.9		10.3		86%
<i>Average for Middle Park</i>							104%	



Chris Brown (USFS hydrologist) assists Mark Volt (USDA-NRCS snow surveyor) with snow measurements on Gore Pass during the March 1st. snow survey. High elevation snowpack remains near normal in Middle Park and statewide.

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

Snow course or SNOTEL (SC or ST)	<u>Highest March. 1 moisture content</u>			<u>Lowest March. 1 moisture content</u>		
	(inches)	(%)	(year)	(inches)	(%)	(year)
Arapaho Ridge ST (read since 2003)	23.5	125%	2006	12.8	68%	2010
Berthoud Summit ST	20.3	142%	1996	7.5	52%	1981
Buffalo Park ST (read since 1996)	17.1	188%	2014	6.6	61%	2002
Columbine ST	40.1	183%	1984	8.2	37%	1981
Copper Mountain ST	18.9	169%	1996	4.8	43%	1981
Corral Creek SC (read since 1995)	18.0	137%	1997	6.6	50%	2010
Fremont Pass ST	18.8	146%	2006	6.4	50%	1981
Gore Pass SC	14.3	155%	1962	2.6	28%	1981
Granby SC	12.4	194%	2014	1.8	28%	1981
Grizzly Peak ST	23.7	173%	1996	6.1	45%	1981
Jones Pass ST (read since 2000)	18.1	141%	2006	8.5	66%	2010
Lake Irene ST	32.3	154%	1956	7.1	34%	1977
Lynx Pass ST	17.5	172%	1962	2.8	27%	1981
Middle Fork Campground SC	13.9	160%	1996	3.0	34%	1981
Phantom Valley ST	12.0	143%	1996	3.4	40%	1977
Stillwater Creek ST (read since 1986)	11.4	158%	1997	2.9	40%	1981
Summit Ranch ST	15.4	181%	1996	5.0	59%	1981
Willow Creek Pass SC	20.4	192%	1952	3.8	36%	1977