



COLORADO

**Colorado Water
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

1313 Sherman Street, Room 718
Denver, CO 80203

P (303) 866-3441
F (303) 866-4474

Jared Polis, Governor

Dan Gibbs, DNR Executive Director

Rebecca Mitchell, CWCB Director

TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Amy Ostdiek, Greg Johnson, Michelle Garrison

DATE: July 21, 2021

AGENDA ITEM: 11. Colorado River Updates

This is an information item only, with no Board action requested.

Staff will provide updates to the Board on a number of Colorado River issues, including current hydrology, ongoing implementation of the Drought Contingency Plans, technical considerations, and other issues.

Post-2026 Reservoir Operations Negotiations Update

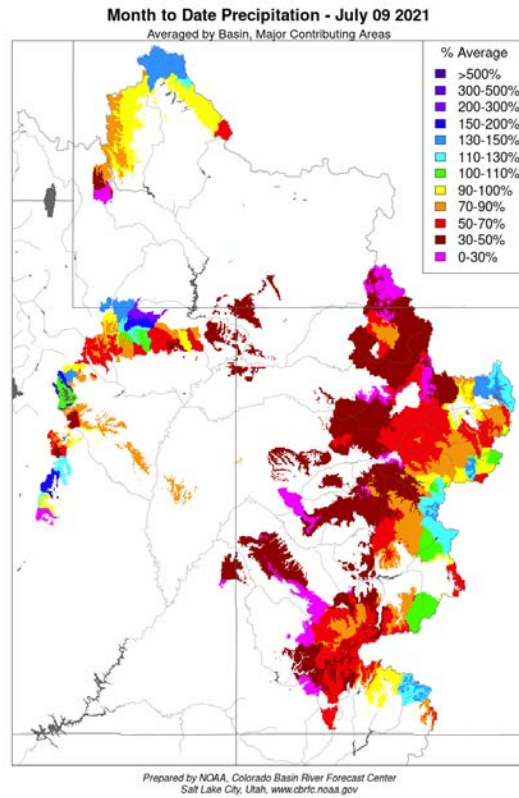
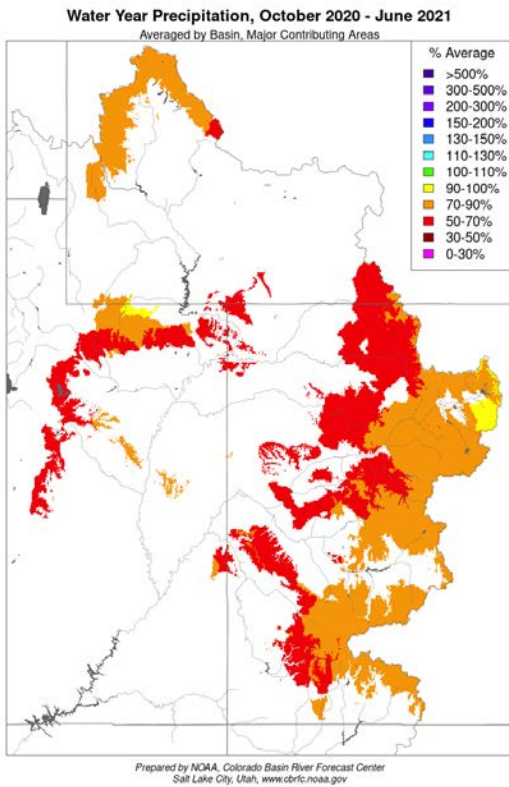
As Commissioner Mitchell and her Colorado River team look to begin discussions with the other Basin States regarding post-2026 Reservoir Operations, she recognizes the importance of working with water users, Tribal Nations, and non-governmental organizations in developing state strategy. Commissioner Mitchell is initiating discussions with these key groups and will continue in this outreach effort, and will soon release a timeline of engagement and outreach to take place through 2021.

Hydrology and Operations Updates

Extremely dry conditions have persisted throughout the Colorado River Basin from summer 2020 to present. Spring snowpack was below average throughout most of the basin. Exceptionally low soil moisture conditions contributed to record low runoff in some locations. Forecasts of Lake Powell inflow continue to decline.

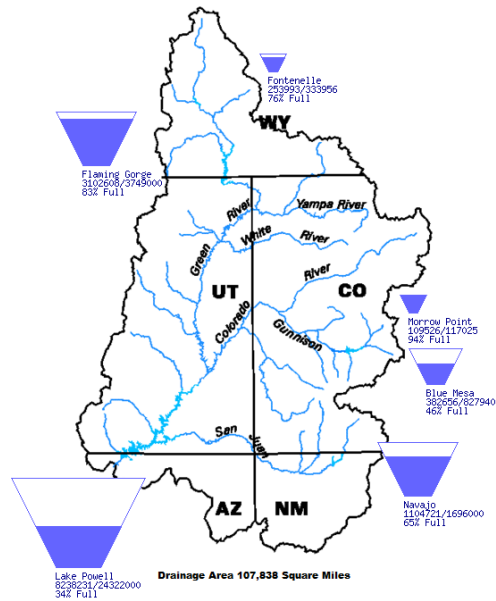
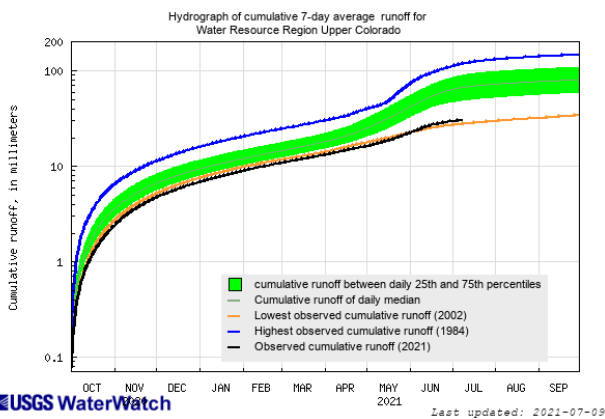


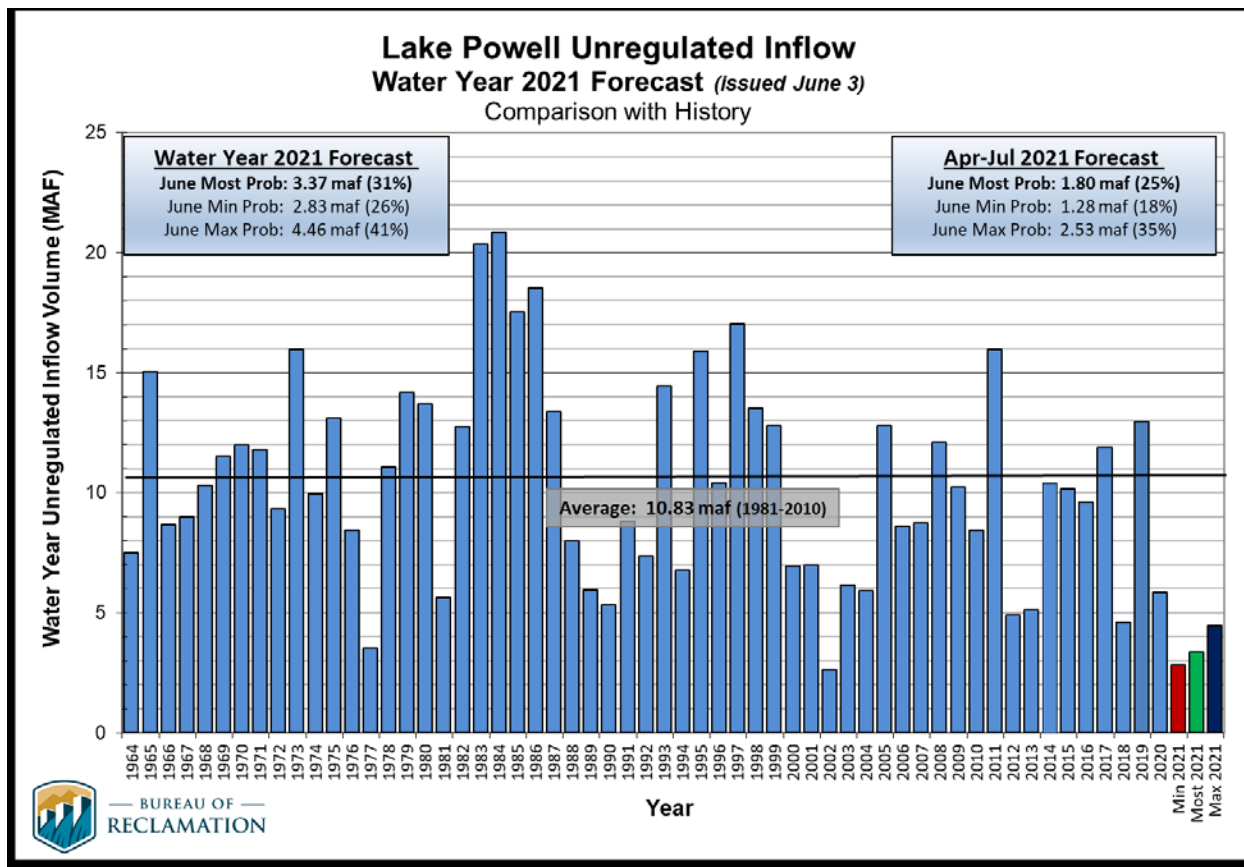
Precipitation, Runoff and Storage Conditions



Data Current as of:
07/07/2021

Upper Colorado River Drainage Basin





Lake Powell released 8.23 MAF in WY2020 and is releasing 8.23 MAF in WY2021.

Current projections suggest a WY2022 release of 7.0 - 7.48 MAF. Projected Lake Powell elevations triggered Drought Response Operations Agreement discussions as part of the Upper Basin Drought Contingency Plan.

Lake Mead elevations triggered water conservation measures under the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan for calendar year 2021. Projected Lake Mead elevations are expected to trigger Level 1 shortage conditions for the Lower Basin in addition to water conservation measures under the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan in calendar year 2022.

Staff will continue to actively monitor this quickly changing situation and provide updates regarding projections and discussions of potential impacts of continued dry conditions.

