



Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

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NEWS RELEASE

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Releases for Endangered Fish to Continue Through Memorial Day

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – The Colorado, Lower Blue and Roaring Fork rivers are running high as reservoir operators and the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program cooperate to enhance peak flows for the benefit of fish habitat in the lower Colorado River at Grand Junction. Coordinated releases from a series of Upper Colorado River Basin reservoirs that began last week are planned to continue through the Memorial Day weekend as part of the Coordinated Reservoirs Operations Program (CROS). Green Mountain and Ruedi reservoirs, operated by the Bureau of Reclamation, began increasing outflows late last week. Williams Fork Reservoir, operated by Denver Water, began increasing outflows Monday.

Recreation conditions may change daily during this period. Streamflows are predicted to increase and then decrease, and reservoirs will be ramping up to these higher outflows and back down. Some reservoirs plan to hold their outflows steady during Memorial Day weekend.

The participating reservoirs will voluntarily bypass additional inflow as part of CROS as follows*:

| <u>Reservoir</u> | <u>Previous Outflow</u> | <u>CROS Additional outflow</u> | <u>Maximum Outflow</u> | <u>Expected total duration, including ramping</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Green Mountain | 105 cfs | up to 870 cfs | 975 cfs | 10 days |
| Ruedi Reservoir | 155 cfs | up to 650 cfs | 800 cfs | 10 days |
| Windy Gap | 700 cfs | up to 175 cfs | 875 cfs | 5-6 days |
| Williams Fork | 305 cfs | up to 400 cfs | 700 cfs | 7 days |
| Wolford Mountain | 465 cfs | up to 235 cfs | 700 cfs | 7 days |
| Dillon Reservoir** | 150 cfs | up to 350 cfs | 500 cfs | 5-6 days |

*Note: All amounts are approximate.

**Note: Dillon Reservoir outflows must be passed through Green Mountain Reservoir to travel to the 15-Mile Reach, upstream of the confluence of the Gunnison and Colorado rivers near Grand Junction, Colo., and are included in the Green Mountain outflows.

Reservoir outflows are being increased to enhance the peak flow in the 15-Mile Reach as measured at the U.S. Geological Survey gage at Cameo on the Colorado River north of the town of Palisade. In an attempt to enhance the peak without raising flows above flood stage at Cameo, the timing and amount of reservoir participation is being staggered. The largest enhancement will occur shortly after the predicted peak on Wednesday. This

operation should offset some of the predicted decline in flow after the peak and extend the duration of high flows without increasing flood concern.

CROS was established in 1995 as part of the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. Its purpose is to enhance spring peak flows in a section of the Colorado River upstream of Grand Junction, Colo. In years when snowpack is above average, surplus inflows to the reservoirs can be passed on downstream to benefit endangered fish in the Colorado River: humpback chub, bonytail, Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker.

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The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program is a cooperative partnership of local, state and federal agencies, water developers, power customers and environmental groups established in 1988 to recover the endangered fishes while water development proceeds in accordance with federal and state laws and interstate compacts.