

Pacific Northwest Region Water Supply Update

February 13, 2013

January was a fairly stingy month for precipitation in the PN Region. Fortunately most of the region got off to a good start with decent precipitation through December. But with the dry month, snowpack percentages and runoff projections have begun to slip. One dry month is not atypical, but concerns will mount if one month turns into two, or more. February has also been fairly dry for the first half, but there are hints of a pattern change next week. The region needs a return to wetter winter conditions to anchor the water supply, and with roughly 25% of the snow accumulation season left any number of outcomes could occur. Beyond winter, spring precipitation will also play a big part in determining the final water supply. The wait and see game continues.

	Snowpack % of avg.	Water Year Precipitation % of avg.	Forecasted Runoff % of avg.	Reservoir Storage % full	Allocations
Yakima (WA)	93	95	96	66	n/a
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	91	116	111	86	n/a
Crooked (OR)	101	104	92	58	n/a
Rogue (OR)	71	102	n/a	64	n/a
Boise (ID)	74	92	85	55	n/a
Payette (ID)	83	107	100	72	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	90	89	93	59	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia R at the Dalles)	98	104	91	n/a	n/a

Pacific Northwest Region Water Supply Update

January 9, 2012

Water Year 2013 is off to a positive so far in the Pacific Northwest. October through December precipitation was above average, especially in the north, leading to near average snowpacks as we approach the midway point in the accumulation season. High freezing levels during November resulted in rain at the middle and lower elevations, but greatly boosted the high elevation snowpacks. However, with more than half the winter left to go there is a wide range of potential outcomes for the water supply. While the next 2 weeks look dry, the longer range forecasts are providing no signal over much of the basin...in other words anything can happen. Of note, averages are now based on the 1981-2010 period, and generally run about 5 to 10% lower than the previous official 30-year averages of the 1971-2000 period; the percentages listed below would be lower if using the former dataset.

	Snowpack % of avg.	Water Year Precipitation % of avg.	Forecasted Runoff % of avg.	Reservoir Storage % full	Allocations
Yakima (WA)	137	123	107	64	n/a
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	93	126	116	92	n/a
Crooked (OR)	97	117	84	54	n/a
Boise (ID)	86	108	109	51	n/a
Payette (ID)	90	125	116	69	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	102	98	104	51	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia R at the Dalles)	110	118	96	n/a	n/a

Pacific Northwest Region Water Supply Update October 23, 2012

Mid October saw an abrupt change in the PN Region from the warm and sunny fall weather to a very cool and wet pattern. As pleasant as the fall weather had been, a pattern change was sorely needed from the entrenched high pressure ridge that has dominated since early June and left the region moisture starved. Moderate to heavy rain has improved soil moisture conditions in the mountains prior to the snow accumulation season, which should lead to more efficient runoff next spring. The first snows of winter are just now occurring, and the cool unsettled pattern is forecast to continue at least in the short term. Long term forecasts are less certain with a weakening of the El Nino signal, although a higher likelihood for below average precipitation this coming winter is still forecast. Essentially anything can happen, however, and it will be likely be a couple months before a discernible trend in the snowpack is established. (note: water year precip is only since Oct. 1)

	Snowpack % of avg.	Water Year Precipitation % of avg.	Forecasted Runoff % of avg.	Reservoir Storage % full	Allocations
Yakima (WA)	n/a	173	avg or blw	43	n/a
Flathead/Hungry Horse (MT)	n/a	145	avg or blw	91	n/a
Crooked (OR)	n/a	193	avg or blw	54	n/a
Boise (ID)	n/a	134	avg or blw	38	n/a
Payette (ID)	n/a	129	avg or blw	54	n/a
Upper Snake (ID)	n/a	97	avg or blw	26	n/a
Columbia Basin (Columbia R at the Dalles)	n/a	107	avg or blw	n/a	n/a