

STATE OF UTAH GENERAL OUTLOOK

March 1, 2015

SUMMARY

February 2015 will be one for the record books – exceptionally warm and exceptionally dry. Hard to believe we could have a month worse than January but somehow February made January look good. Snowpacks took a beating across the state declining as a percent of average: Bear down -21%, Weber -12%, Provo -24%, Duchesne -15%, Price -24%, South East – 17%, Sevier -15%, San Pitch -28% and the South West - down 36% and then back up 34% to end up down only 2% for the month. Much of the month had temperatures 10 to 20 degrees above average. Sunny, warm and dry conditions brought snow densities up to the 30%-40% range which is just short of melting. Many of the lower elevation SNOTEL sites showed active melt with some sites melting out completely. Snowpacks in general are 3 to 6 weeks ahead of schedule when it comes to melt potential. That is to say, it won't take much additional energy to begin snow melt in earnest and water managers can expect earlier than normal streamflow with lower peak flows, shorter flow durations and much less than normal April-July totals. South facing aspects in almost all areas of the state are bare of snow up to near the 9000 foot level and have been for some time. Any new snow accumulating on these areas is not likely to last very long as the soils have warmed substantially and will melt any new snow rapidly. Most areas have less than a 10% probability of getting sufficient snow accumulation in March to get back to average. Some areas would have to get 40% or more of their annual snowpack in the next 4 weeks to have average by April 1. February precipitation ranged from 25% over the Price River Basin to 70% over southwest Utah. This brings the statewide seasonal (Oct-Feb) total to 66% of normal. Soil moisture conditions are near normal for most of Utah. Reservoir storage continues to incrementally improve as water managers are storing as much as possible and is similar to last year. Surface Water Supply indexes are below average across the state. The water supply outlook is below to much below normal conditions for all areas of Utah even with the recent storms.

SNOWPACK

March first snow packs as measured by the NRCS SNOTEL system range from 60% of median in southwest Utah to 78% on the San Pitch and Bear River basins. Stations that are or are close to record lows for March 1 snowpack include: Little Bear, Ben Lomond Peak, Ben Lomond Trail, Dry Bread Pond, Parleys Summit, Thaynes Canyon, Brighton, Currant Creek, Steel Creek Park, Hayden Fork, Chepeta, Kings Cabin, Mining Fork, Rocky Basin, Vernon Creek, Payson RS, Clear Creek 2 and Merchant Valley. Most sites north of I 70 are in the bottom 25% of observed values with a significant number in the lowest 10%.

PRECIPITATION

Mountain precipitation during February ranged from 25% to about 70% of average. This brings the seasonal accumulation for the state (Oct-Feb) to 66% of normal.

SOIL MOISTURE

Soil Moisture conditions are at or near normal in the north and above normal in the south with 62% of saturation in southeast Utah.

RESERVOIRS

Storage in 46 of Utah's key irrigation reservoirs is at 63% of capacity compared to 62% last year.

STREAMFLOW

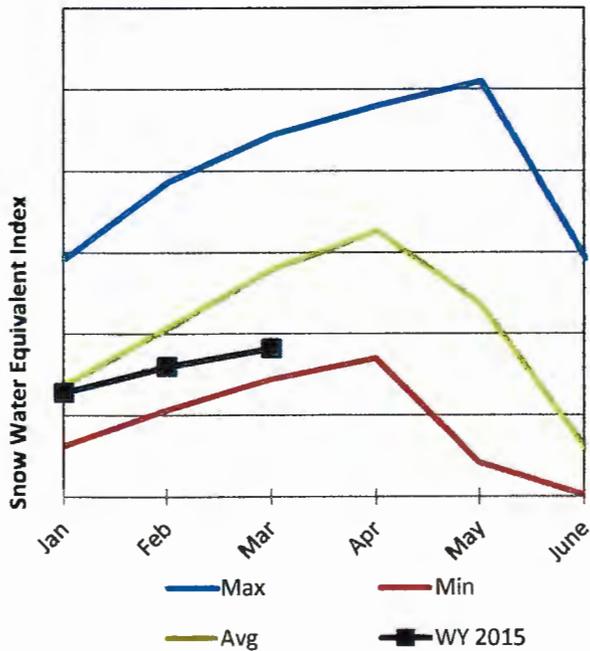
Snowmelt stream flows are forecast to be below to near normal across the state this year. Most flows are forecast to be in the 30% to 80% range.

Statewide Utah

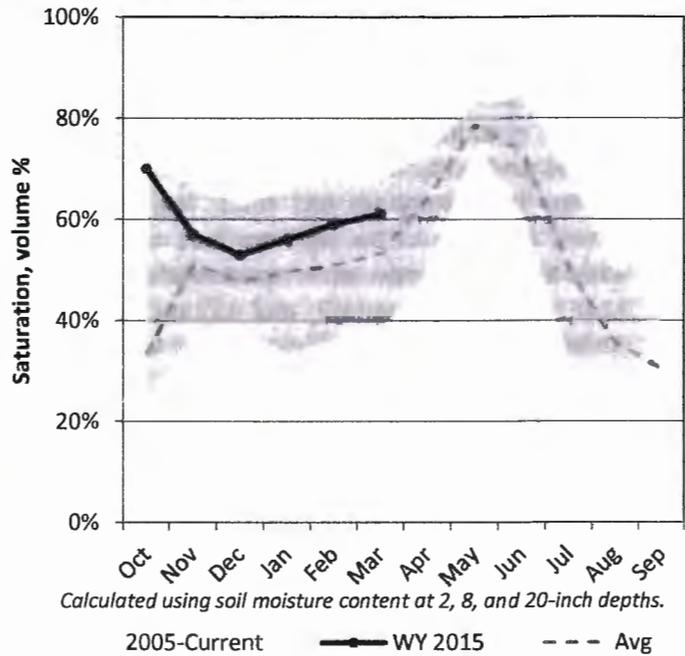
3/1/2015

Snowpack in Utah is much below average at 69% of normal, compared to 89% last year. Precipitation in February was much below average at 48%, which brings the seasonal accumulation (Oct-Feb) to 66% of average. Soil moisture is at 61% compared to 56% last year. Reservoir storage is at 63% of capacity, compared to 62% last year. Forecast streamflow volumes range from 24% to 78% of average.

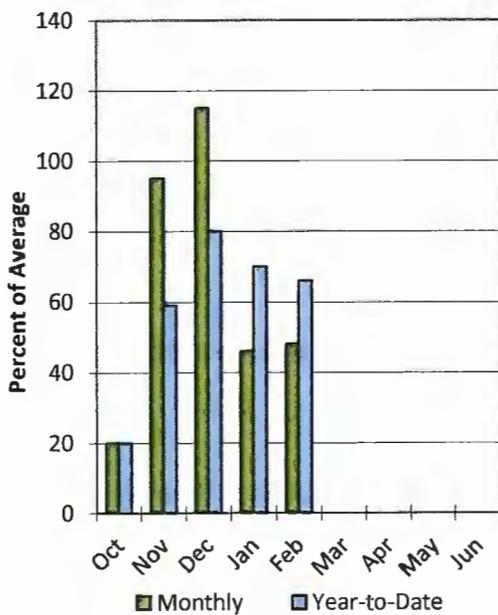
Snowpack



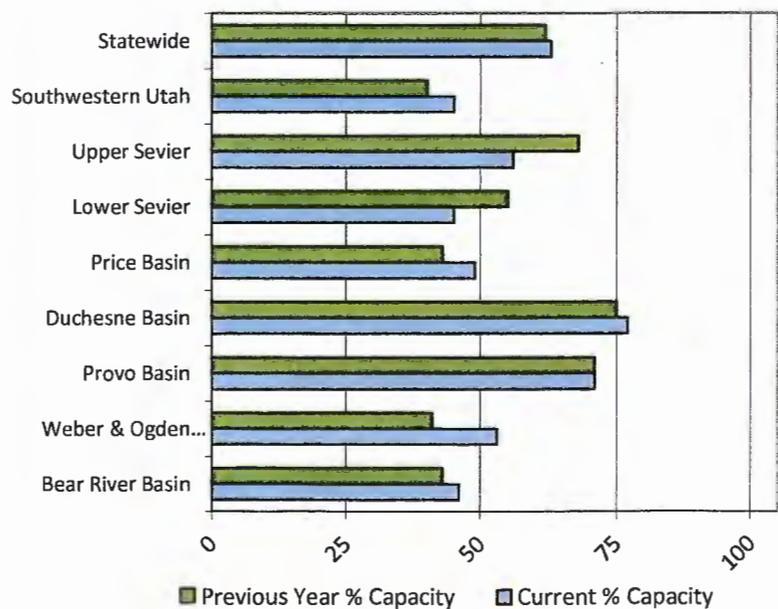
Soil Moisture



Precipitation



Reservoir Storage

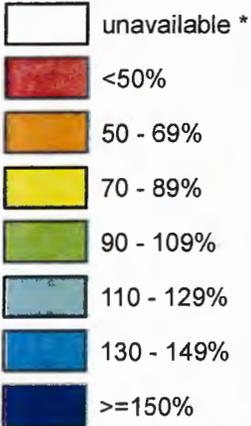


Utah

SNOTEL Water Year (Oct 1) to Date Precipitation % of Normal

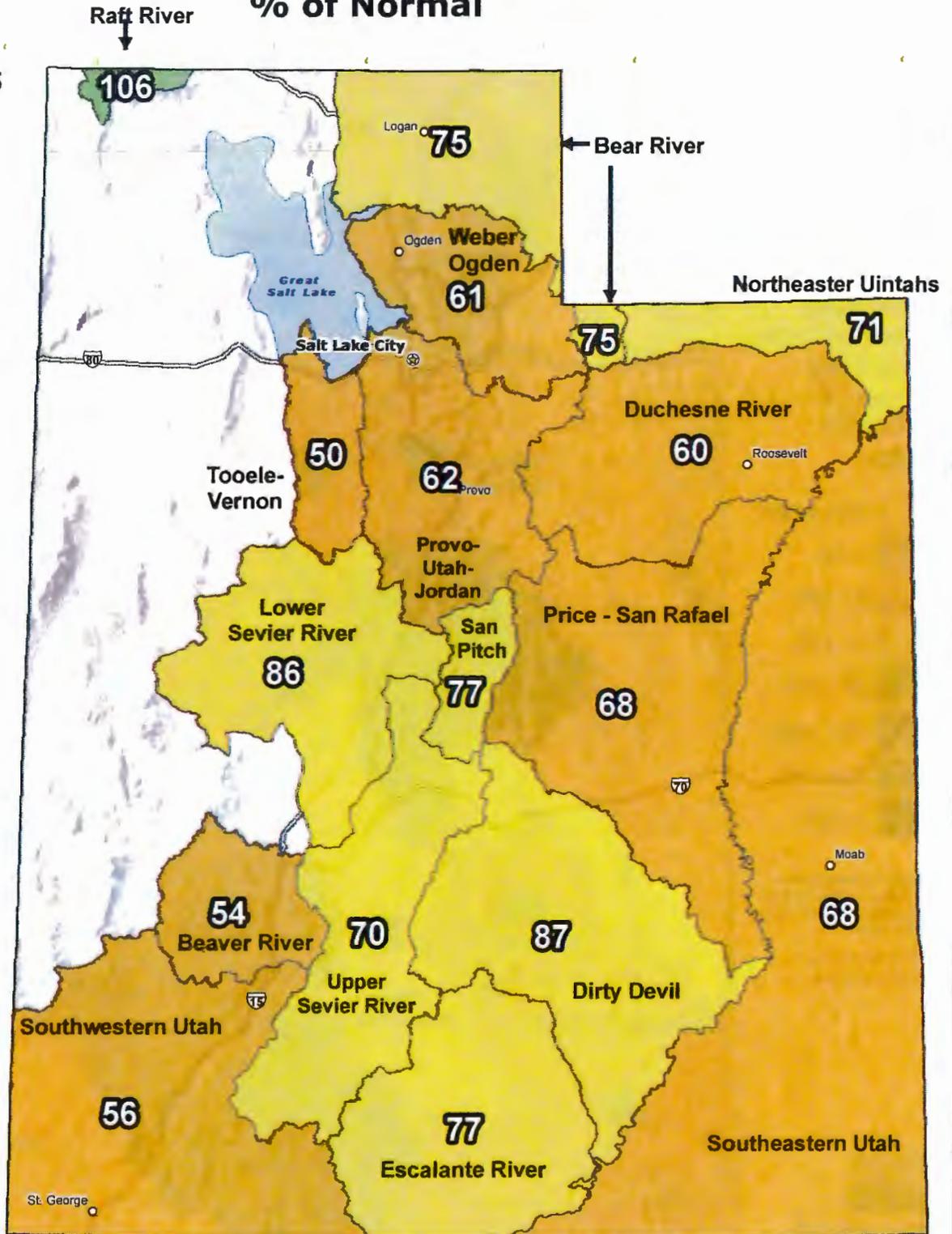
Mar 01, 2015

**Water Year
(Oct 1) to Date
Precipitation
Basin-wide
Percent of
1981-2010
Average**



* Data unavailable at time of posting or measurement is not representative at this time of year

**Provisional Data
Subject to Revision**



The water year to date precipitation percent of normal represents the accumulated precipitation found at selected SNOTEL sites in or near the basin compared to the average value for those sites on this day. Data based on the first reading of the day (typically 00:00).

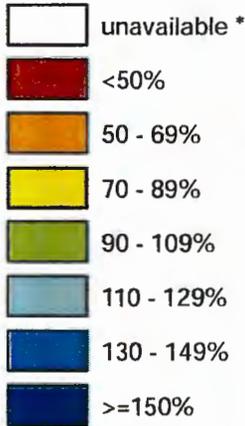
Prepared by:
USDA/NRCS National Water and Climate Center
Portland, Oregon
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

Utah

SNOTEL Current Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) % of Normal

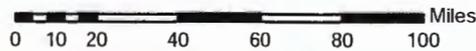
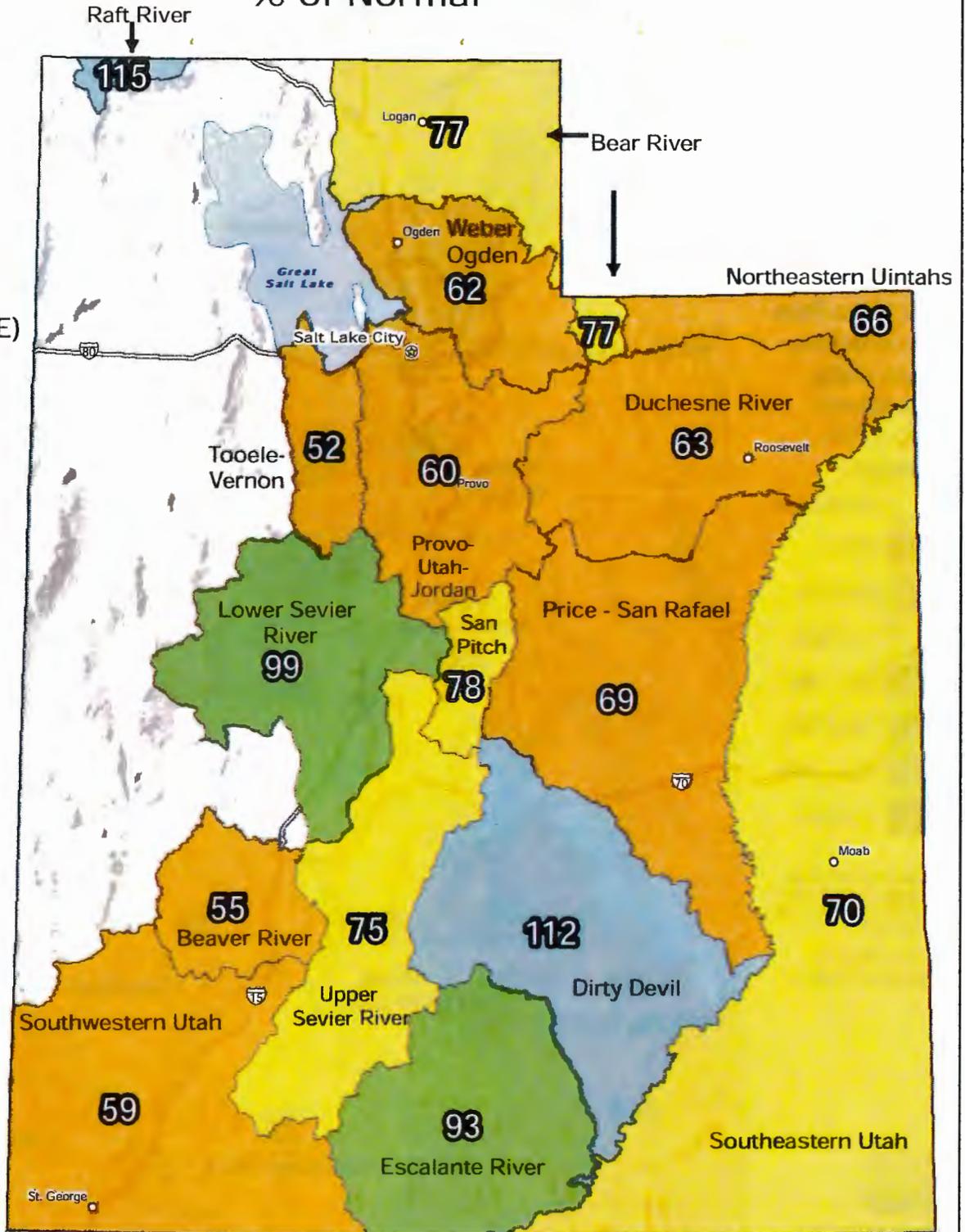
Mar 01, 2015

Snow Water Equivalent (SWE)
Basin-wide
Percent of
1981-2010
Median



* Data unavailable at time of posting or measurement is not representative at this time of year

*Provisional Data
Subject to Revision*



The snow water equivalent percent of normal represents the current snow water equivalent found at selected SNOTEL sites in or near the basin compared to the average value for those sites on this day. Data based on the first reading of the day (typically 00:00).

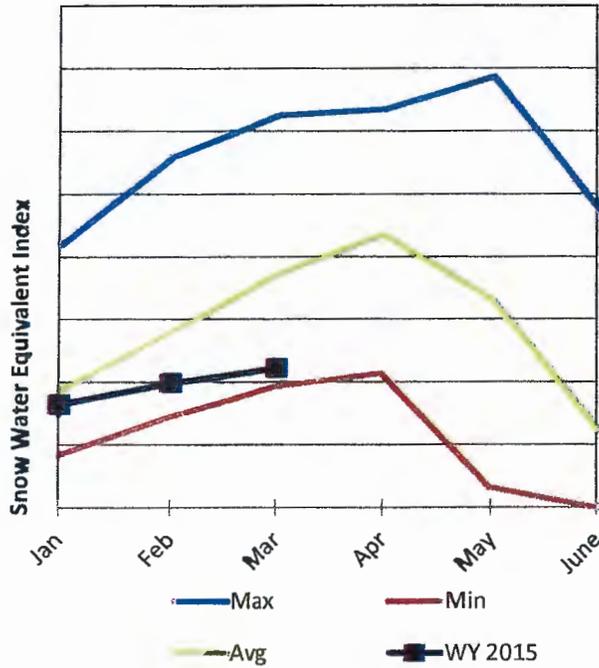
Prepared by:
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Weber & Ogden River Basins

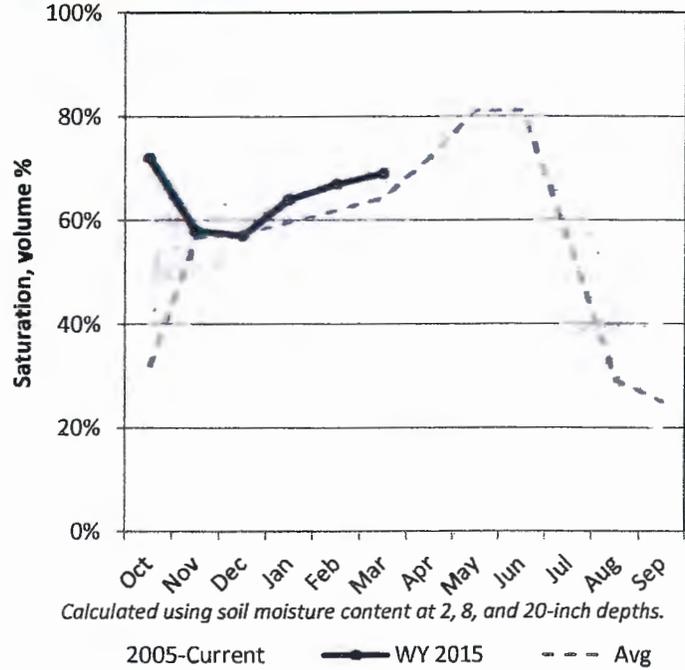
3/1/2015

Snowpack in the Weber & Ogden River Basins is much below average at 63% of normal, compared to 97% last year. Precipitation in February was much below average at 45%, which brings the seasonal accumulation (Oct-Feb) to 62% of average. Soil moisture is at 69% compared to 61% last year. Reservoir storage is at 53% of capacity, compared to 41% last year. Forecast streamflow volumes range from 28% to 78% of average. The surface water supply index is 19% for the Ogden River, 19% for the Weber River.

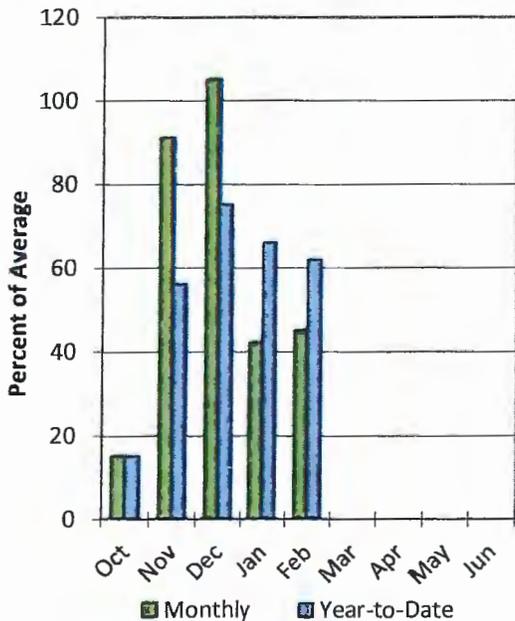
Snowpack



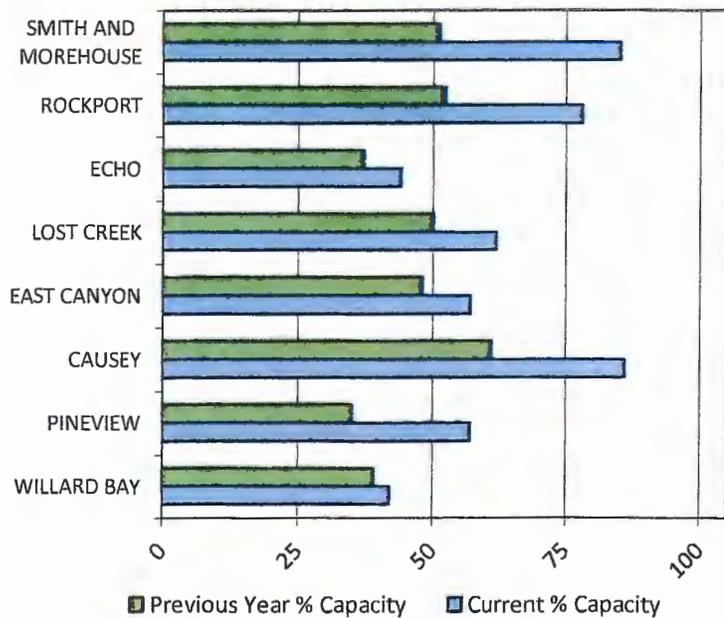
Soil Moisture



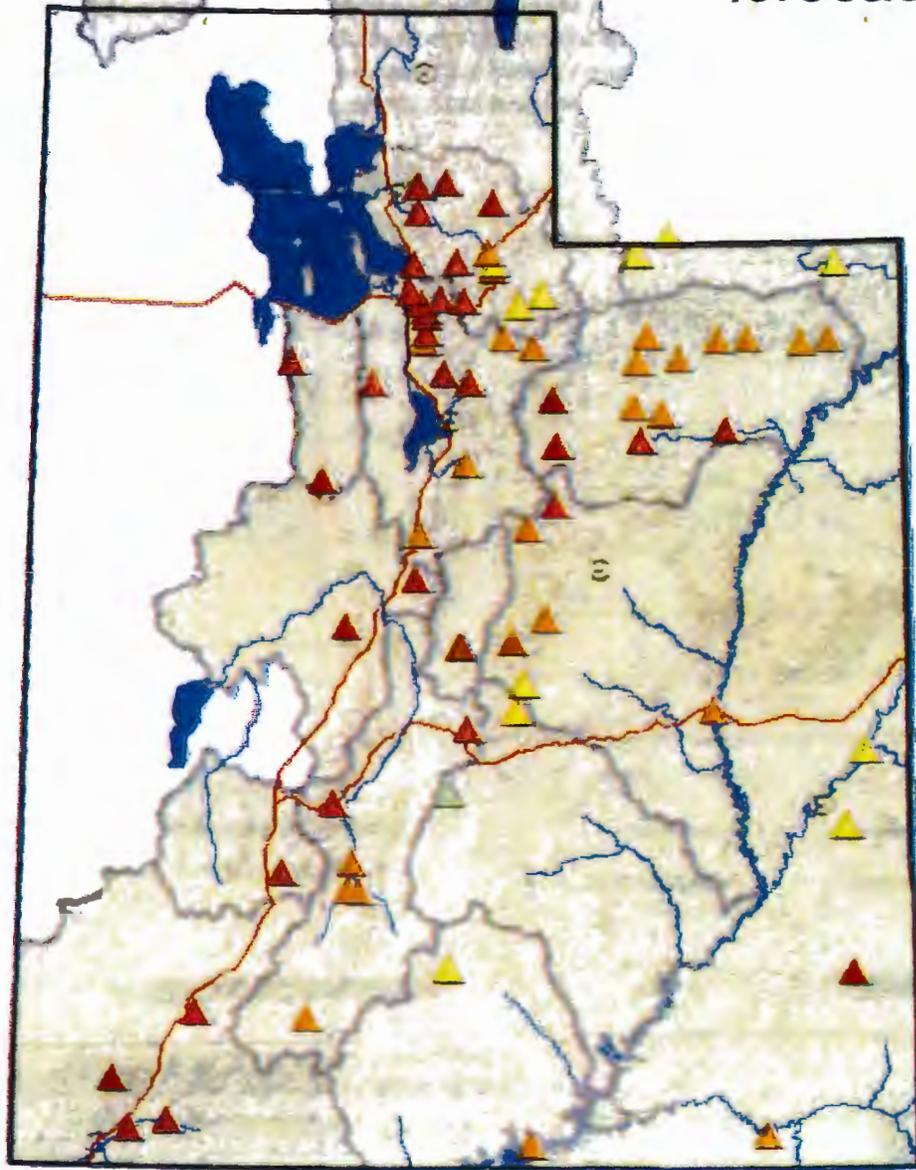
Precipitation



Reservoir Storage



Utah streamflow and reservoir forecast points



Percent normal

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|-----------------|
| ▲ | < 50% | △ | Forecast points |
| ▲ | 50 - 69% | ⊙ | Cities |
| ▲ | 70 - 89% | — | Rivers |
| ▲ | 90 - 109% | — | Highways |
| ▲ | 110 - 129% | | |
| ▲ | 130 - 149% | | |
| ▲ | > 150% | | |
| △ | no % avail. | | |

