



Oregon Water Supply Outlook Report

February 1, 2024



Clouds part over Anthony Lake Snow Course, situated in the Elkhorn Mountains northwest of Baker City. Snowpack at the site is 92% of median as of February 1st.

Photo taken by Luke Albert, Baker County Assistant Watermaster (January 30, 2024)

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Conditions Overview

Summary

January was a month of stark contrast. While it began with low snowpack and higher-than-normal temperatures—historically characteristic of a strong El Niño, a destabilized polar jet stream swept across the region starting on 1/7. This brought unseasonably cold temperatures and significant snow accumulation to the valleys and mountains. Several SNOTEL stations recorded the largest or second largest snowpack increase on record for the first half of January. Stations in the Oregon Cascades received nearly 5.5 ft of snow, in the Blue Mountains up to 2.8 ft, and on Steens Mountain nearly 3 ft.

However, in mid-January, El Niño once again dominated the weather pattern, with temperatures becoming anomalously warm and atmospheric rivers bringing rain to higher elevations in the mountains. Early in the 2nd half of January, notably at SNOTEL sites in the Cascades and in eastern Klamath Basin, minor rain-on-snow events and above-freezing temperatures likely warmed the snowpack, increasing its susceptibility to melting. Then, on 1/26, a major storm impacted those areas and parts of the Blue Mountains, which resulted in substantial melting of snowpack. Significant melting continued in those regions as a mid-winter heatwave followed the storm. Some higher elevation sites in the Oregon Cascades lost as much as 4 inches of snow water equivalent (SWE; a measure of the water content stored in snowpack) during this period. Several sites, mostly in the Cascades, recorded their largest or 2nd largest decline in snowpack on record for the 2nd half of January. Due to active storm patterns in January water year-to-date precipitation as percent of normal improved at most SNOTEL sites.

While water supply forecasts (WSF) were marginally impacted in some regions that experienced significant snowmelt, other regions saw marginal improvements to WSFs due to improved snowpack and WYTD precipitation. The summer outlook for water supply will come into clearer focus, with predictive skill for forecasts improving, as the historic period of peak snowpack (between mid-March and early April) approaches.

*Note that basin conditions outlined in this report include data from stations within the SNOTEL and SNOLITE network, and/or cooperator weather stations.

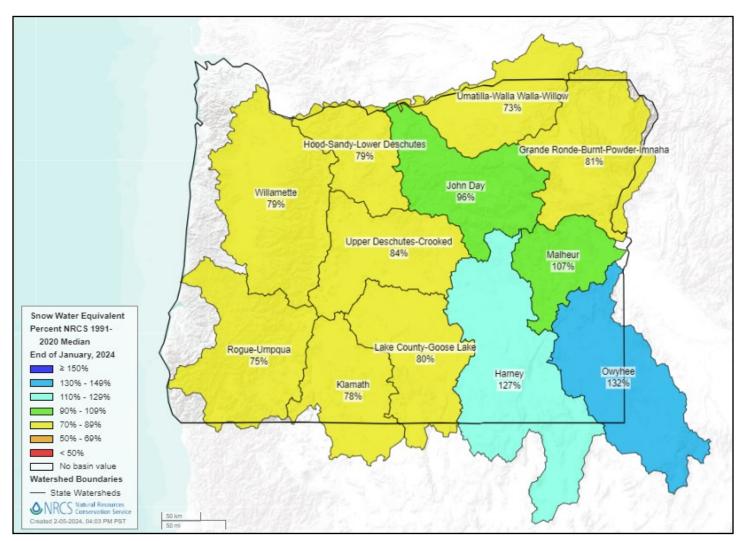


Brock Phillips, Bureau of Reclamation, prepares sampling equipment at the Park H.Q. Snow Course in Crater Lake National Park. Snowpack at the site is 104% of median as of February 1st.

Photo taken by Chris Gebauer, NRCS Soil Scientist (January 30, 2024)

Snowpack

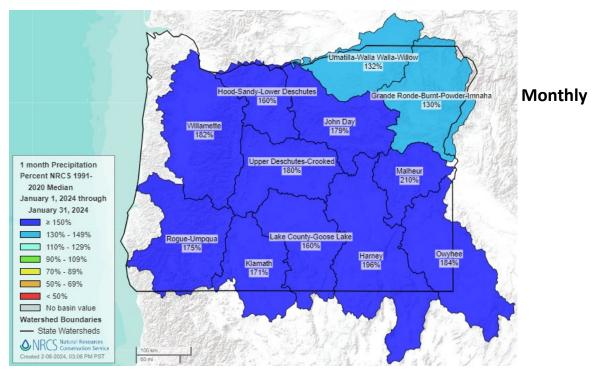
As of February 1st, snowpack is 81% statewide, with significant variability across the state. While colder storms in the first half of January provided a much needed boost to snowpack, warmer temperatures and rain-on-snow in the 2nd half pared back some gains, and in some cases erased gains altogether as snowmelt set a record or near record at several stations. More substantial melting occurred across the Cascades and in eastern Klamath and western Lake counties than in the Blue Mountains. Some stations in the Blue Mountains did experience significant melting, such as Madison Butte and County Line SNOTEL; however, snowpack at stations in that region remained mostly stable with either slight or no melting of snowpack. SNOTEL stations on Steens Mountain are recording above-normal snowpack.



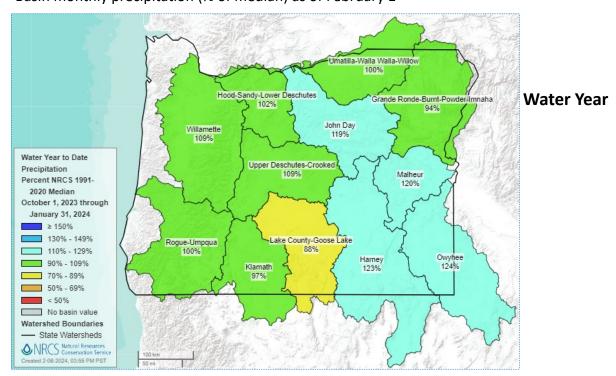
Basin snowpack (% of median) as of February 1

Precipitation

January was a wet month across Oregon. Active storm patterns throughout much of the month resulted in mostly well-above normal precipitation for January. Early-season deficits in WYTD precipitation were mostly alleviated, notably across the Cascades and much of the Blue Mountains. Deficits still persist at some SNOTEL sites in eastern Klamath and western Lake counties, parts of the Rogue Basin, and in parts of the Wallowa Mountains.



Basin monthly precipitation (% of median) as of February 1

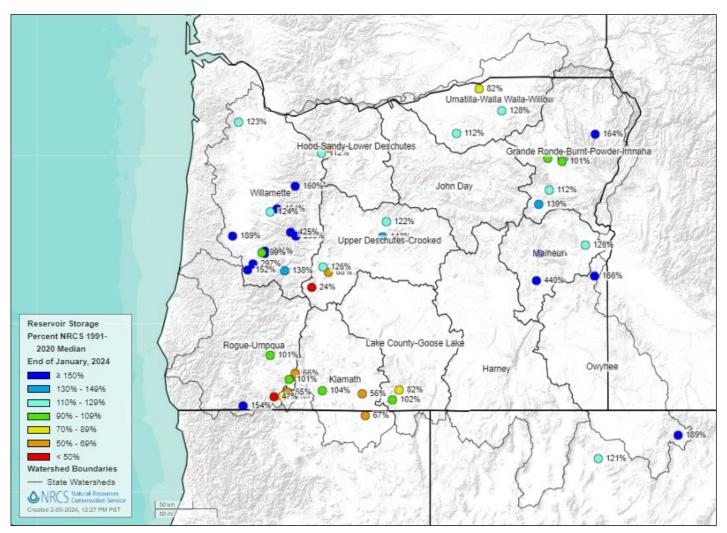


Basin water-year precipitation (% of median) as of February 1

Reservoirs

Volumetric storage for reservoirs across the state is variable. In the Willamette Valley and eastern Oregon, reservoirs are storing volumes near to well-above median. In the Upper Deschutes Basin and southern Oregon, reservoirs are storing volumes that are well-below to above normal.

Reservoir storage values, notably this early in the season, aren't necessarily reflective of water supply conditions. Reservoir operators control for a variety of factors when choosing to store or release water, including flooding, irrigation, ecological management, and other water needs. These management needs may impact storage values for a reservoir.



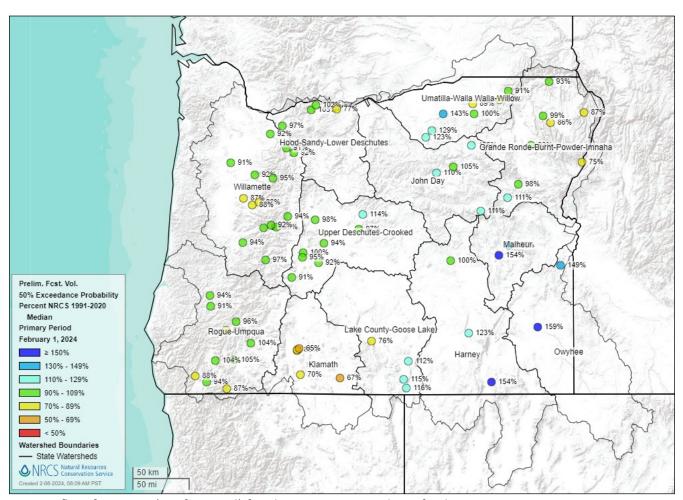
Reservoir storage (% of storage capacity) as of February 1

Streamflow

Streamflow across Oregon is mostly well-above normal. Snowmelt in some regions and a higher proportion of precipitation falling as rain during the 2nd half of January have contributed to elevated streamflows.

As of February 1st, water supply forecasts (WSF) have generally improved since January 1st across much of the central Blue Mountains and in Harney Basin. Some WSFs in the Rogue and Klamath basins have declined. While there have been some marginal improvements and degradation in regions, predictive skill for most WSFs remains comparatively low (i.e., current conditions are a poor predictor for summer water supply) this early in the season. The 50%-exceedance for WSFs tends nearer the climatological normal when predictive skill is sufficiently low, which may or may not be more inclusively reflective of conditions. As the season progresses, the predictive skill of most WSFs will improve as the historic period of peak snowpack (between mid-March and early April) approaches. Forecast-product users should bear this and any model uncertainty (quantitatively captured by exceedance intervals) in mind when interpreting WSFs for decision making.

View the map for January observed streamflow <u>here.</u>

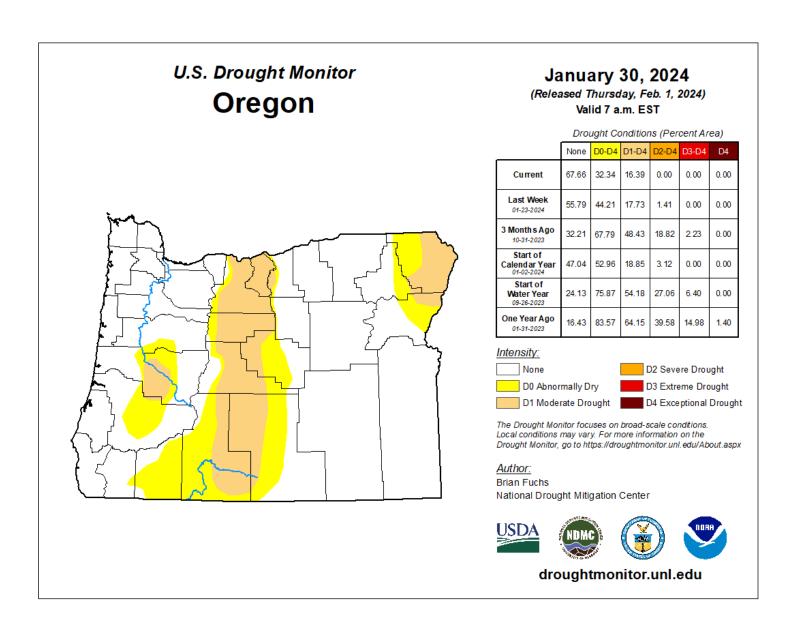


Streamflow forecasts (% of normal) for the primary period as of February 1

Drought

Drought distribution (D1 – Moderate Drought) in Oregon is primarily distributed from Wasco and Sherman counties down to Klamath and Lake counties, with additional D1-drought designations in part of the upper Willimatte Valley and in northeastern Oregon mostly in Wallowa County. As of January 23rd, nearly 44% of the state is in a drought category, with no severe to exceptional drought designations.

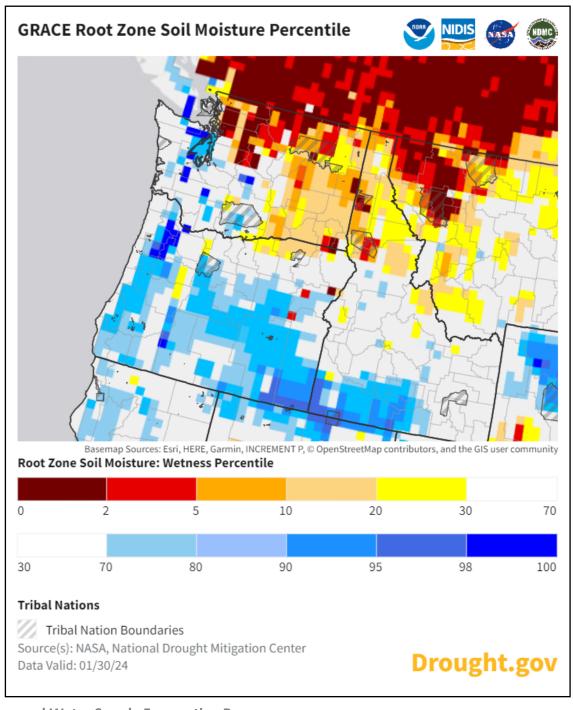
At the beginning of the water year, 54% of the state was in some drought category (D1-D3), and 27% of the state in severe to extreme drought.



Soils

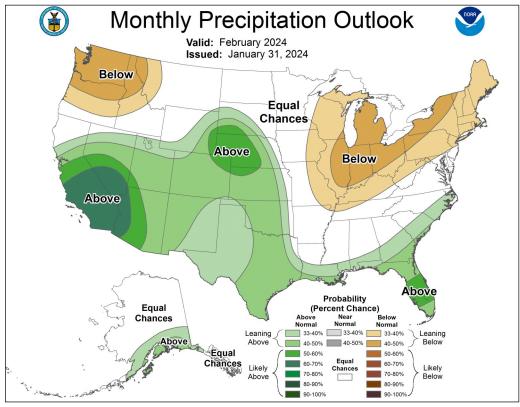
The NASA GRACE product for root-zone soil moisture indicates generally wetter soil moisture conditions across much of the state, with the exception of some drier profiles in parts of the Walla Walla and Umatilla watersheds near the Oregon and Washington border.

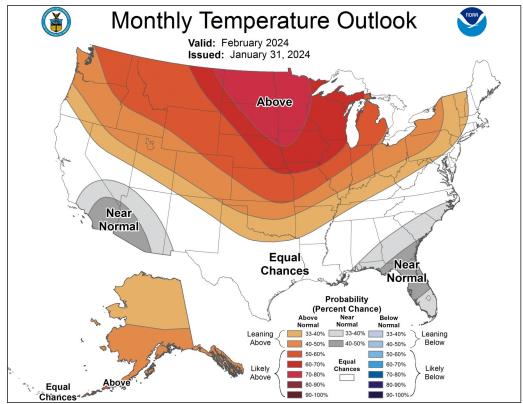
Soil moisture conditions are useful in assessing current drought and future drought potential. In addition, soil moisture is generally a good indicator of the efficiency of snowmelt runoff into streamflow in the spring. Drier soils tend to absorb more water from snowmelt than wetter soils, thus less melt is translated into streamflow (i.e. low efficiency). Soil moisture is generally restored each year during the late fall and early winter before precipitation falls predominantly as snow. Therefore, early-season soil moisture is essential for increasing runoff efficiency in the spring.



1-Month Outlook

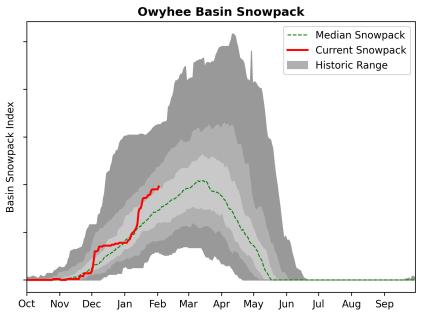
The Climate Prediction Center's 1-month climatic outlook calls for a greater chance of above-normal temperatures across much of Oregon and a greater chance of below-normal precipitation, except for the southern-most part of Oregon where the chances of higher and lower-than-normal precipitation are equal.





Owyhee Basin Summary

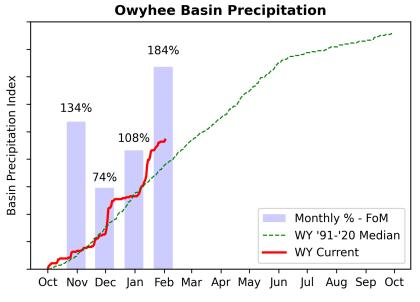
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 132% of median. This is an improvement from January 1st, when the basin snowpack was 94% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

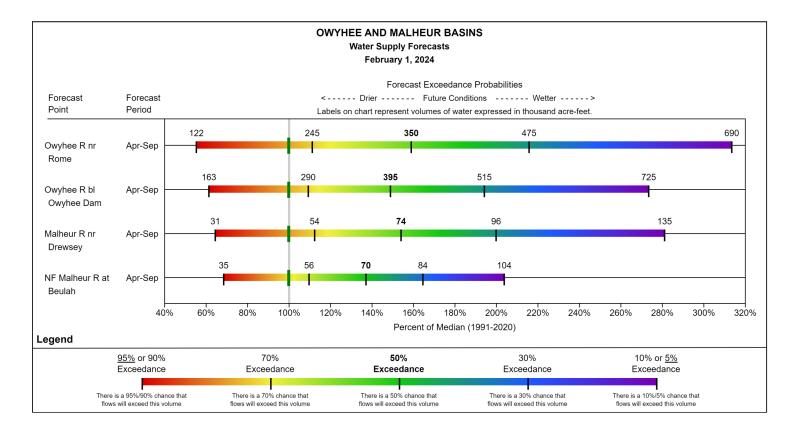
February precipitation is above normal at 184% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 124% of median.

Reservoir storage across the basin is above normal. As of February 1, storage at Lake Owyhee Reservoir is 166% of median and Wild Horse Reservoir is 189% of median.

Oundee	Current	Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
Owyhee	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
Wild Horse Reservoir	57.7	29.1	30.5	71.5	81%	41%	43%	189%	95%
Lake Owyhee	430.6	119.4	258.8	715.0	60%	17%	36%	166%	46%
Basin Index					62%	19%	37%	169%	51%
# of reservoirs					2	2	2	2	2

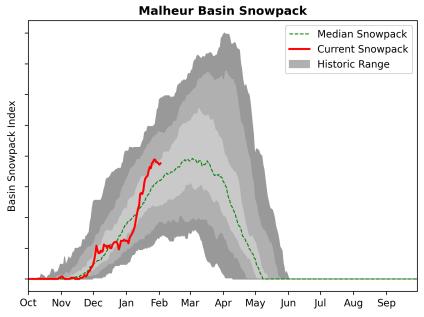
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The streamflow forecasts for the primary period in the basin are above normal and range from 145% to 159% of median.



Malheur Basin Summary

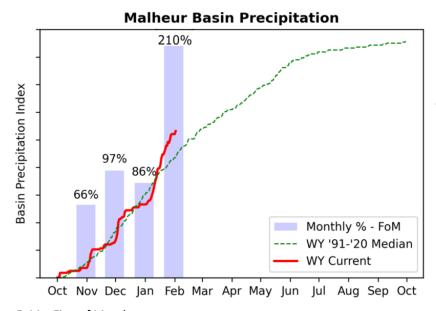
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 107% of median. On January 1, basin snowpack was 69% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

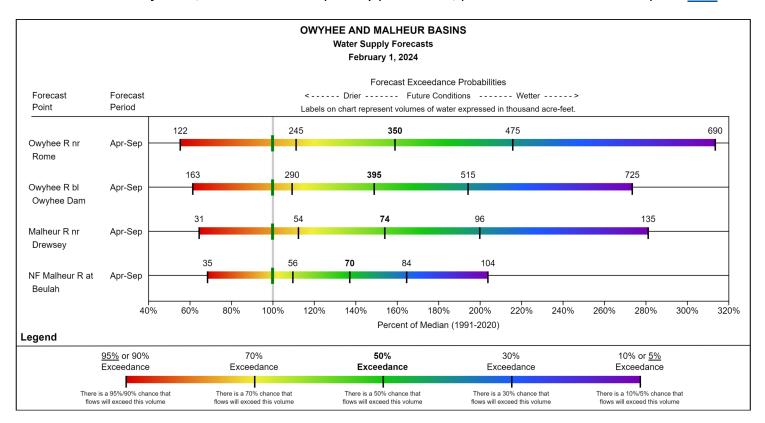
February precipitation is above normal at 210% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 120% of median.

As of February 1, storage ranges from 126% at Bully Creek Reservoir to 440% of median at Warm Springs Reservoir.

Ma	C	Current	Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
Malheur		(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
Bully Creek		13.5	4.5	10.7	23.7	57%	19%	45%	126%	42%
Beulah		29.8	12.7	16.7	59.2	50%	21%	28%	178%	76%
Warm Springs		116.7	10.7	26.5	169.6	69%	6%	16%	440%	41%
	Basin Index					63%	11%	21%	297%	52%
	# of reservoirs					3	3	3	3	3

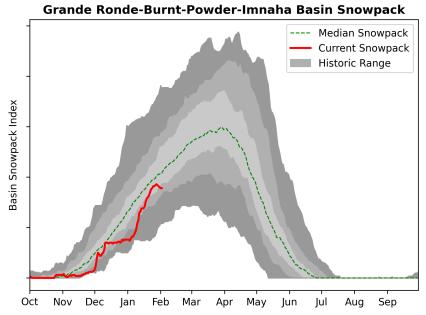
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin are above normal, with forecasts ranging from 137% to 154% of median.



Grande Ronde, Burnt, Powder, Imnaha Basin Summary

SNOWPACK

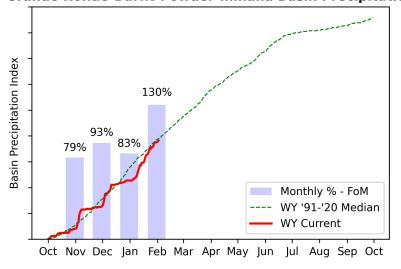


► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report <u>here</u>.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 81% of median. On January 1, basin snowpack was 56% of median.

PRECIPITATION

Grande Ronde-Burnt-Powder-Imnaha Basin Precipitation



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

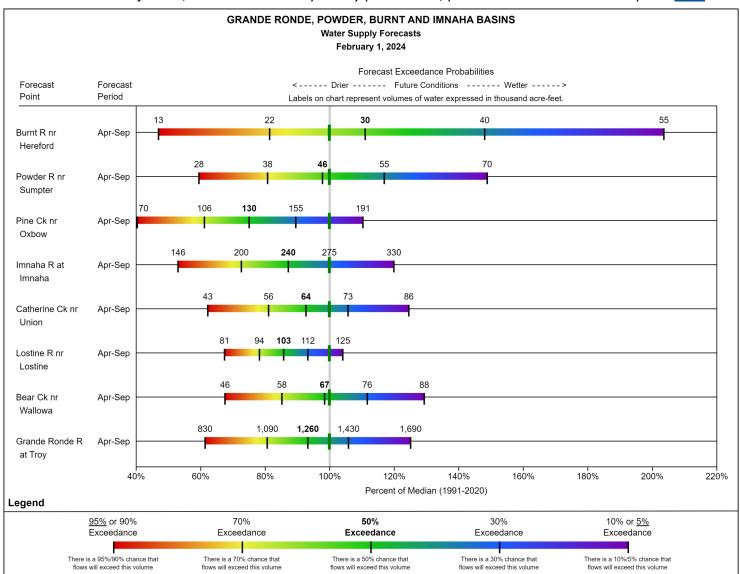
February precipitation is above normal at 130% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 94% of median.

As of February 1, storage at major reservoirs in the basin ranges from 100% of median at Brownlee Reservoir to 164% of median at Wallowa Lake.

Grande Ronde-Burnt-Powder-Imnaha	Current	Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
Grande Ronde-Burnt-Powder-Initiana	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
Wallowa Lake	26.2	14.9	16.0	37.5	70%	40%	43%	164%	93%
Phillips Lake	26.4	2.3	23.5	73.5	36%	3%	32%	112%	10%
Thief Valley	13.6	9.1	13.5	13.3	102%	68%	101%	101%	67%
Brownlee Reservoir	1225.7	1088.2	1230.0	1420.0	86%	77%	87%	100%	88%
Wolf Creek	2.9	2.6	2.7	11.1	26%	23%	24%	108%	96%
Unity	13.6	11.4	9.8	25.5	53%	45%	38%	139%	116%
Basin Index	(83%	71%	82%	101%	87%
# of reservoirs	3				6	6	6	6	6

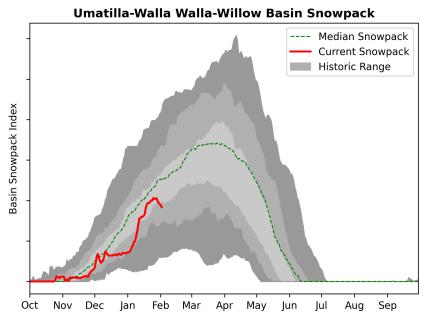
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 75% to 111% of median.



Umatilla, Walla Walla, Willow Basin Summary

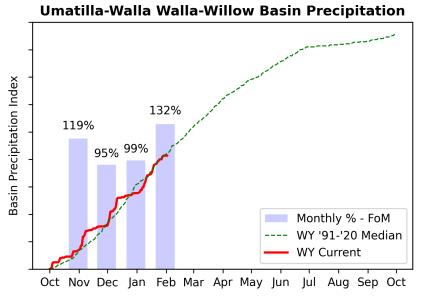
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 73% of median. On January 1, the basin snowpack was 44% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

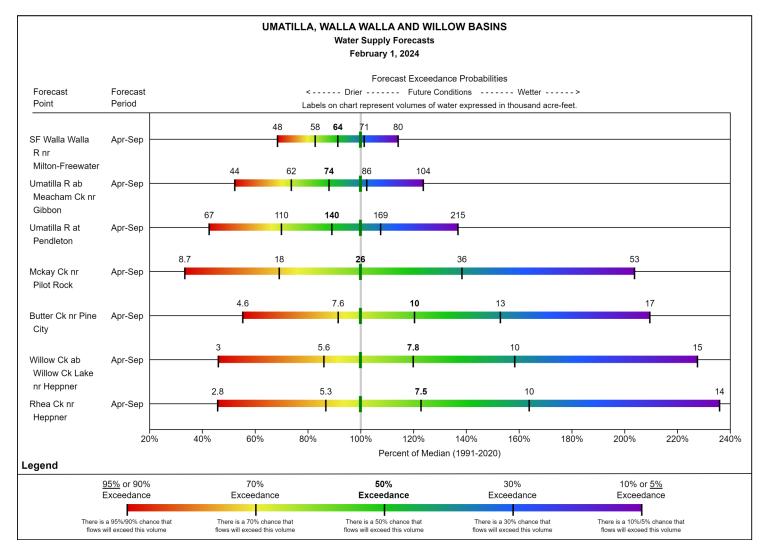
February precipitation is above normal at 132% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 100% of median.

As of February 1, storage at major reservoirs in the basin ranges from 82% of median at Cold Springs Reservoir to 128% at McKay Reservoir.

I metille Welle Welle Willow	Current	Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
Umatilla-Walla Walla-Willow	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
Willow Creek	4.8	4.1	4.3	9.8	49%	42%	44%	112%	94%
Mckay	33.0	28.7	25.7	71.5	46%	40%	36%	128%	112%
Cold Springs	9.1	6.0	11.1	38.6	24%	16%	29%	82%	54%
Basin Index					39%	32%	34%	114%	94%
# of reservoirs					3	3	3	3	3

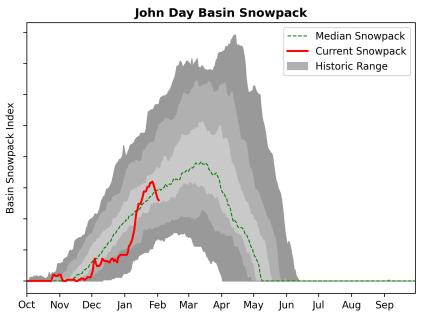
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 88% to 123% of median.



John Day Basin Summary

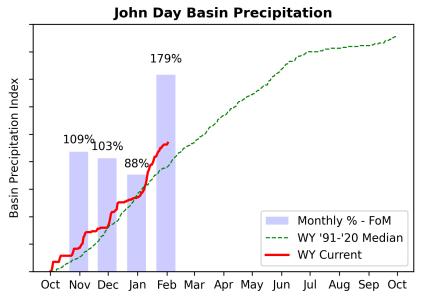
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 96% of median. On January 1, basin snowpack was 53% of median.

PRECIPITATION



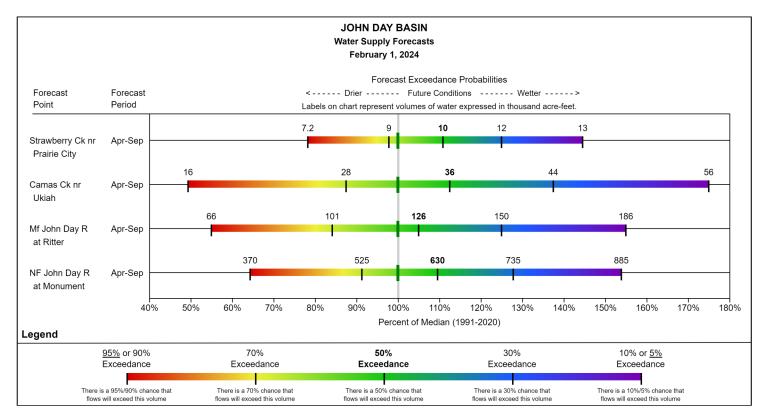
► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

February precipitation is above normal at 179% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 119% of median.

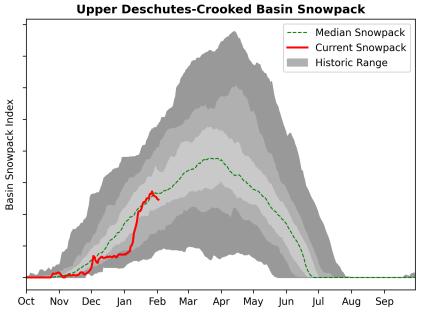
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin are above normal, with forecast points ranging from 105% to 112% of median.



Upper Deschutes, Crooked Basin Summary

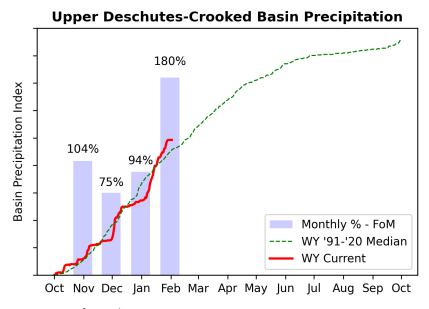
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report <u>here</u>.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 84% of median. On January 1, the basin snowpack was 33% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

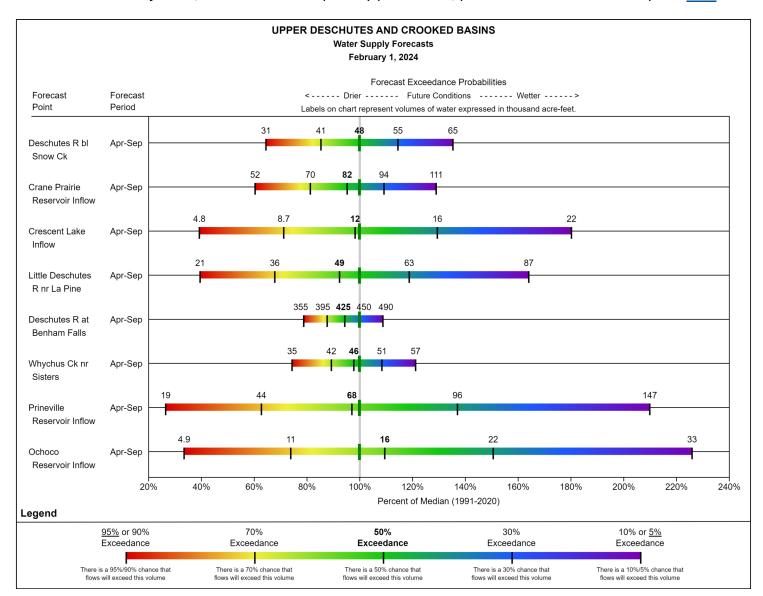
February precipitation is above normal at 180% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 109% of median.

As of February 1, storage at major reservoirs in the basin ranges from 24% of median at Crescent Lake to 143% of median at Prineville.

Upper Deschutes-Crooked	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Median (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)	Current % Capacity	Last Year % Capacity	Median % Capacity	Current % Median	Last Year % Median
Crescent Lake	12.6	7.9	53.5	86.9	15%	9%	62%	24%	15%
Ochoco	23.5	5.0	19.3	44.2	53%	11%	44%	122%	26%
Crane Prairie	49.8	46.1	39.6	55.3	90%	83%	72%	126%	116%
Wickiup	113.1	99.0	166.7	200.0	57%	50%	83%	68%	59%
Prineville	121.6	18.2	85.0	148.6	82%	12%	57%	143%	21%
Basin Ind	dex				60%	33%	68%	88%	48%
# of reservo	oirs				5	5	5	5	5

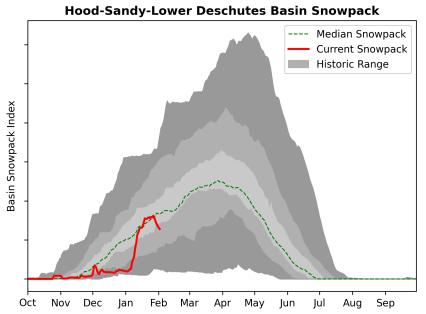
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 92% to 110% of median.



Hood, Sandy, Lower Deschutes Basin Summary

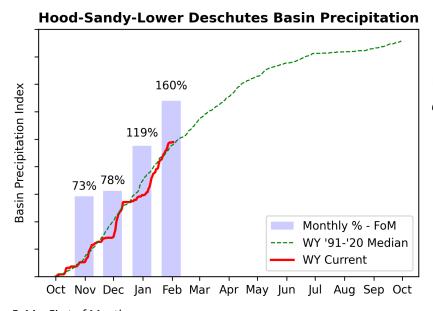
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 79% of median. On January 1, the basin snowpack was 17% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

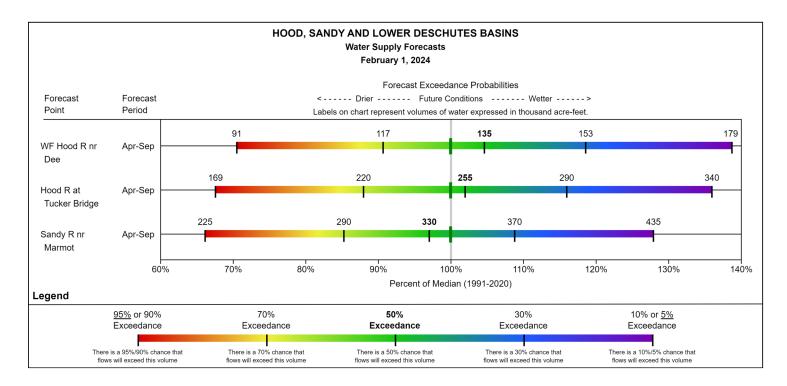
February precipitation is above normal at 160% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 102% of median.

As of February 1, volumetric storage for Clear Lake is below normal at 54% of median.

	Hood-Sandy-Lower Deschutes		Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
			(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
(Clear Lake	1.5	2.0	2.8	13.1	12%	16%	21%	54%	73%
-	Basin Index					12%	16%	21%	54%	73%
	# of reservoirs					1	1	1	1	1

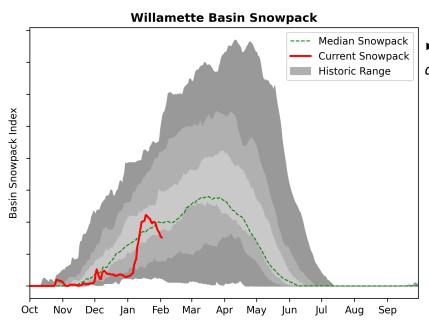
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 77% to 105% of median.



Willamette Basin Summary

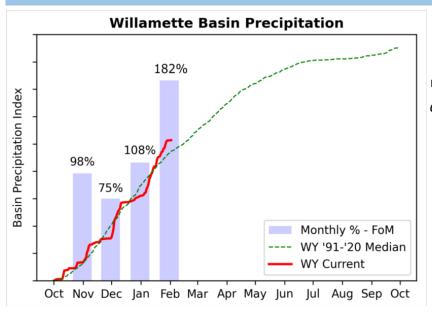
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 79% of median. On January 1 the basin snowpack was 26% of median.

PRECIPITATION



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FoM = First of Month

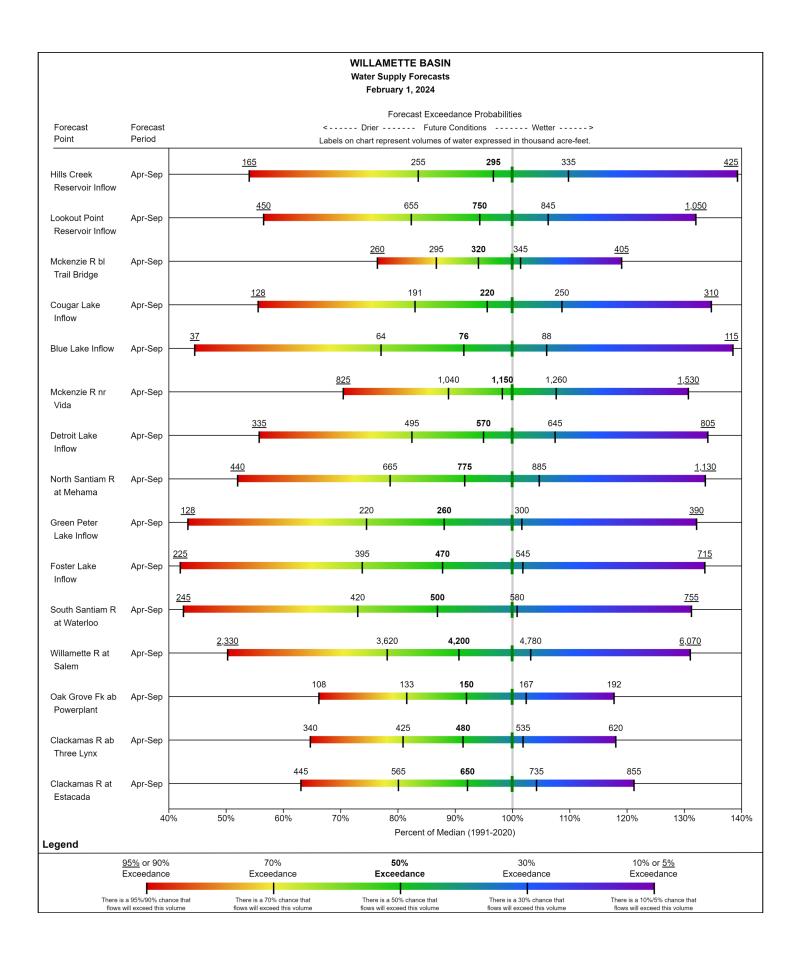
February precipitation is above normal at 182% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 109% of median.

As of February 1, storage at major reservoirs in the basin ranges from 99% of median at Dexter to 425% of median at Blue River.

Wil	lamette Currer (KAF	t Last Year (KAF)	Median (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)	Current % Capacity	Last Year % Capacity	Median % Capacity	Current % Median	Last Year % Median
Dexter	25.	2 24.6	25.4					99%	97%
Detroit	287.	1 145.8	179.5	426.8	67%	34%	42%	160%	81%
Blue River	40.	8 3.8	9.6	82.3	50%	5%	12%	425%	40%
Cougar	120.	9 39.0	51.5	174.9	69%	22%	29%	235%	76%
Dorena	36.	3 7.7	12.2	72.1	50%	11%	17%	297%	63%
Foster	28.	6 22.1	23.0	46.2	62%	48%	50%	124%	96%
Fern Ridge	17.	9 2.5	9.5	97.3	18%	3%	10%	189%	26%
Green Peter	293.	0 154.9	179.0	402.8	73%	38%	44%	164%	87%
Lookout Point	289.	2 108.1	137.0	433.2	67%	25%	32%	211%	79%
Henry Hagg Lake	46.	4 38.0	37.8	53.3	87%	71%	71%	123%	100%
Cottage Grove	7.	6 3.1	5.0	31.8	24%	10%	16%	152%	62%
Fall Creek	32.	2 1.3	12.1	116.0	28%	1%	10%	266%	11%
Timothy Lake	58.	6 54.8	52.5	63.6	92%	86%	83%	112%	104%
Hills Creek	136.	7 70.2	99.1	279.2	49%	25%	35%	138%	71%
	Basin Index			_	61%	29%	35%	170%	81%
	# of reservoirs				13	13	13	14	14

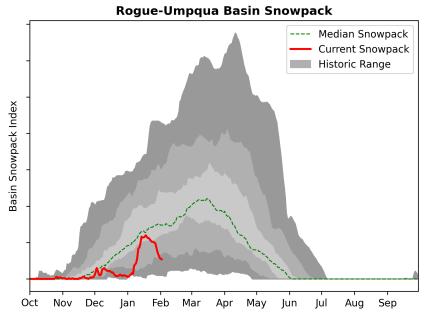
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 87% to 98% of median.



Rogue, Umpqua Basin Summary

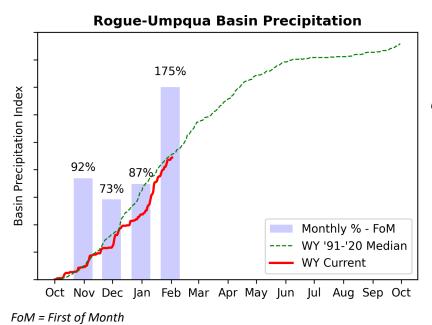
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 75% of median. On January 1, basin snowpack was 42% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

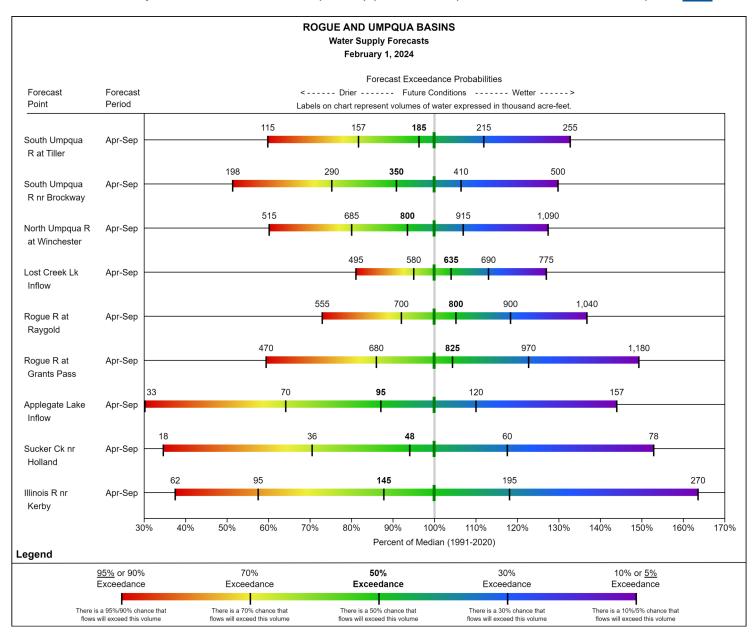
February precipitation is above normal at 175% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 100% of median.

As of February 1, storage at major reservoirs in the basin ranges from 47% of median at Emigrant Lake to 154% of median at Applegate Reservoir.

	Pogue Umpgue	Current	Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
	Rogue-Umpqua	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
Fish Lake		4.3	3.2	4.3	7.9	55%	40%	54%	101%	74%
Applegate		15.7	10.5	10.2	75.2	21%	14%	14%	154%	103%
Lost Creek		166.3	143.4	164.1	315.0	53%	46%	52%	101%	87%
Emigrant Lake		10.3	7.7	21.7	39.0	26%	20%	56%	47%	36%
	Basin Index					45%	38%	46%	98%	82%
	# of reservoirs					4	4	4	4	4

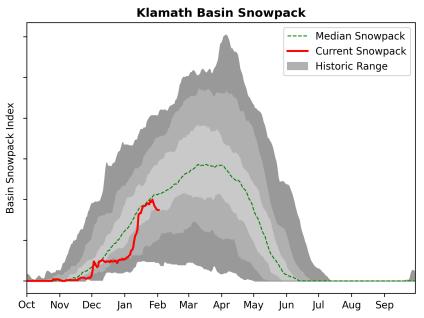
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 87% to 105% of median.



Klamath Basin Summary

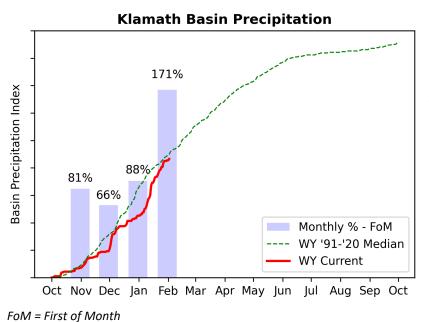
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report <u>here</u>.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 78% of median. On January 1, the basin snowpack was 39% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

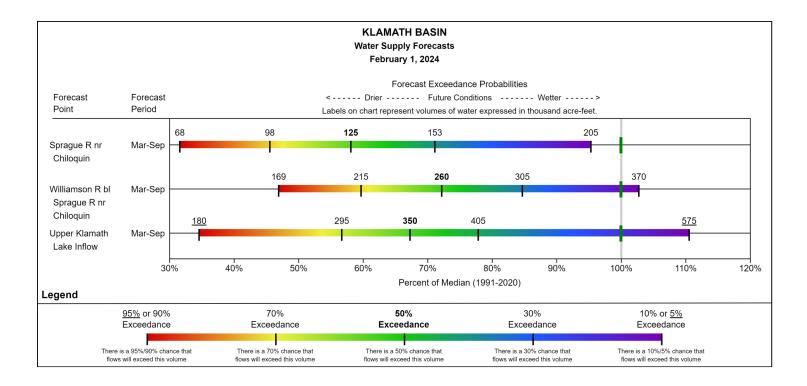
February precipitation is above normal at 171% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 97% of median.

As of February 1, storage at major reservoirs in the basin ranges from 56% of median at Gerber Reservoir to 104% of median at Upper Klamath Lake.

Klamath	Curi	rent	Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
	(KA	۹F)	(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
Fourmile Lake		3.8	3.5	5.8	15.6	24%	23%	37%	66%	61%
Gerber	2	21.8	9.2	38.6	94.3	23%	10%	41%	56%	24%
Hyatt Prairie		8.0	2.2	10.5	16.2	49%	13%	65%	76%	21%
Clear Lake	8	32.7	53.6	123.7	513.3	16%	10%	24%	67%	43%
Upper Klamath Lake	34	42.3	328.3	330.6	523.7	65%	63%	63%	104%	99%
Howard Prairie	2	22.5	9.9	34.5	62.1	36%	16%	56%	65%	29%
	Basin Index					39%	33%	44%	88%	75%
	# of reservoirs					6	6	6	6	6

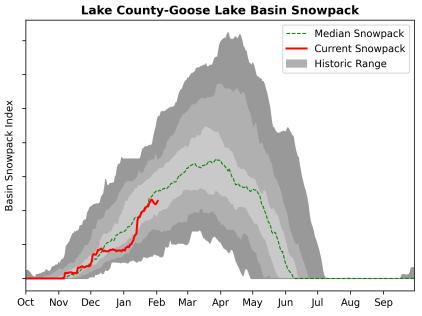
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 58% to 148% of median.



Lake County, Goose Lake Basin Summary

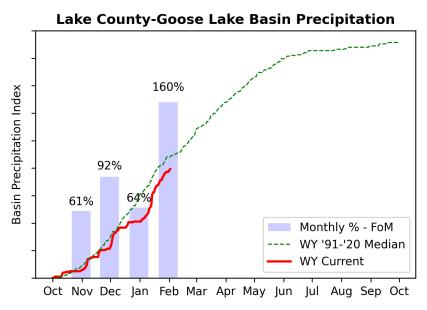
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 80% of median. On January 1, basin snowpack was 42% of median.

PRECIPITATION



► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report <u>here</u>.

FoM = First of Month

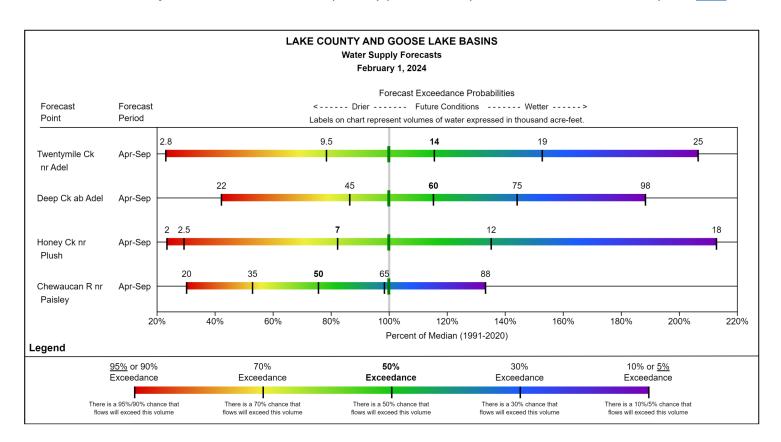
February precipitation is above normal at 160% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 88% of median.

As of February 1, storage at major reservoirs in the basin ranges from 82% of median at Cottonwood Reservoir to 102% of median at Drews Reservoir.

Lake County Coope Lake		Current	Last Year	Median	Capacity	Current %	Last Year %	Median %	Current %	Last Year %
	Lake County-Goose Lake		(KAF)	(KAF)	(KAF)	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity	Median	Median
Drews		26.2	3.8	25.6	63.5	41%	6%	40%	102%	15%
Cottonwood		2.9	1.4	3.5	9.3	31%	15%	38%	82%	41%
	Basin Index					40%	7%	40%	100%	18%
	# of reservoirs					2	2	2	2	2

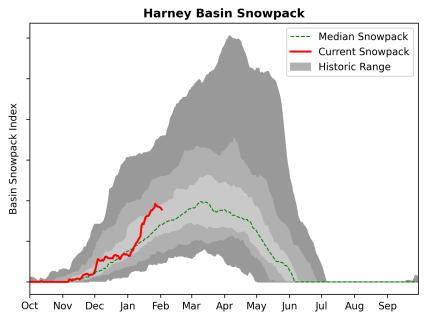
STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 76% to 116% of median.



Harney Basin Summary

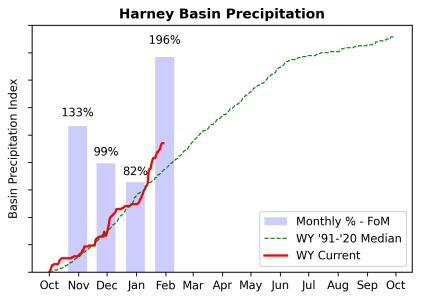
SNOWPACK



► View snowpack for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

As of February 1, the basin snowpack is 126% of median. On January 1, basin snowpack was 80% of median.

PRECIPITATION



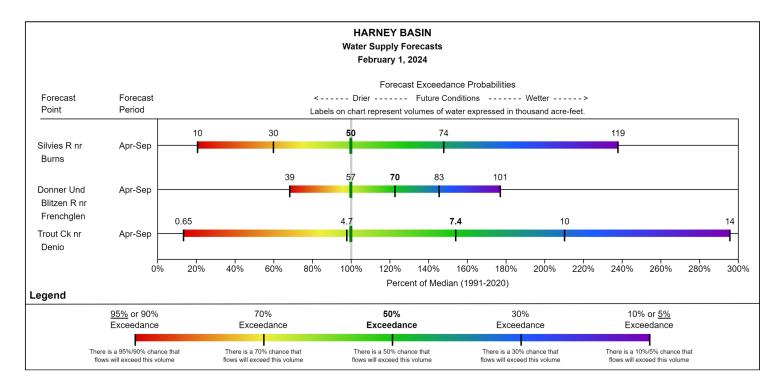
► View precipitation for individual sites by accessing the basin data report here.

FoM = First of Month

February precipitation is above normal at 196% of median. Precipitation since the beginning of the water year (October 1 - February 1) is 123% of median.

STREAMFLOW FORECAST

The April through September streamflow forecasts in the basin range from 100% to 154% of median.



Additional Resources

Interpreting Water Supply Forecast Charts
Water Supply Forecasting
Development and Interpretation of Seasonal
Water Supply Forecasts

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For more water supply and resource management information, contact:

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