

May 1, 2011

Snowpack at Record Levels for May 1st

The majority of snow sites in Middle Park set new record highs for May 1, ranging from 136% to 335% of 30-year averages. The average for all of Middle Park is 201%. Snow density averages 36%, which means that for a foot of snow there are 4.3 inches of water.

“Peak snowpack continued to rise through the month of April—which is unusual because in most years, snowpack declines during April. This year, there’s a lot of snow still to come off. And from this point on, runoff is governed by temperature, wind and possibly a few late spring storms,” said Mark Volt, District Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Kremmling Field Office.

In Colorado, the highest snow packs, relative to normal, are in the Yampa-White River and Laramie-North Platte Basins. River basins in southern Colorado are reporting the lowest snow packs. Reported readings for the major river basins in Colorado are as follows: The upper Colorado River Basin averages 148%; Gunnison River Basin, 135%; South Platte River Basin, 139%; Yampa and White River Basins, 156%; Arkansas River Basin, 109%; Upper Rio Grande Basin, 81%; San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basins, 95%; and the Laramie and North Platte River Basins, 157% 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. 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>.



NEWS RELEASE

NRCS Kremmling Field Office snow survey for May 1, 2011, as compared to average.

Snow course or SNOTEL	Last year		This year		30-year average (1971 - 2000) moisture content	Percent of average moisture content
	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content		
	------(inches)-----					(%)
Arapaho Ridge ST	-	21.0	-	35.4	26.0	136%
Arrow ST	-	11.4	-	18.3	15.7	117%
Berthoud Summit ST	-	21.9	-	31.8	21.6	147%
Buffalo Park ST	-	9.1	-	21.2	11.4	186%
Columbine ST	-	11.8	-	39.6	20.9	189%
Gore Pass SC	19	5.3	48	17.4	7.1	245%
Granby SC	5	0.8	35	13.0	4.2	310%
Jones Pass ST	-	13.8	-	24.9	16.6	150%
Lake Irene ST	-	21.9	-	44.0	27.9	158%
Lynx Pass ST	-	5.6	-	16.2	8.6	188%
Middle Fork Camp SC	17	2.0	37	13.3	7.7	173%
Phantom Valley ST	-	5.0	-	19.8	6.5	305%
Stillwater Creek ST	-	1.0	-	6.7	2.0	335%
Summit Ranch ST	-	1.9	-	16.0	9.0	178%
Willow Creek Pass SC	-	12.3	64	22.9	11.8	194%
<i>Average</i>						201%

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

Snow course or SNOTEL	Highest May 1 moisture content		Lowest May 1 moisture content	
	(inches)	(year)	(inches)	(year)
Arapaho Ridge ST (read since 2003)	35.4	2011	19.1	2007
Arrow ST	24.8	1984	0.0	Many
Berthoud Summit ST	31.8	2011	6.4	2002
Buffalo Park ST (read since 1996)	21.2	2011	0.0	2002
Columbine ST	39.6	2011	0.0	1981
Corral Creek SC (read since 1995)	13.5	1999	8.3	2006
Gore Pass SC	17.4	2011	0.0	Many
Granby SC	13.0	2011	0.0	Many
Jones Pass ST (read since 2000)	24.9	2011	0.0	2002
Kremmling Reservoir SC (read since 2001)	14.6	2003	13.0	2007
Lake Irene ST	44.0	2011	8.0	1981
Lynx Pass ST	17.7	1947	0.0	Many
Middle Fork Campground SC	17.6	1984	0.0	Many
Phantom Valley ST	19.8	2011	0.0	Many
Stillwater Creek ST (read since 1986)	6.7	2011	0.0	Many
Summit Ranch ST	18.8	1984	0.0	Many
Willow Creek Pass SC	22.9	2011	1.5	1981