

# STATE OF UTAH GENERAL OUTLOOK

May 1, 2010

## SUMMARY

The first week of April had some phenomenal storms for northern Utah bringing nearly 1/3 of all the snowpack we have received this year in that short time frame. While those storms did not bring snowpacks up to average conditions, they did take a bit of the edge off a rather dry runoff season. Mid April was a bit dry but the end of the month has again brought very cool temperatures as well as more snow and precipitation. Snowmelt during April was 28% to 88% of average in northern Utah and 121% to 141% of average in southern Utah. Bottom line is northern Utah is still very dry with snowpacks in the 60%-80% of average range with southern Utah packs ranging in the 100% to 160% of average. April precipitation was above to much above normal (129%-151%) in northern Utah and near normal (95%-106%) in the south which brings the year to date precipitation to below normal in the north and near to above average in the south. Current soil moisture saturation levels in runoff producing areas are: Bear – 71%, Weber – 68%, Provo – 65%, Uintah Basin – 55%, SE Utah – 69%, Sevier – 61% and SW Utah – 70%, up substantially from last month as active snowmelt is charging those soils. Dryer soils typically mean less runoff from snowmelt and this year it is apparent that these losses will be larger than recent years. Reservoir storage is currently at 73% of capacity statewide compared to 70% last year. General water supply conditions are below to much below average in northern Utah, above average on the Virgin and near to below average in central Utah. Streamflow forecasts range from 26% for the Bear River at Stewart Dam to 156% of average at Sevier River at Hatch. Surface Water Supply Indices range from 22% on the Bear River to 80% for the Virgin.

## SNOWPACK

May first snowpacks as measured by the NRCS SNOTEL system are as follows: Bear - 59%, Weber - 73%, Provo - 79%, Uintahs - 74%, southeast Utah - 79%, Sevier - 112%, southwest Utah - 152% and the statewide figure is 81% of average. Cool and wet conditions during April slowed snowmelt in the north. In southern Utah, which had extensive snowpacks at lower elevations, even cool and wet conditions did not slow the melt with average April snowmelt ranging between 111% and 141% of normal. May climate can still significantly impact snowmelt runoff with cool, wet conditions enhancing runoff and warm, dry conditions reducing flows.

## PRECIPITATION

Mountain precipitation during April was: Bear – 142%, Weber – 146%, Provo – 151%, Uintahs – 129%, SE Utah – 106%, Sevier – 104%, SW Utah – 95% and the statewide figure is 87% of average. This brings the seasonal accumulation (Oct-April) to 87% of average statewide.

## RESERVOIRS

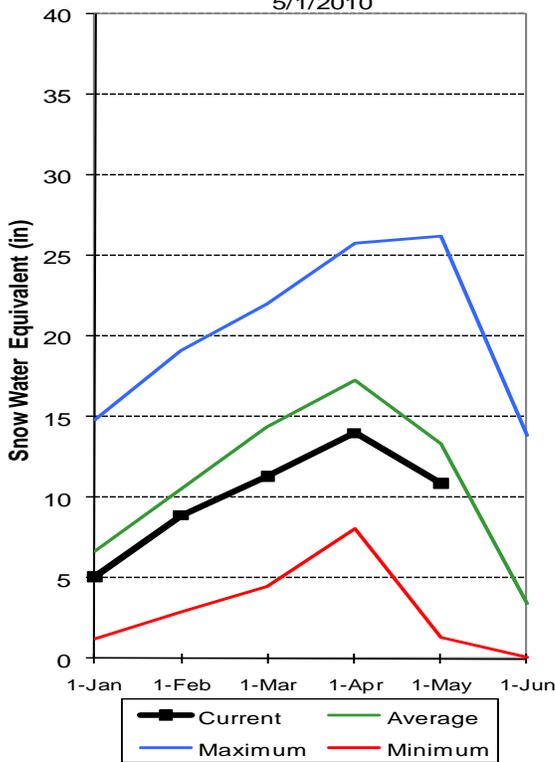
Storage in 41 of Utah's key irrigation reservoirs is at 73% of capacity up 3% compared to May of last year. Reservoir operations in northern Utah have been capturing every drop whereas in southern Utah, space has been created in some reservoirs in anticipation of higher runoff. Given the bleak runoff forecast in northern Utah, some reservoirs may not fill and most will not stay full very long as declining streamflows will be outpaced by demand.

## STREAMFLOW

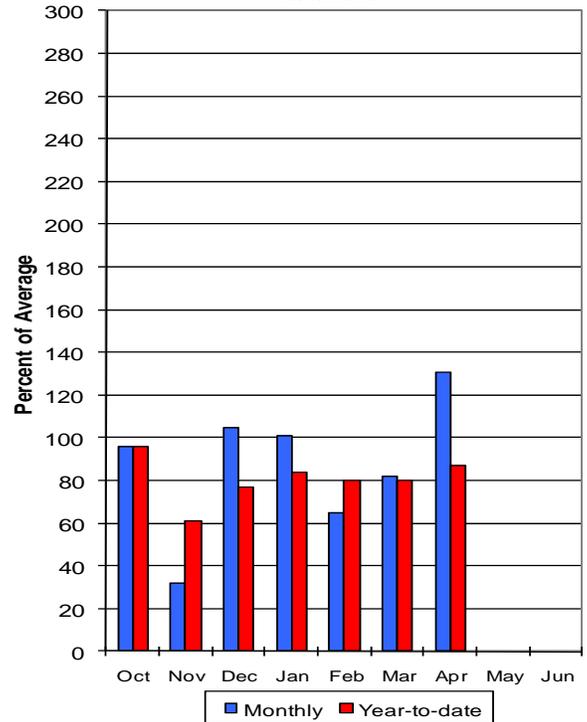
Snowmelt streamflows are expected to have a wide range from much below average to above average across the state of Utah this year. Forecast streamflows range from 26% for the Bear

River at Stewart Dam to 156% of average at Sevier River at Hatch. Most flows are forecast to be in the 50% to 120% range.

**Statewide Mountain Snowpack**  
5/1/2010



**Statewide Precipitation**  
5/1/2010



**May Statewide Reservoir Storage**

