RECLAMATION
Managing Water in the West

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

Pacific Northwest Region
Water Supply Update
April 22, 2009

March was a generous month for the Pacific Northwest in terms of water supply. Significant precipitation fell throughout the region, shoring up snowpack and leading to April 1 runoff forecasts much improved over those in March. April weather has primarily been cool and showery, with the exception being this week which brought record temperatures to some locations. Snowmelt runoff is beginning to get underway in earnest in the mountain basins; runoff in the lower and mid elevations is beginning to recede. More cool unsettled weather is forecast to return. Thanks to good carryover storage from last year, water supplies will be adequate in 2009 even if runoff comes in below average, although supplies will be tight in the Malheur and Owyhee basins. Flood control releases are being made in the Upper Snake and Payette basins to reserve space for the coming runoff, but no significant flood control operations are anticipated in the Region at this time.

	Snowpack % of avg	**Water Year Precipitation % of avg**	**Forecasted Spring Runoff % of avg**	**Reservoir Storage % full**	**Allocations**
Yakima (WA)	85	91	97	84	full
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	85	87	99	72	n/a
Crooked (OR)	70	88	81	93	n/a
Boise (ID)	75	91	80	72	n/a
Payette (ID)	79	86	82	69	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	101	104	99	81	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia R at the Dalles)	89	94	87	n/a	n/a

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Pacific Northwest Region
Water Supply Update
March 18, 2009

Late February and March finally brought a return to wetter conditions for the Pacific Northwest, after a very dry period extending back to the middle of January or longer. Snowpack percentages had dropped into the 60% to 70% range, but thanks to several significant storm cycles they have rebounded to the 80% to 90% range. Maximum snowpack for the season typically occurs around April 1; after that, spring rain (or lack of it) plays a large role in determining final water supplies. Thanks to good carryover storage from last year, water supplies will be adequate in 2009 even if runoff comes in below average. One area of exception is the Malheur basin in Eastern Oregon, which will have a very tight supply once again unless a wet spring occurs. No significant flood control operations are anticipated in the Region at this time. The forecast for the next 2 weeks calls for fairly benign spring like weather, with showers throughout the inland regions.

	Snowpack % of avg	**Water Year Precipitation % of avg**	**Forecasted Spring Runoff % of avg**	**Reservoir Storage % full**	**Allocations**
Yakima (WA)	81	90	81	77	n/a
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	88	87	93	70	n/a
Crooked (OR)	90	89	61	68	n/a
Boise (ID)	83	90	70	60	n/a
Payette (ID)	84	86	79	65	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	94	98	93	81	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia R at the Dalles)	89	89	80	n/a	n/a

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Pacific Northwest Region
Water Supply Update
February 5, 2009

Since the last update in early December, the PN Region was hit with a period of very heavy precipitation near the end of the year, creating a myriad of problems such as heavy flooding in Washington (including the Yakima basin), mudslides, and avalanches that closed many mountain passes. Despite the negatives, it did allow the Region's mountain snowpacks to catch up to average after starting out so slowly. Unfortunately, the wet weather has been followed by almost a month of high pressure which has shunted the storm track away from the Pacific Northwest. Snowpack percentages have dropped off again and are typically in the 75 to 85% of average range. Roughly 40% of the winter is still to come, so any range of outcomes is still possible. The two week forecast calls for a slow breakdown of the high pressure and a return to a more active pattern.

	Snowpack % of avg	**Water Year Precipitation % of avg**	**Forecasted Spring Runoff % of avg**	**Reservoir Storage % full**	**Allocations**
Yakima (WA)	71	93	93	75	n/a
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	83	83	102	75	n/a
Crooked (OR)	70	78	75	60	n/a
Boise (ID)	79	88	80	54	n/a
Payette (ID)	77	81	82	62	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	94	100	95	69	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia River at the Dalles)	n/a	77	86	n/a	n/a

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Pacific Northwest Region
Water Supply Update
December 10, 2008

Winter is off to a very late and foreboding start for the Pacific Northwest, with very little snow in the mountains as we head into mid-December. Typically, about 15% to 20% of the April 1 snowpack is on the ground by December 1, with an additional 20-25% added in December, so the lack of snow thus far is definitely reason to worry. Ski resorts are nowhere close to opening. The deficits can be made up, but will require above average precipitation as we move forward. A major arctic blast is forecast to hit the entire region beginning this weekend and lasting all next week. Snow will accompany the storm, but amounts may be limited due to the northern origin of the stormtrack, which tends to be drier. The federal power system will be heavily relied upon to meet electrical demands next week, but is well positioned to do so with no power emergencies anticipated. The first runoff forecasts for 2009 will be available after January 1.

	Snowpack % of avg	**Water Year Precipitation % of avg**	**Forecasted Spring Runoff % of avg**	**Reservoir Storage % full**	**Allocations**
Yakima (WA)	15	78	Below avg	57	n/a
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	47	72	Below avg	80	n/a
Crooked (OR)	0	55	Below avg	56	n/a
Boise (ID)	32	65	Below avg	48	n/a
Payette (ID)	34	61	Below avg	60	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	60	81	Below avg	54	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia R at the Dalles)	n/a	77	Below avg	n/a	n/a

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Pacific Northwest Region
Water Supply Update
November 6, 2008

The Pacific Northwest finally appears to be entering winter. After a pleasant second half of October, November has ushered in a cooler and wetter pattern with moderate precipitation in western Washington and Oregon, and snow beginning to fall in the higher terrain. This trend is forecast to continue over the next 10 days. Reservoir carryover storage is generally good in most basins. The exceptions are reservoirs in the Malheur and Owyhee basins of eastern Oregon, which did not refill completely in 2008 and used most of their storage.

	WY 2009 Precipitation % of avg	WY 2009 Runoff % of avg	Reservoir Storage % full	Allocations
Yakima (WA)	86	75	40	full
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	64	77	80	n/a
Crooked (OR)	109	50	57	n/a
Boise (ID)	125	86	43	n/a
Payette (ID)	91	86	58	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	116	106	44	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia R at the Dalles)	94	91	n/a	n/a

Note: Water year precipitation and runoff refer to water year 2009, and is too early in the season to establish meaningful trends. Runoff percentages reflect observed runoff since October 2008, rather than forecasted runoff.