

February 1, 2016

Snowpack- Off to a good start. (A little above normal)

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Kremmling Field Office snow surveyors Mark Volt and Donn Slusher took the February 1 snow survey measurements during the last days of January.

Snowpack in the high-elevation Mountains above Middle Park is at 112 % of the 30-year average. (1980-2010). Last year's snowpack at this time was right at 100% of average. It is still early in the winter and snowpack could change significantly by May.

Snow density is averaging 24%, which means that for a foot of snow there are 2.9 inches of water. .

Reported readings for the major river basins in Colorado are also doing well.: The upper Colorado River Basin averages 104%; Gunnison River Basin, 109%; South Platte River Basin, 101%; Yampa and White River Basins, 98%; Arkansas River Basin, 109%; Upper Rio Grande Basin, 102%; San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basins 110%; and the Laramie and North Platte River Basins 95% 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 1st. 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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NRCS Kremmling Field Office snow survey for February 1, 2016- compared to long-term average.

Snow course (SC) or SNOTEL (ST)	Last year		This year		30-year median (1981 - 2010)		Percent of median	
	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content
	------(inches)-----						------(%)-----	
Arapaho Ridge ST		9.6		13.9		12.8		109%
Berthoud Summit ST		11.0		11.7		10.3		114%
Buffalo Park ST		9.0		9.8		6.7		140%
Columbine ST		11.7		13.4		14.3		94%
Copper Mountain ST		9.5		8.5		7.8		109%
Corral Creek SC	27	7.4	36	8.7	33	8.0	109%	109%
Elliot Ridge ST		9.2		9.5		<i>New site c</i>		<i>New site</i>
Fremont Pass ST		11.4		9.1		9.0		101%
Gore Pass SC	26	7.0	35	8.3	27	6.4	129%	130%
Granby SC	23	4.0	28	7.2	17	4.0	164%	180%
Grizzly Peak ST		10.7		10.6		8.9		119%
Jones Pass ST		9.0		9.7		7.4		131%
Lake Irene ST		12.8		12.3		13.7		90%
Lynx Pass ST		6.8		7.6		6.5		117%
Middle Fork Camp SC		6.8	33	8.7	27	6.4	122%	136%
Phantom Valley ST		4.9		5.0		6.2		81%
Stillwater Creek ST		4.7		6.6		4.8		125%
Summit Ranch ST		6.4		6.6		6.2		106%
Willow Creek Pass SC	23	5.6	35	7.8	34	8.2	103%	95%
<i>Average (Median)</i>								112

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

Snow course or SNOTEL	Highest Feb. 1 moisture content			Lowest Feb. 1 moisture content		
	(inches)	(%)	(year)	(inches)	(%)	(year)
Arapaho Ridge ST (read since 2003)	19.3	125%	2011	9.4	63%	2003
Berthoud Summit ST	17.1	154%	1984	5.0	45%	1981
Buffalo Park ST (read since 1996)	14.7	167%	1997	4.6	52%	2002
Columbine ST	28.0	170%	1978	5.1	31%	1981
Copper Mountain ST	14.5	167%	1997	3.5	40%	1981
Corral Creek SC (read since 1995)	15.6	154%	1997	4.3	43%	2010
Fremont Pass ST	16.2	156%	1952	5.0	48%	1981
Gore Pass SC	11.7	165%	1997	1.3	18%	1981
Granby SC	10.6	226%	1997	1.1	23%	1981
Grizzly Peak ST	18.9	177%	1996	3.6	34%	1981
Jones Pass ST (read since 2000)	17.2	177%	1997	3.3	34%	1963
Lake Irene ST	26.4	163%	1962	6.0	37%	1977
Lynx Pass ST	13.4	174%	1978	1.6	21%	1981
Middle Fork Campground SC	11.6	178%	1952	1.8	28%	1981
Phantom Valley ST	10.6	166%	1996	2.9	45%	1981
Stillwater Creek ST (read since 1986)	10.8	200%	1997	2.2	41%	1981
Summit Ranch ST	12.1	181%	1984	4.0	60%	1981
Willow Creek Pass SC	17.6	215%	1984	2.2	27%	1981



Donn Slusher measures snow for his first time on Gore Pass. Donn will assist long time snow surveyor Mark Volt with the NRCS Snow Survey. Courses are read at the end of each month between January and May.