
COLORADO

WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS UPDATE

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER: COLORADO DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES
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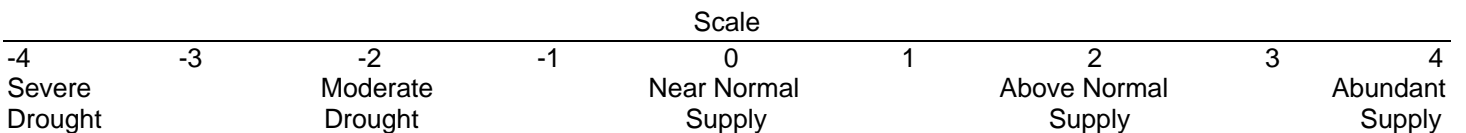
October 2007

The Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) developed by this office and the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service is used as an indicator of mountain-based water supply conditions in the major river basins of the state. It is based on stream flow, reservoir storage, and precipitation for the summer period (May through October). During the summer period, stream flow is the primary component in all basins except the South Platte basin where reservoir storage is given the most weight.

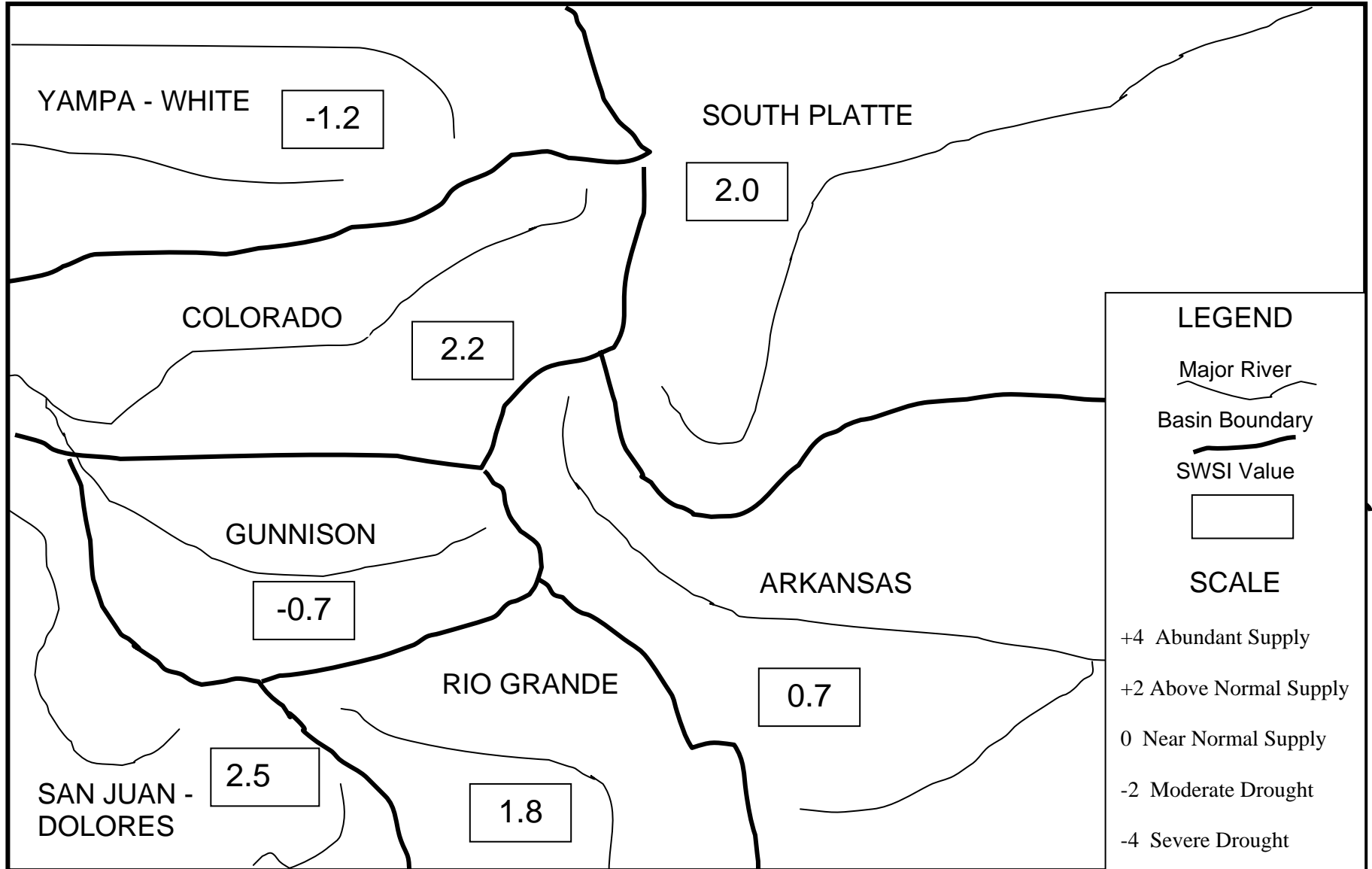
The statewide SWSI values for the month range from a high value of 2.5 in the San Juan/Dolores Basin to a low value of -1.2 in the Yampa/White Basin. Six of the basins (South Platte, Arkansas, Rio Grande, Colorado, Yampa/White, and San Juan/Dolores) experienced a gain from the previous month's values. One of the basins (Gunnison) experienced a loss from the previous month's values.

The following SWSI values were computed for each of the seven major basins for October 1, 2007, and reflect the conditions during the month of September 2007.

<u>Basin</u>	<u>October 1, 2007 SWSI Value</u>	<u>Change From Previous Month</u>	<u>Change From Previous Year</u>
South Platte	+2.0	+0.6	+1.2
Arkansas	+0.7	+0.8	+1.0
Rio Grande	+1.8	+1.9	+1.1
Gunnison	-0.7	-0.4	+0.2
Colorado	+2.2	+3.2	+2.2
Yampa/White	-1.2	+1.7	-0.5
San Juan/Dolores	+2.5	+2.8	+1.5



SURFACE WATER SUPPLY INDEX FOR COLORADO



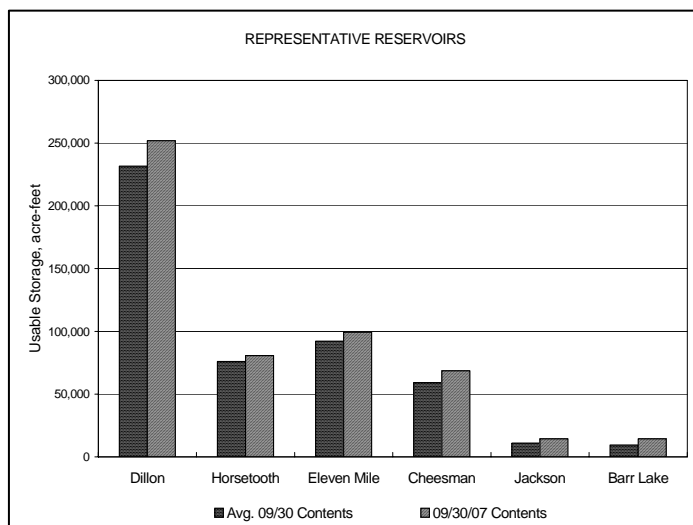
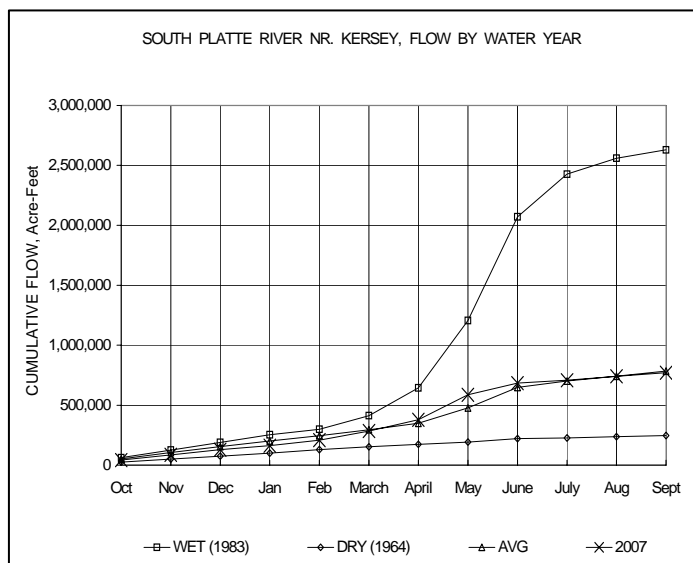
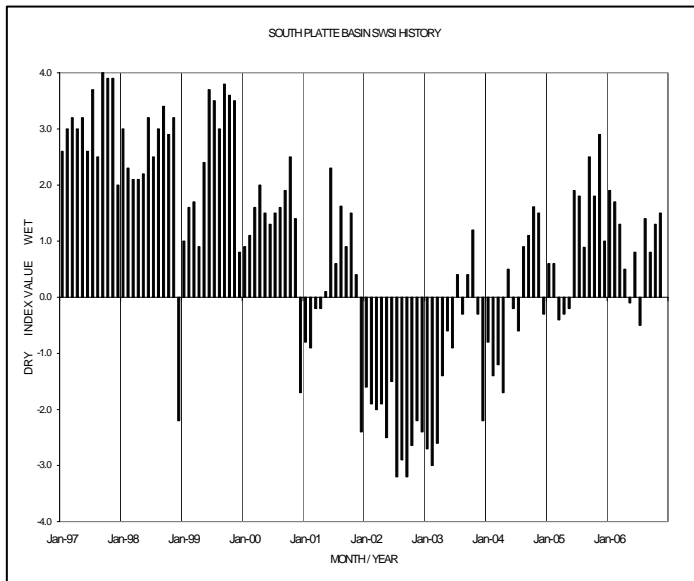
October 1, 2007

Basinwide Conditions Assessment

The SWSI value for the month was +2.0. Reservoir storage in Dillon, Horsetooth, Eleven Mile, Cheesman, Jackson, and Barr Lake, the major component in this basin in computing the SWSI value, was 110% of normal as of the end of September. Cumulative storage in the major plains reservoirs: Julesberg, North Sterling, and Prewitt, is at 26% of capacity. Cumulative storage in the major upper-basin reservoirs: Cheesman, Eleven Mile, Spinney, and Antero is at 93% of capacity. Flow at the gaging station South Platte River near Kersey was 520 cfs, as compared to the long-term average of 514 cfs. Flow at the Colorado/Nebraska state line averaged 66 cfs.

Outlook

September was fairly uneventful as the irrigation season wound down. There was generally adequate water for users during the month. As usually happens this time of year, the calls on the river became less senior than in previous months. Reservoir levels remain in good condition as we end the irrigation season and look forward to filling reservoirs next year. In particular, cities appear to be in a good water supply situation for the end of this irrigation year with excellent storage conditions. As irrigation ends in October, we would expect recharge and some storage to begin in the basin.



Basinwide Conditions Assessment

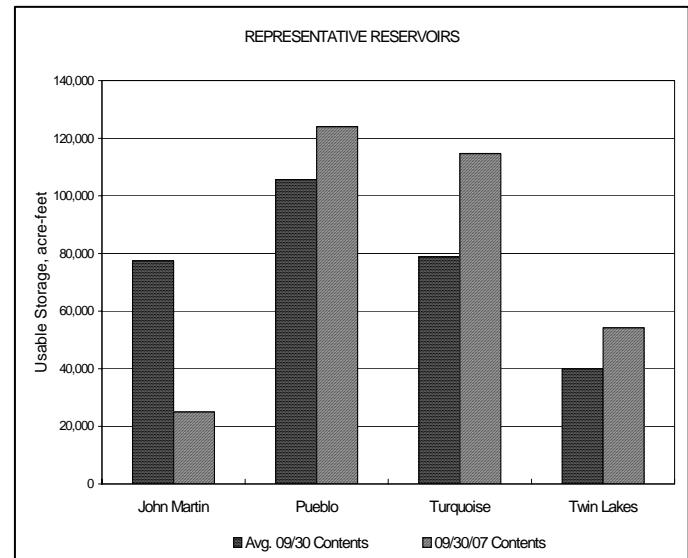
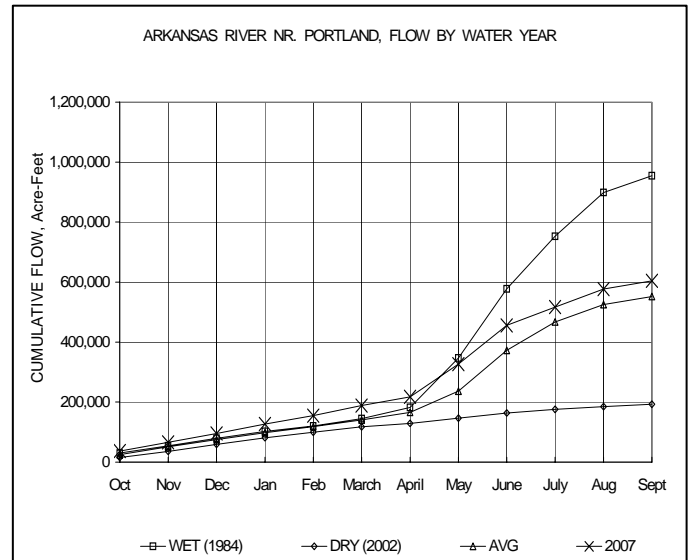
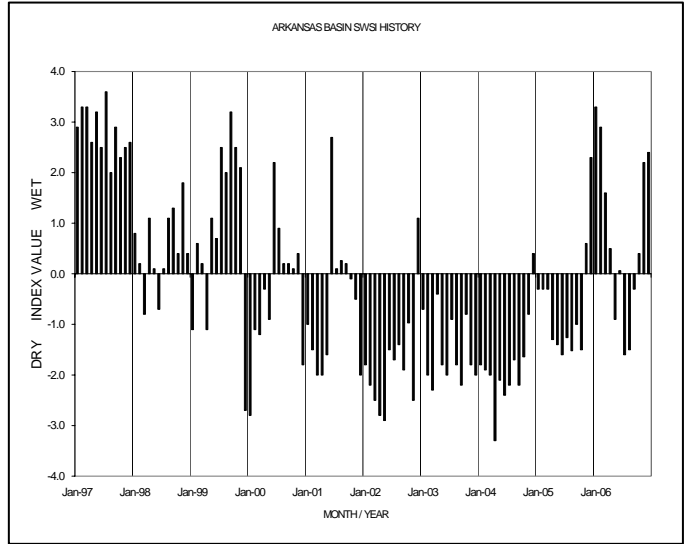
The SWSI value for the month was +0.7. Flow at the gaging station Arkansas River near Portland was 456 cfs, as compared to the long-term average of 452 cfs. Storage in Turquoise, Twin Lakes, Pueblo, and John Martin reservoirs totaled 105% of normal as of the end of September.

Outlook

The river call for September was set on the Amity Canal senior right (2/21/1887) for most of the month with a three day period from September 1st through 3rd where the call went to the Fort Lyon #2 (3/1/1887) due to increased river flows.

Administrative/Management Concerns

The Bureau of Reclamation is currently going through the 10-Year Review of the Trinidad Reservoir Operations to assess the impact of storage of water in Trinidad Reservoir for use for irrigation of lands under the Purgatoire River Water Conservancy District. The Bureau hopes to complete a report on an update of the spreadsheet model used to evaluate operations by the date of the Arkansas River Compact Administration Meeting in December.



Basinwide Conditions Assessment

The SWSI value for the month was +1.8. Flow at the gaging station Rio Grande near Del Norte averaged 548 cfs (107% of normal). The Conejos River near Mogote had a mean flow of 177 cfs (134% of normal). The higher than normal flow on the Conejos River was due mainly to releases from Platoro Reservoir for irrigation needs downstream. Generally, stream flow in the Upper Rio Grande basin was normal to slightly above normal during September. Storage in Platoro, Rio Grande, and Santa Maria reservoirs totaled 97% of normal as of the end of September.

Precipitation in Alamosa for the month of September was 1.06 inches, 0.17 inches above normal. Temperatures ranged from 24 degrees to 83 degrees in Alamosa where the average monthly temperature was 57 degrees, 2.5 degrees above normal.

Outlook

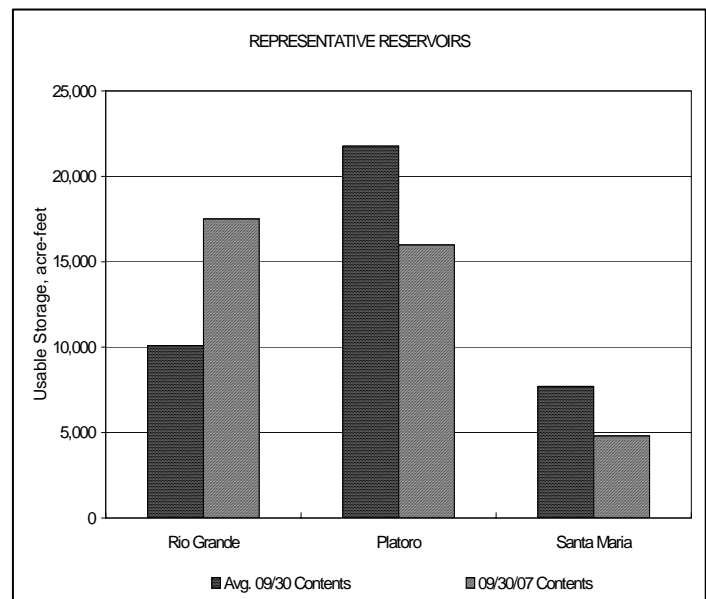
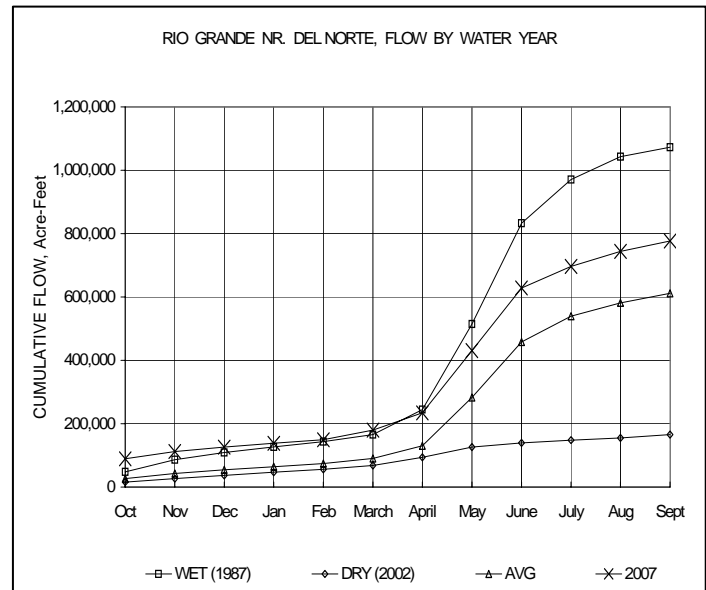
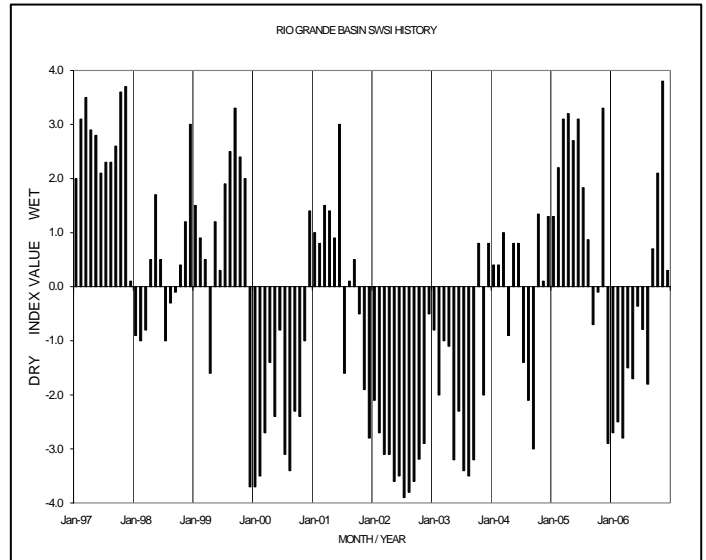
Streams in the upper Rio Grande basin have experienced slightly above average flows during the late summer and early fall. The mountains surrounding the basin are still clear of snow for the most part. However, there is optimism that rain and snowfall in October and November can jump-start a snowy winter.

Administrative/Management Concerns

Colorado will meet its delivery obligation to New Mexico and Texas under the Rio Grande Compact.

Public Use Impacts

The relatively mild September allowed the harvest to progress rapidly. Farmers in the San Luis Valley should benefit from high commodity prices on their field crops this fall, especially those with grain crops.



Basinwide Conditions Assessment

The SWSI value for the month was -0.7. Flow at the gaging station Uncompahgre River near Ridgway was 135 cfs, as compared to the long-term average of 110 cfs. Storage in Taylor Park, Crawford, and Fruitland reservoirs totaled 102% of normal as of the end of September.

Outlook

It has been a fairly good summer for both occasional rains and the increased stream flows they have created.

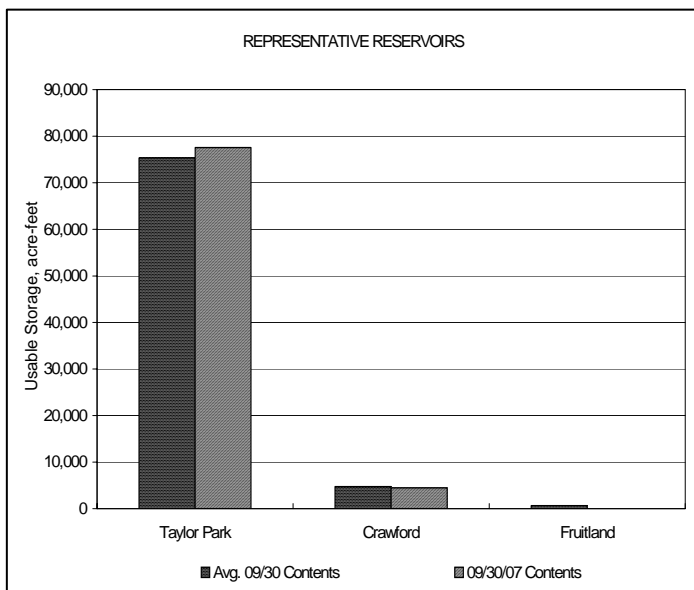
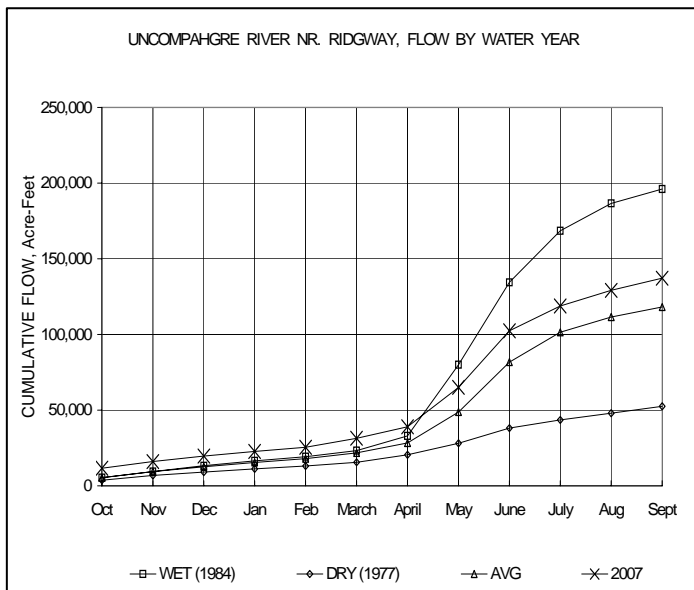
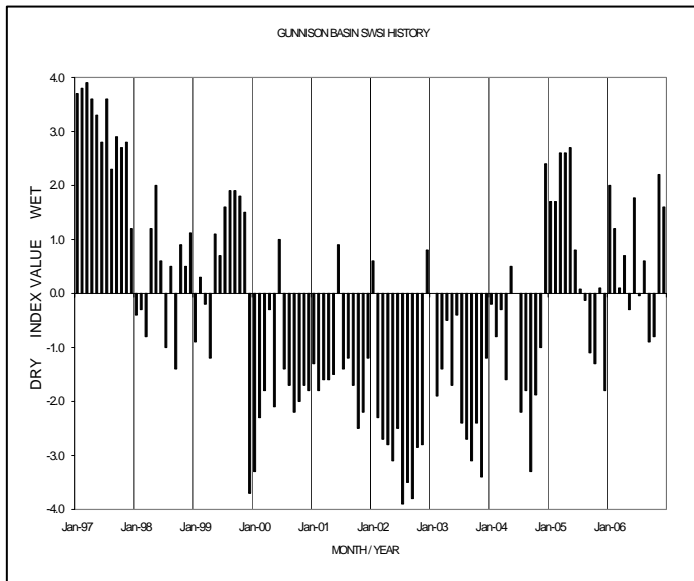
Administrative/Management Concerns

The Gunnison basin irrigators have enjoyed a good season. The occasional rains have provided relief from the heat and boosted the stream flows. This has kept a call off the San Miguel River from the Highline Canal and the Gunnison River from the Redlands Canal or the Gunnison Tunnel. There was not a call on the Uncompahgre River either, since the M & D Canal was satisfied with natural flow and Ridgway Reservoir had enough storage to satisfy UVWUA needs.

Reservoir storage has been more than expected in the basin this summer, largely due to increased flows from the wet groundwater conditions last fall and this summer's precipitation. Blue Mesa reservoir is still 83% full, so releases will need to be above normal to meet their January 1st storage target to prevent icing in the river above the reservoir.

Public Use Impacts

As the winter season approaches, water users in this basin are hoping for a good snowpack year. The rains are helpful, but they long for a snowpack and spring runoff that is above normal for a change.



Basinwide Conditions Assessment

The SWSI value for the month was +2.2. Flow at the gaging station Colorado River near Dotsero was 1654 cfs, as compared to the long-term average of 1414 cfs. Storage in Green Mountain, Ruedi, and Williams Fork reservoirs totaled 103% of normal as of the end of September.

Outlook

The 2007 water year ended this month with Colorado River Basin rainfall of 145 percent of normal for September. Last month's increased stream flow trend continued to even higher flows this month which slowed Grand Valley Irrigation diversions, and contributed to Lake Powell, which is currently half full with a pool level of 60 percent of normal for this time of year.

Basin reservoirs volumes have increased considerably above average for this time of year which will result in good carry-over storage for next year.

Administrative/Management Concerns

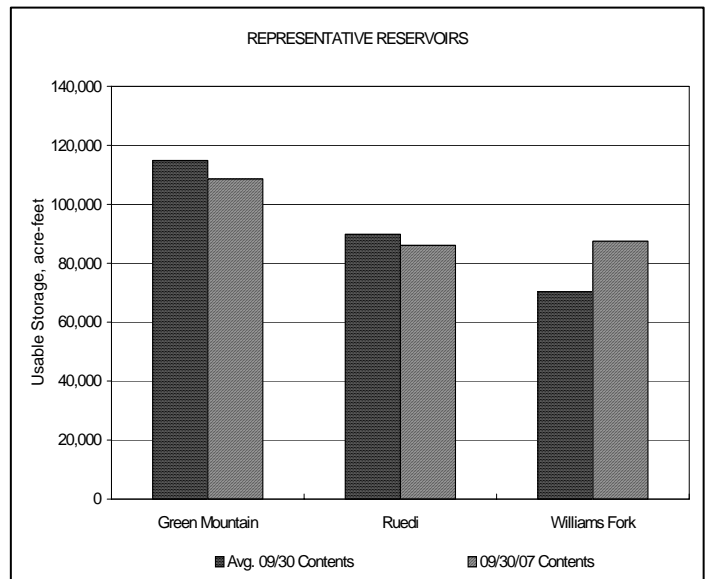
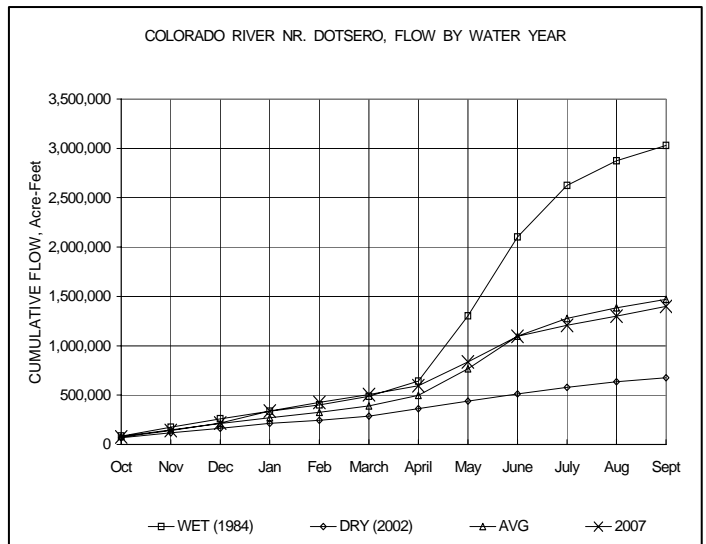
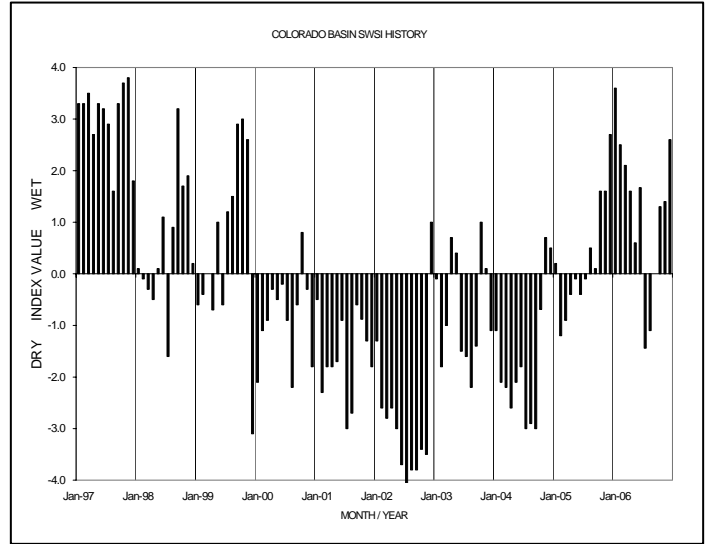
Stream flow levels in the basin were above average beginning the second half of September. Dillon Reservoir remains full and must release to create capacity for spring run-off.

Division 5 Augmentation Coordination staff has initiated work with Water Commissioners to assess augmentation plans within each district. This includes accounting for augmentation water availability, and ensuring accuracy to prevent adverse impact to senior users. An internal database will also be developed from which augmentation plans can be administered and accounted for.

The Summit County Well-Enforcement Program continued throughout September to curtail non-permitted uses of residential wells. Compliance with well permits will reduce depletion of associated surface water and increase water available to downstream senior users.

Public Use Impacts

Ruedi Reservoir will begin above average releases of 80-90 cfs (average 60-70 cfs) beginning November 1st to reach the target 65-70 acre ft. level by April 1, 2008. This supports more active spawning within the Lower Fryingpan fish habitat.



Basinwide Conditions Assessment

The SWSI value for the month was -1.2. Flow at the gaging station Yampa River at Steamboat was 100 cfs, as compared to the long-term average of 120 cfs.

September precipitation was considerably above average for the Yampa, White, and North Platte River basins. Precipitation for the month, as measured at the SNOTEL sites operated by the NRCS, was reported at approximately 202% of average for the Yampa/White River basin and 208% of average for the North Platte River basin. Precipitation for Water Year 2007, however, was below average at 85% and 89%, respectively, for the Yampa/White River basin and the North Platte River basin.

Due to the increased precipitation, streamflows throughout the basins were generally at average or above average levels by the end of September.

Outlook

October temperature and precipitation forecasts for the area, based on NOAA data, are for an equal chance of above normal, normal, or below normal temperatures and precipitation for the month.

Fish Creek Reservoir storage level continued to decline in September and was reported at approximately 72% of capacity at the end of the month. Yamcolo Reservoir storage level increased slightly in September and the reservoir was at approximately 36% of capacity at the end of the month. Elkhead Creek Reservoir level declined during the month and the reservoir was at approximately 17,675 acre-feet or 71% of its' enlarged capacity (approximately 24,900 acre-feet) at the end of September. Water stored in Fish Creek Reservoir is used primarily for municipal purposes, Yamcolo Reservoir for irrigation purposes, and Elkhead Creek Reservoir for municipal, industrial, recreation, and fish recovery releases.

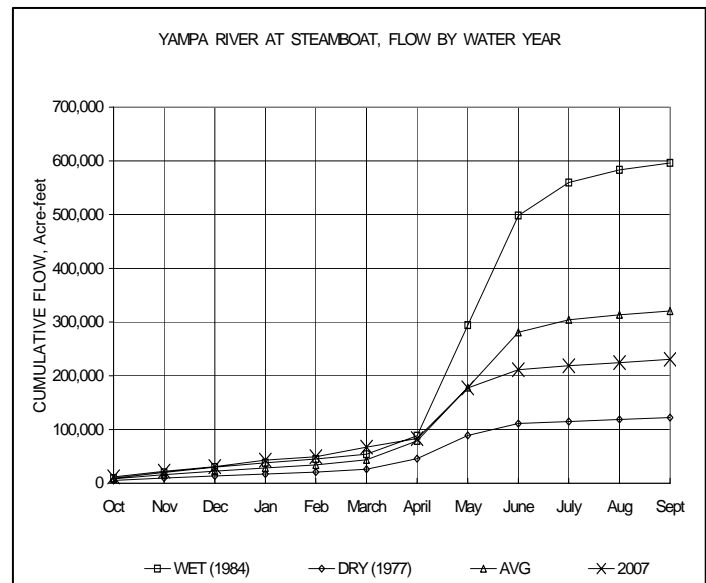
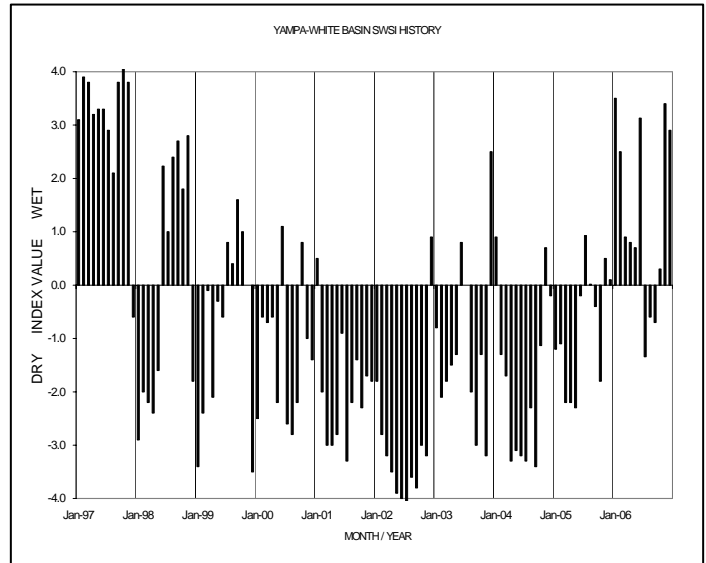
Administrative/Management Concerns

A number of calls were released in September and only Middle Hunt Creek, Bear River, Piceance Creek, and Newcomb Creek remained under administration at the end of the month.

The Colorado River District, on behalf of the Recovery Program, continued with the fish recovery release from Elkhead Creek Reservoir in September. Fish release flows ranged between 75 cfs at the beginning of the month to 30 cfs on September 20, at which time the Recovery Program requested that the release be discontinued due to increased flow in the Yampa River. Division 6 is responsible for protecting this water through the Yampa River critical habitat reach.

Public Use Impacts

Elkhead Creek Reservoir, which opened this spring after being closed for almost two years, was open for day-use fishing and recreational activities this summer.



Basinwide Conditions Assessment

The SWSI value for the month was 2.5. Flows at the Animas River at Durango averaged 658 cfs (142% of normal) with an average daily peak flow of 3010 cfs on September 24th. The Dolores River at Dolores averaged 222 cfs (123% of normal) with an average daily peak flow of 938 cfs on September 24th. The La Plata River at Hesperus averaged 25.2 cfs (125% of normal) with an average daily peak flow of 92.7 cfs on September 24th. Durango recorded 2.68 inches for the month which is above the 30-year average of 2.27 inches. Precipitation to date in Durango, for the water year, is 19.78 inches which is slightly above the average of 19.52 inches. Temperatures in September were above normal for the month. Durango was 1.3° above its 30-year average high and 2.3° above its 30-year average low.

At the end of the month Vallecito Reservoir contained 83,580 acre-feet compared to its normal contents of 56,961 acre-feet (147% of normal). McPhee Reservoir has 291,278 acre-feet compared to its normal contents of 260,324 acre-feet (114% of normal). Lemon Reservoir has 22,430 acre-feet as compared to its normal content of 19,613 acre-feet (114% of normal).

Outlook

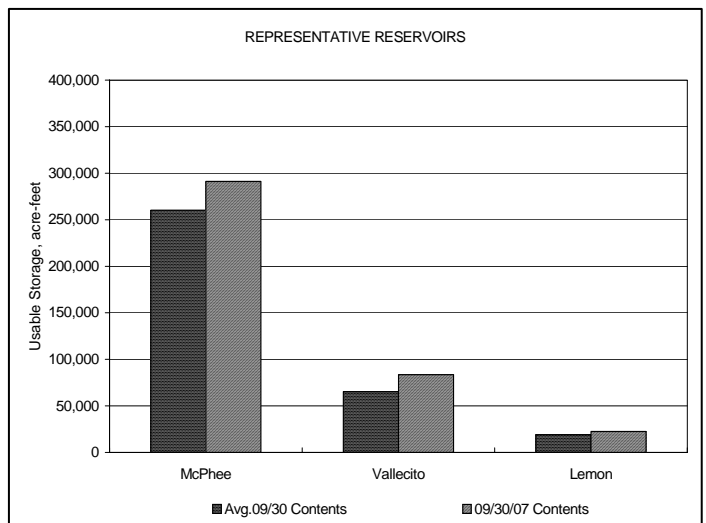
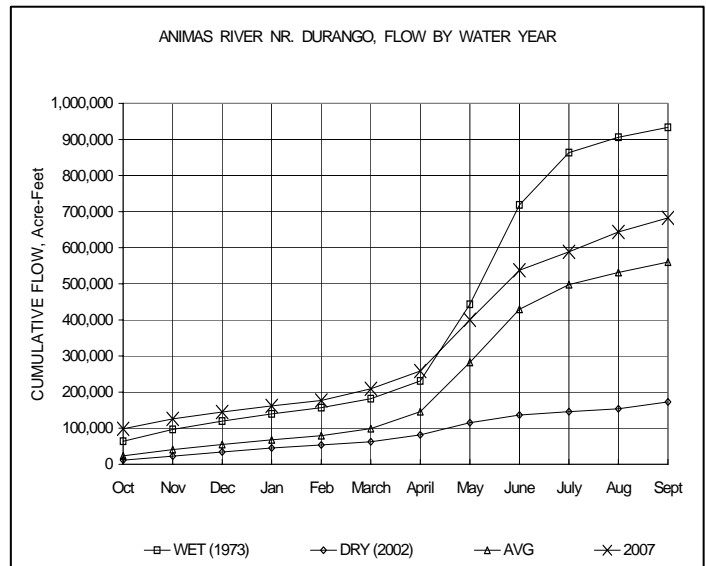
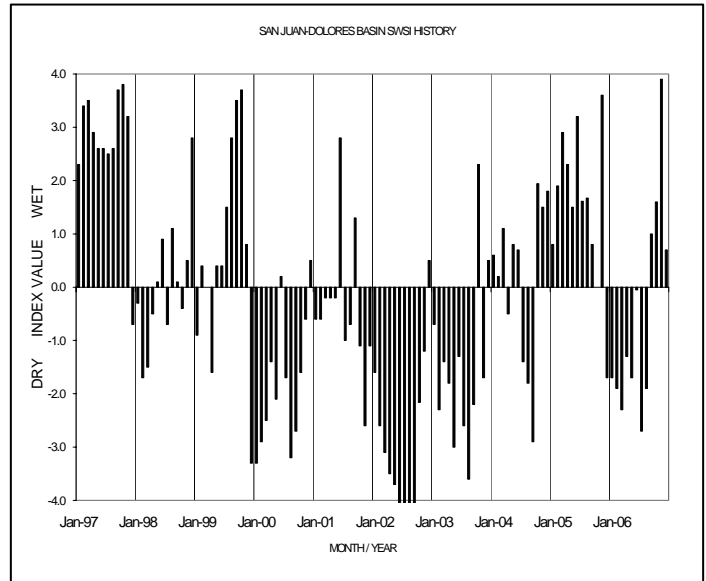
September precipitation was slightly above average this year. Overall flows in all the major rivers within the division were above 2006 totals. Total flow volume past the Animas River at Durango for the water year was approximately 207,000 more acre-feet than 2006. Dolores River at Dolores had approximately 107,000 more acre-feet and the La Plata River at Hesperus had approximately 10,000 more acre-feet than last year. Water storage within the major reservoirs remained above average for the entire water year. With the irrigation season winding down we shift our focus to snow pack and hope we maintain 2007 levels or better.

Administrative/Management Concerns

On September 30, 2007 the Division Engineer Bruce Whitehead retired after 25 years of service with over 14 of those years in Division 7. At this time it is unknown who will be the successor. Assistant Division Engineer Scott Brinton and District 30 Water Commissioner Jeff Titus have been deposed for the City of Durango RICD trial. The trial has been set for two weeks in January 2008. Depositions with attorneys began in October. The La Plata compact continued to be on call the entire month of September. New Mexico placed a call for 80 cfs on May 22, 2007 that continued through the end of September.

Public Use Impacts

Kayaking has continued to be observed by DWR staff on the Animas River.



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