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## News Release

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## Near Record Stages Continue on James River

Although flood conditions persist along the James River, no record stages have been set for 2010 according to real-time data collected by the U.S. Geological Survey. However, the stages at many streamgages on the James River have reached the second or third highest level on record. For many streamgages in eastern South Dakota, the highest recorded stages occurred in 1997; for the upper James River, many new stage records were set in 2009.

“Stages for many of the USGS streamgages in eastern South Dakota are still at or above flood stage,” said Joyce Williamson, USGS hydrologist. “Because the stages for many streams are at or near flood stage, graphs are available that compare current water levels to previous peak stages including those that occurred in 1997, 2001, and 2009.”

A flood watch web page to help track the current flooding conditions in South Dakota has been updated by the USGS and can be accessed at <http://sd.water.usgs.gov/projects/2010flooding/>.

The James River at Ashton (USGS streamgage 06473000), reached a peak stage of 25.24 feet on March 22, which was more than 12 feet above the National Weather Service flood stage of 13 feet. The highest stage was 26.64 feet on April 5, 1997.

The scenario is similar for the James River at Redfield (USGS streamgage 06475000), where the March 21, 2010 peak stage of 29.37 feet is second only to the April 4, 1997 peak stage of 29.92 feet. The NWS flood stage at this site is 20 feet.

At the James River at Huron (USGS streamgage 06476000), the stage also attained the second highest level (about 19.7 feet today) and is rising. The stage currently is almost nine feet above the NWS flood stage of 11 feet. The record stage of 21.28 feet was set on April 5, 1997.

On March 18, the James River at Mitchell (USGS streamgage 06478000) reached a stage of 25.0 feet, the highest stage since a stage of 25.3 feet in 2001 based on provisional real-time streamflow data from the USGS. The NWS flood stage at this site is 17 feet.

To allow comparisons between 2010 flood stages and previous peak stages, the USGS has made changes to the graphs presented on the WaterWatch Flood Web pages (<http://waterwatch.usgs.gov/?m=flood&r=sd&w=real%2Cmap>). Previously, the stage associated with the peak discharge was used on the WaterWatch graph, without regard to higher peak stage values or to changes in gage elevation.

The [South Dakota Flood Watch](#) web page shows locations of streamgages where the water level is above flood stage or at high flow and provides flood tracking charts and tables of recent and previous flood peak flows.

Links to additional information about floods, including flood safety, also are provided.

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