



Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

# Arizona Basin Outlook Report February 1, 2017



**Issued by**

Leonard Jordan  
Acting Chief  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Released by**

Keisha L. Tatem  
State Conservationist  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Phoenix, Arizona

## **Basin Outlook Reports And Federal – State – Private Cooperative Snow Surveys**

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### ***How forecasts are made***

Most of the annual streamflow in Arizona originates as snowfall that has accumulated in the mountains during the winter and early spring. As the snowpack accumulates, hydrologists estimate the runoff that will occur when it melts. Measurements of snow water equivalent at selected manual snow courses and automated Snow Telemetry (SNOTEL) sites, along with precipitation and streamflow values, are used in statistical and simulation models to prepare runoff forecasts. These forecasts are coordinated between hydrologists in the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) the National Weather Service, and the Salt River Project.

Forecasts of any kind are not perfect. Streamflow forecast uncertainty arises from three primary sources: (1) uncertainty of future weather conditions, (2) uncertainty in the forecasting procedure, and (3) errors in the data. The forecast, therefore, must be interpreted not as a single value but rather as a range of values with specific probabilities of occurrence. The middle of the range is expressed by the 50% exceedance probability forecast, for which there is a 50% chance that the actual flow will be above, and a 50% chance that the actual flow will be below, this value. To describe the expected range around this 50% value, four other forecasts are provided, two smaller values (90% and 70% exceedance probability) and two larger values (30%, and 10% exceedance probability). For example, there is a 90% chance that the actual flow will be more than the 90% exceedance probability forecast.

The wider the spread among these values, the more uncertain the forecast. As the season progresses, forecasts become more accurate, primarily because a greater portion of the future weather conditions become known. This is reflected by a narrowing of the range around the 50% exceedance probability forecast. Users should take this uncertainty into consideration when making operational decisions by selecting forecasts corresponding to the level of risk they are willing to assume about the amount of water to be expected. If users anticipate receiving a lesser supply of water, or are concerned about having an adequate water supply, they may want to base their decisions on the 90% or 70% exceedance probability forecasts. On the other hand, if users anticipate receiving too much water, or are concerned about the threat of flooding, they may want to base their decisions on the 30% or 10% exceedance probability forecasts. Regardless of the forecast value users choose, they should be prepared to deal with either more or less water.



### ***For more water supply and resource management information, contact:***

Dino DeSimone  
Water Supply Specialist  
230 N. First Ave., Suite 509  
Phoenix, AZ 85003-1706  
Phone: (602) 280-8786  
Email: [dino.desimone@az.usda.gov](mailto:dino.desimone@az.usda.gov)

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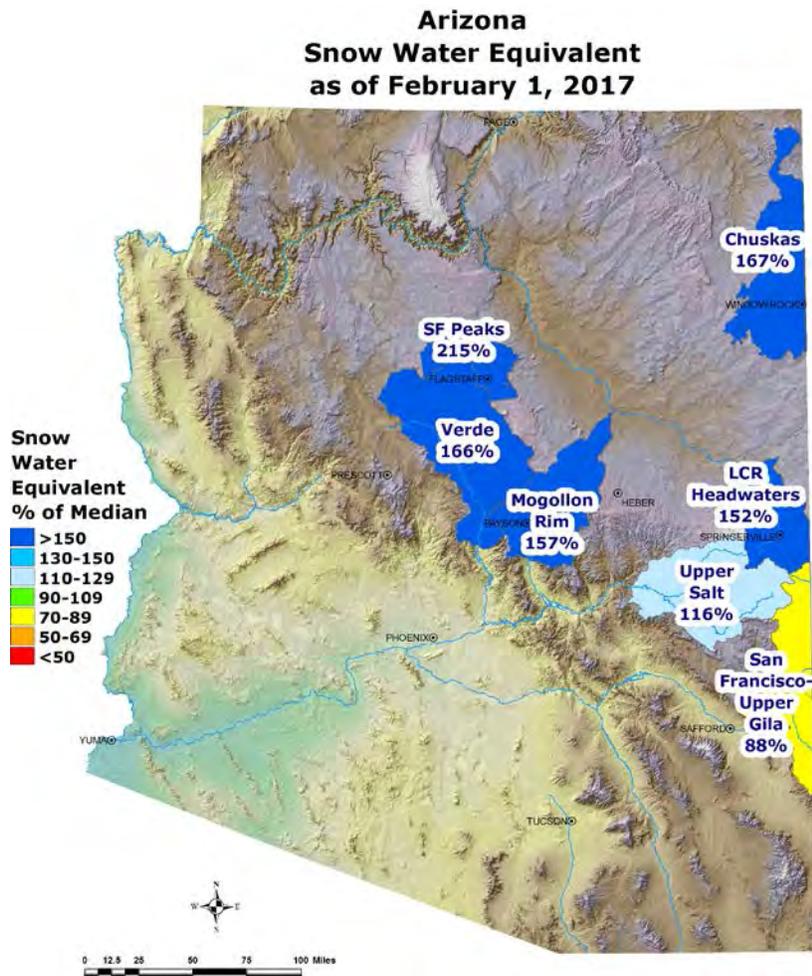
# ARIZONA Basin Outlook Report as of February 1, 2017

## SUMMARY

As of February 1, snowpack levels are near normal to well above normal throughout the basins. Precipitation for the month of January was well above average in the mountains. The Salt and Verde River reservoir system now stands at 60 percent of capacity, while San Carlos Reservoir is at 15 percent of capacity. The forecast calls for well above normal runoff in all basins for the spring runoff period.

## SNOWPACK

Snow water equivalent levels are near normal to well above normal in the major river basins, ranging from 88 percent of median in the San Francisco-Upper Gila River Basin to 166 percent of median in the Verde River Basin. Statewide, the snowpack is well above normal at 159 percent of median. There was significant snowpack accumulation during the latter half of January.

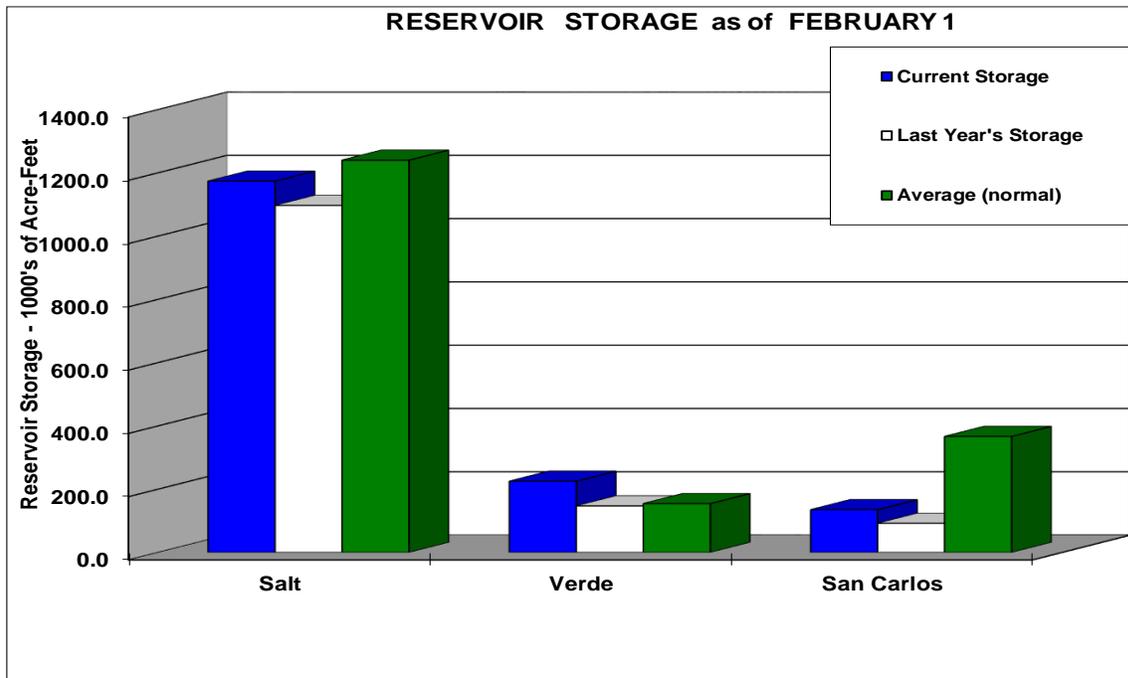


## PRECIPITATION

Mountain data from NRCS SNOTEL sites and NWS Cooperator gages show that January precipitation was well above normal, ranging from 172 percent of average in the Salt River Basin to 215 percent of average in the Little Colorado River Basin. Cumulative precipitation since October 1 is now well above normal in all major river basins for the water year.

## RESERVOIR STORAGE

As of February 1, the Salt and Verde River reservoir system stands at 60 percent of capacity. San Carlos Reservoir is well below normal at only 15 percent of capacity.



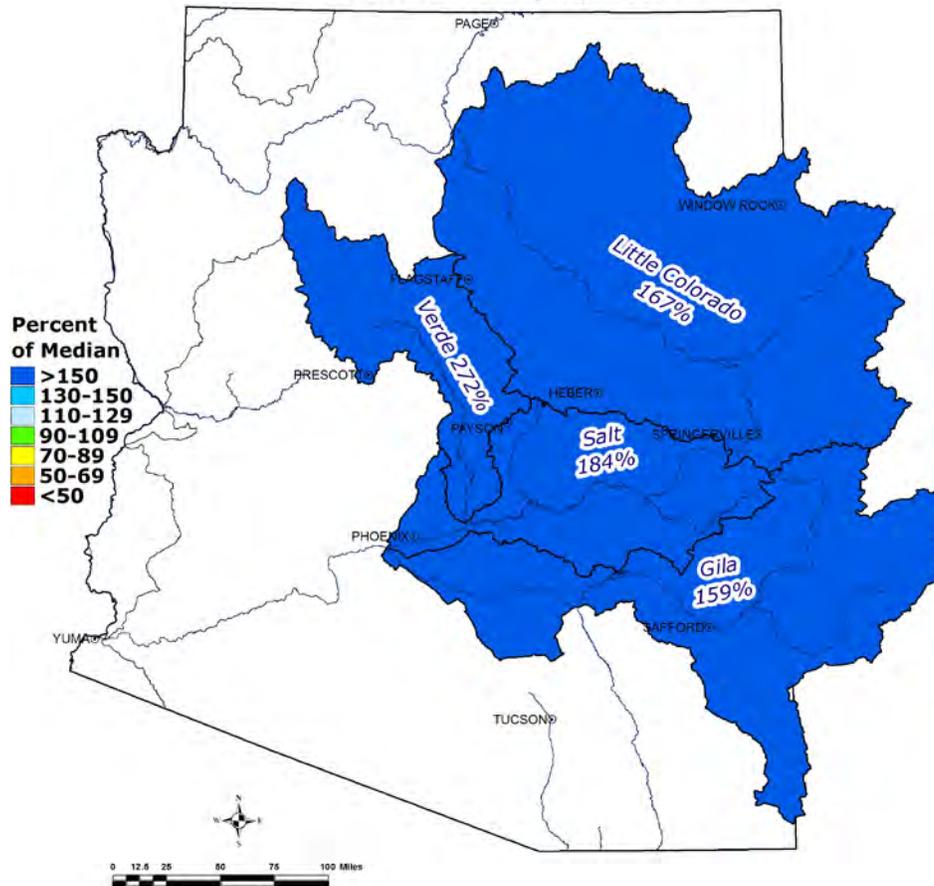
Key storage volumes displayed in thousands of acre-feet (x1000):

<u>Reservoir</u>	<u>Current Storage</u>	<u>Last Year Storage</u>	<u>30-Year Average</u>	<u>Storage Capacity</u>
Salt River System	1173.7	1096.8	1240.0	2025.8
Verde River System	225.3	147.1	154.4	287.4
San Carlos Reservoir	135.2	92.1	366.8	875.0
Lyman Lake	7.0	8.2	12.3	30.0
Lake Havasu	566.6	554.9	556.4	619.0
Lake Mohave	1710.0	1647.0	1676.0	1810.0
Lake Mead	10531.0	10318.0	20452.0	26159.0
Lake Powell	11390.2	11429.5	17338.0	24322.0

# STREAMFLOW

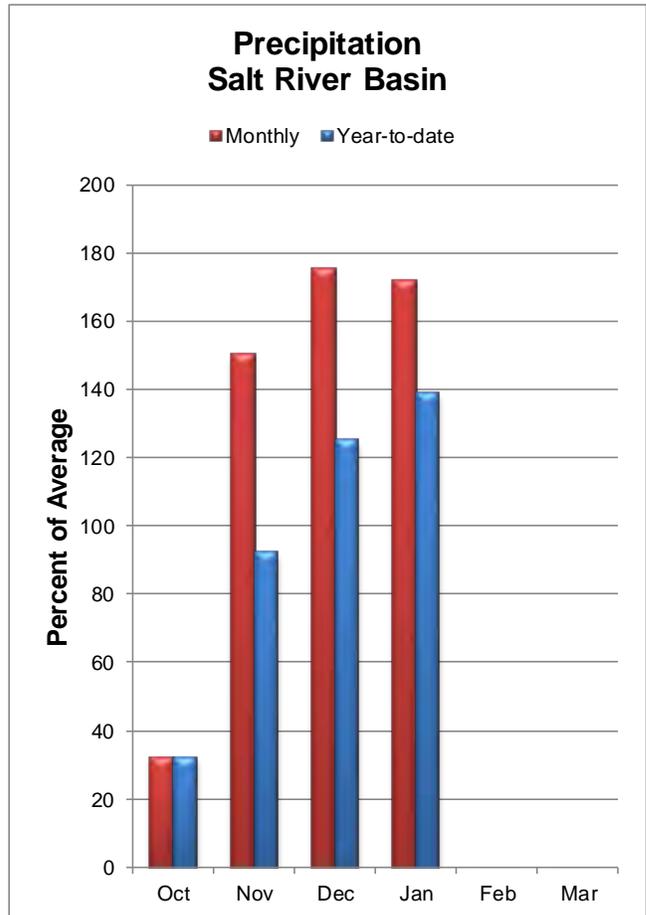
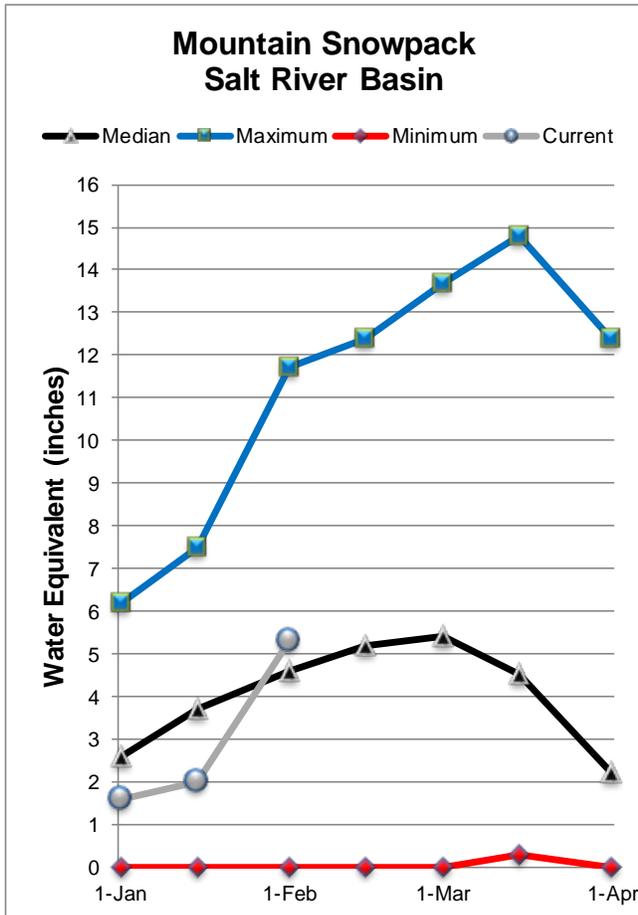
As of February 1, the forecast calls for well above normal streamflow for the spring runoff period in all major river systems, ranging from 159 percent of median in the Gila River near Solomon to 272 percent of median in the Verde River above Horseshoe Dam. The streamflow forecasts are significantly increased due to the abundant precipitation the state received during the latter half of January. The precipitation outlook for the remainder of the winter is uncertain, however, which kept the streamflow forecasts from being even higher. Please refer to the basin forecast tables found in this report for more information regarding water supply forecasts.

## Arizona Spring Streamflow Forecasts as of February 1, 2017



## SALT RIVER BASIN as of February 1, 2017

Well above normal streamflow levels are forecast for the basin. In the Salt River, near Roosevelt, the forecast calls for 184% of median streamflow through May, while at Tonto Creek, the forecast calls for 257% of median streamflow through May. Snow survey measurements show the Salt snowpack to be at 116% of median.



**Salt River Basin  
Streamflow Forecasts - February 1, 2017**

SALT RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast						30yr Avg (KAF)
		90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	
Salt R nr Roosevelt <sup>3</sup>	FEB			125	321%			39
	FEB-MAY	300	425	525	184%	640	835	285
	MAR-MAY	220	320	400	167%	495	655	240
Tonto Ck ab Gun Ck nr Roosevelt <sup>3</sup>	FEB			27	262%			10.3
	FEB-MAY	34	63	90	257%	124	187	35

1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%

2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions

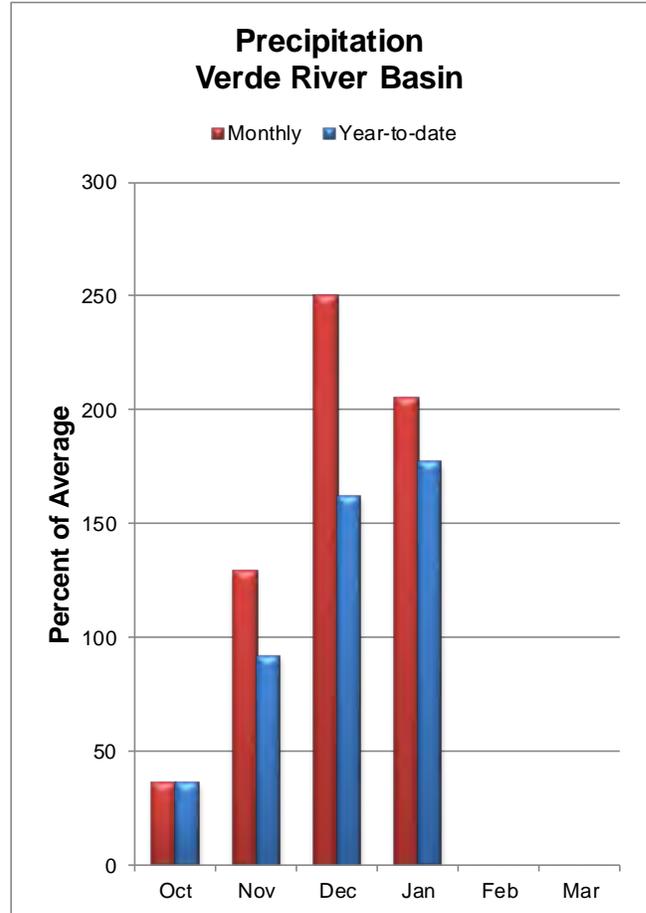
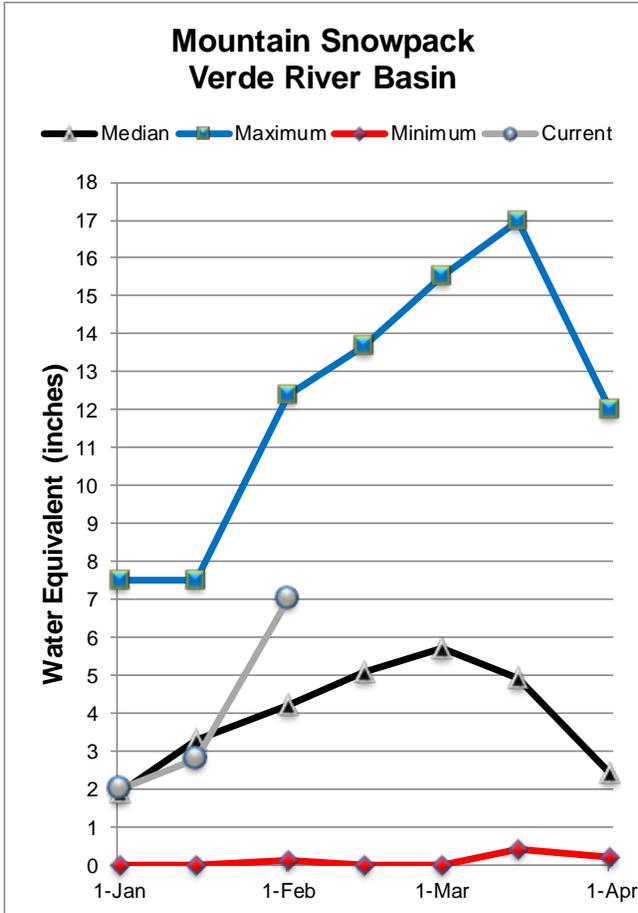
3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of January, 2017	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Salt River Reservoir System	1173.7	1096.8	1240.0	2025.8
Basin-wide Total	1173.7	1096.8	1240.0	2025.8
# of reservoirs	1	1	1	1

Watershed Snowpack Analysis February 1, 2017	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
SALT RIVER BASIN	11	116%	97%

## VERDE RIVER BASIN as of February 1, 2017

Well above normal streamflow levels are forecast for the basin. In the Verde River, at Horseshoe Dam, the forecast calls for 272% of median streamflow through May. Snow survey measurements show the Verde snowpack to be at 166% of median.



## Verde River Basin Streamflow Forecasts - February 1, 2017

Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment  
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

VERDE RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Verde R bl Tangle Ck ab Horseshoe Dam <sup>3</sup>								
	FEB			88	251%			35
	FEB-MAY	187	285	370	272%	470	645	136

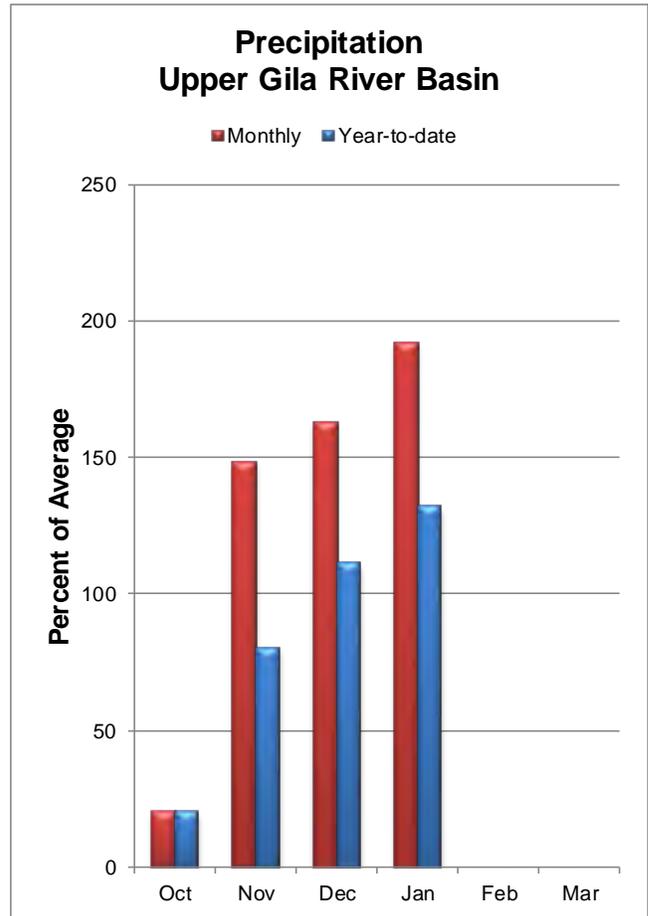
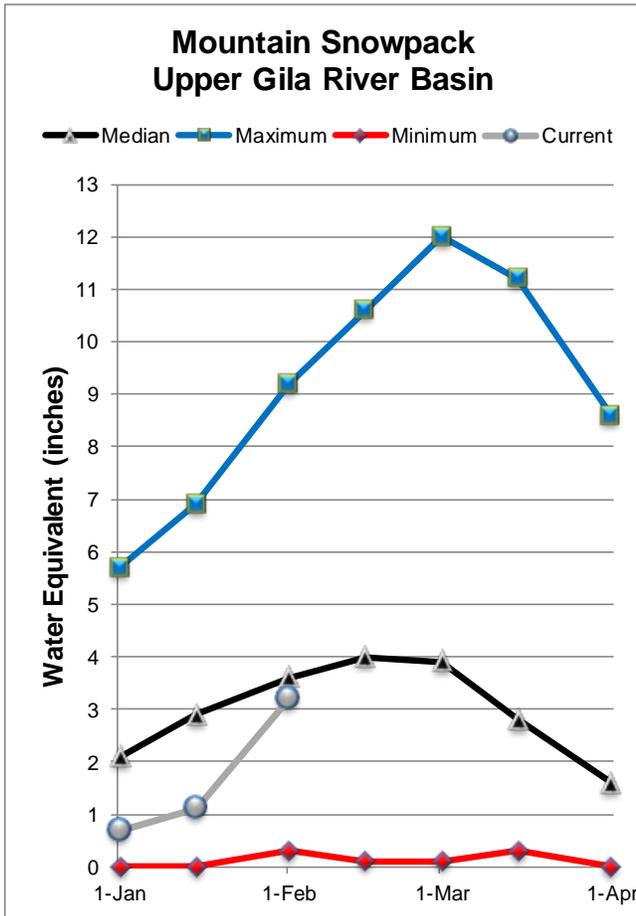
- 1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
- 2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
- 3) Median value used in place of average

<b>Reservoir Storage End of January, 2017</b>	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Verde River Reservoir System	225.3	147.1	154.4	287.4
Basin-wide Total	225.3	147.1	154.4	287.4
# of reservoirs	1	1	1	1

<b>Watershed Snowpack Analysis February 1, 2017</b>	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
VERDE RIVER BASIN	12	166%	140%

## SAN FRANCISCO-UPPER GILA RIVER BASIN as of February 1, 2017

Well above normal streamflow levels are forecast for the basin. In the San Francisco River, at Clifton, the forecast calls for 141% of median streamflow levels through May. In the Gila River, near Solomon, the forecast calls for 159% of median streamflow levels through May. At San Carlos Reservoir, inflow to the lake is forecast at 210% of median through May. Snow survey measurements show the snowpack for this basin to be at 88% of median.



### San Francisco-Upper Gila River Basin Streamflow Forecasts - February 1, 2017

Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment  
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

SAN FRANCISCO-UPPER GILA RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Gila R at Gila <sup>3</sup>								
Gila R bl Blue Ck nr Virden <sup>3</sup>								
San Francisco R at Glenwood <sup>3</sup>								
San Francisco R at Clifton <sup>3</sup>	FEB-MAY	30	53	72	141%	94	133	51
Gila R nr Solomon <sup>3</sup>	FEB			62	270%			23
	FEB-MAY	88	147	195	159%	250	345	123
San Carlos Reservoir Inflow <sup>3</sup>	FEB-MAY	53	115	170	210%	235	355	81

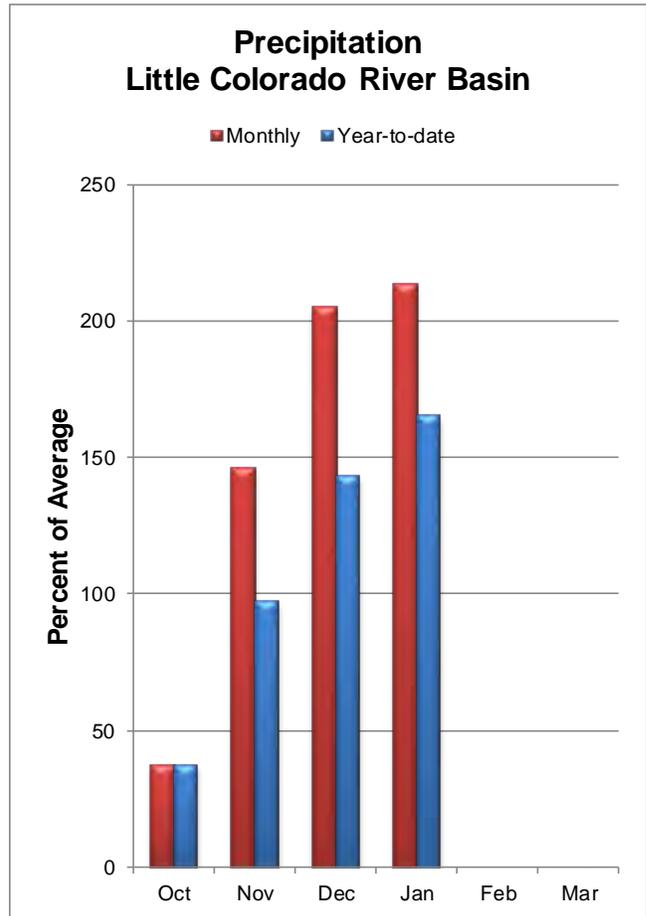
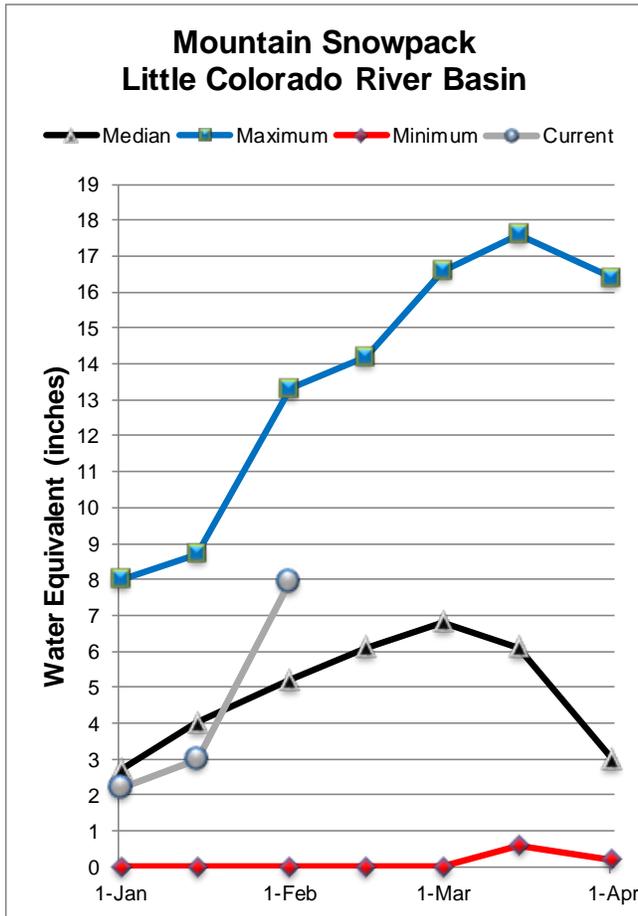
- 1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
- 2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
- 3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of January, 2017	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
San Carlos Reservoir	135.2	92.1	366.8	875.0
Basin-wide Total	135.2	92.1	366.8	875.0
# of reservoirs	1	1	1	1

Watershed Snowpack Analysis February 1, 2017	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
SAN FRANCISCO-UPPER GILA RIVER BASIN	10	88%	95%

## LITTLE COLORADO RIVER BASIN as of February 1, 2017

Well above normal streamflow levels are forecast for the basin. In the Little Colorado River, above Lyman Lake, the forecast calls for 167% of median streamflow through June. At Blue Ridge (C.C. Cragin) Reservoir, inflow to the lake is forecast at 196% of median through May. Snowpacks along the southern headwaters of the Little Colorado River, and along the central Mogollon Rim, were measured at 152% and 157% of median, respectively.



### Little Colorado River Basin Streamflow Forecasts - February 1, 2017

Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment  
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

LITTLE COLORADO RIVER BASIN	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Little Colorado R ab Lyman Lake <sup>3</sup>	FEB-JUN	5.9	8.7	11	167%	13.7	18.5	6.6
Rio Nutria nr Ramah <sup>3</sup>	FEB-MAY	0.48	1.43	2.5	179%	4	7.2	1.4
Zuni R ab Black Rock Reservoir <sup>3</sup>	FEB-MAY	0	0.16	0.7	184%	1.87	5.3	0.38
Blue Ridge Reservoir Inflow <sup>3</sup>	FEB-MAY	13.4	23	32	196%	44	64	16.3
Lake Mary Reservoir Inflow <sup>3</sup>	FEB-MAY	5.9	8.7	11	256%	13.7	18.5	4.3

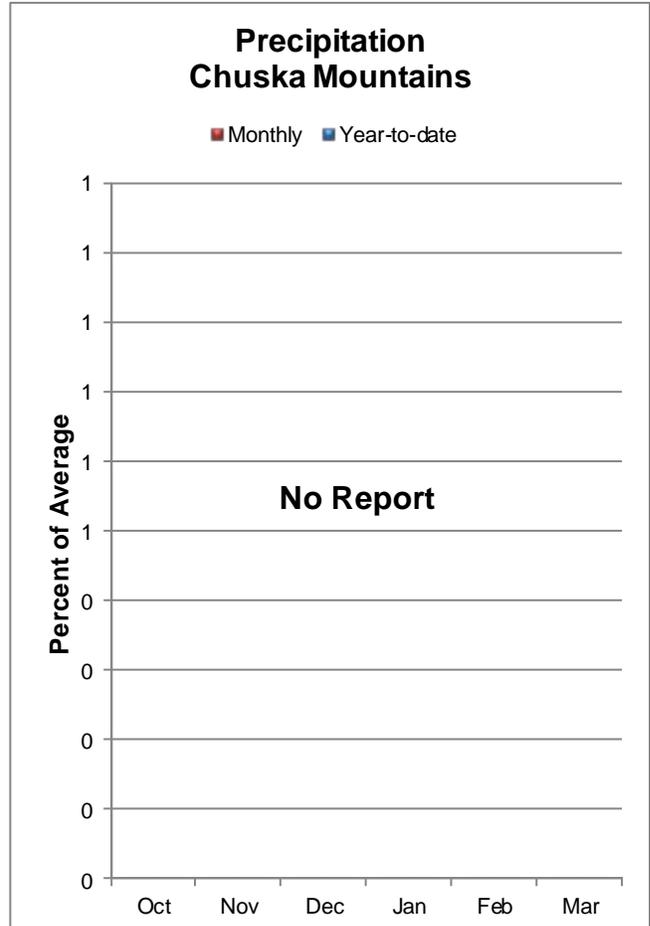
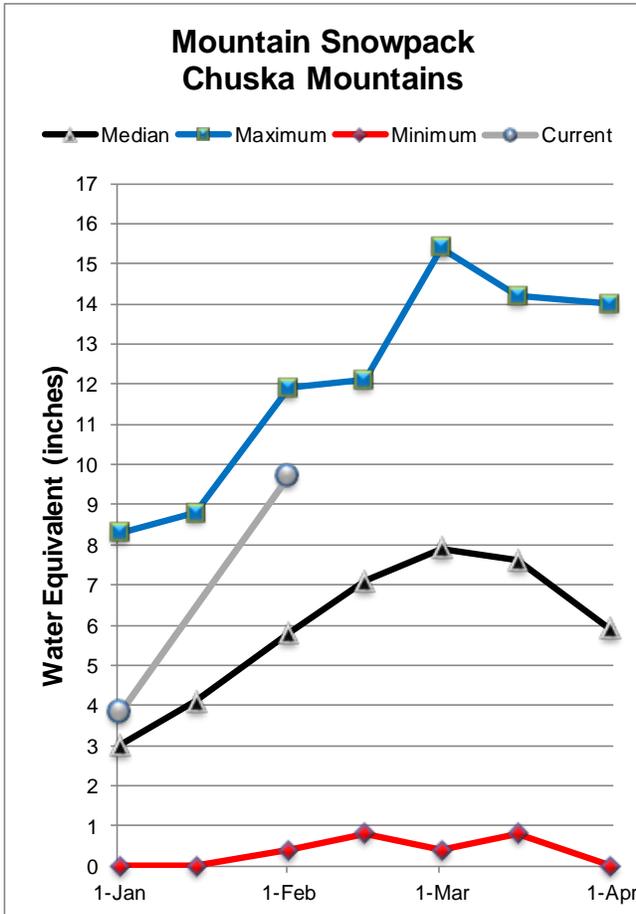
- 1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
- 2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
- 3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of January, 2017	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Lyman Reservoir	7.0	8.2	12.3	30.0
Basin-wide Total	7.0	8.2	12.3	30.0
# of reservoirs	1	1	1	1

Watershed Snowpack Analysis February 1, 2017	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
LITTLE COLORADO RIVER BASIN	10	152%	114%
CENTRAL MOGOLLON RIM	4	157%	140%

## CHUSKA MOUNTAINS as of February 1, 2017

Snow survey measurements conducted by staff of the Navajo Nation Water Management Branch show the Chuska snowpack to be at 167% of median. Well above normal runoff is forecast for Captain Tom Wash, Wheatfields Creek, and Bowl Canyon Creek.



## Chuska Mountains Streamflow Forecasts - February 1, 2017

Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment  
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

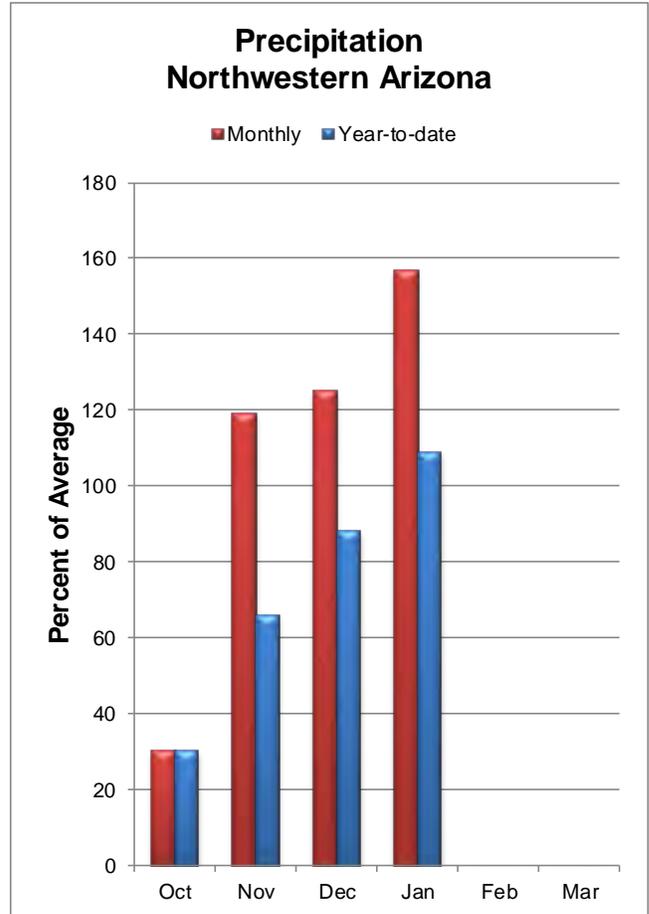
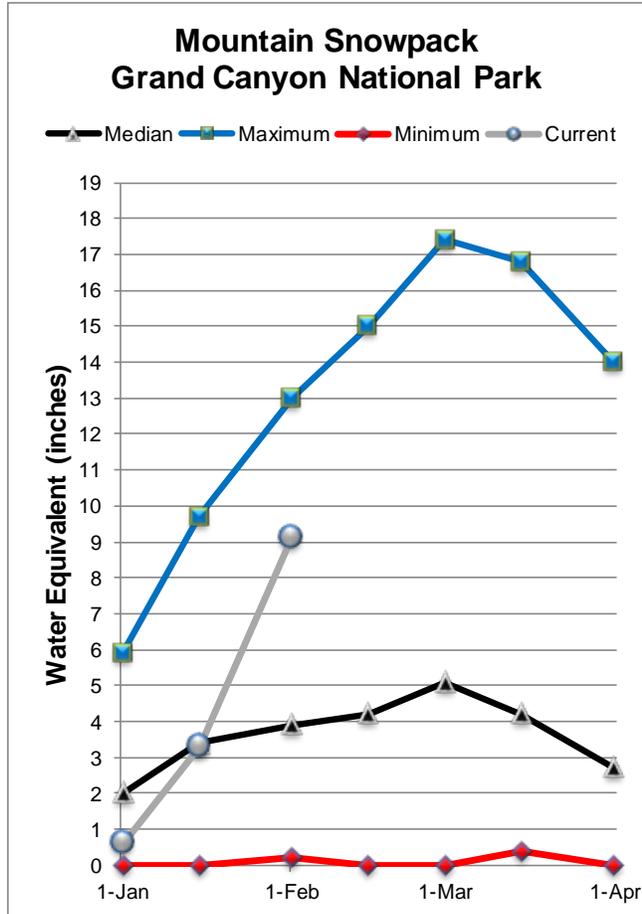
<b>CHUSKA MOUNTAINS</b>	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Captain Tom Wash nr Two Gray Hills	MAR-MAY	1.3	3.1	4.9	188%	7.4	12.4	2.6
Wheatfields Ck nr Wheatfields	MAR-MAY	2.8	4	5	238%	6	7.7	2.1
Bowl Canyon Ck ab Asaayi Lake	MAR-MAY	1.18	1.81	2.3	177%	2.9	3.8	1.3

- 1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
- 2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
- 3) Median value used in place of average

<b>Watershed Snowpack Analysis February 1, 2017</b>	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
CHUSKA MOUNTAINS	6	167%	119%
DEFIANCE PLATEAU	1	112%	123%

## NORTHWESTERN ARIZONA as of February 1, 2017

On the Colorado River, well above normal inflow to Lake Powell is forecast at 147% of the 30-year average for the forecast period April-July. At the Grand Canyon, measurements conducted by park rangers show the snowpack to be at 234% of median.



## Northwestern Arizona Streamflow Forecasts - February 1, 2017

Forecast Exceedance Probabilities for Risk Assessment  
Chance that actual volume will exceed forecast

NORTHWESTERN ARIZONA	Forecast Period	90% (KAF)	70% (KAF)	50% (KAF)	% Avg	30% (KAF)	10% (KAF)	30yr Avg (KAF)
Virgin R at Littlefield	APR-JUL	76	108	130	200%	152	184	65
Lake Powell Inflow <sup>2</sup>	APR-JUL	6860	8940	10500	147%	12200	14900	7160

- 1) 90% and 10% exceedance probabilities are actually 95% and 5%
- 2) Forecasts are for unimpaired flows. Actual flow will be dependent on management of upstream reservoirs and diversions
- 3) Median value used in place of average

Reservoir Storage End of January, 2017	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Average (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)
Lake Havasu	566.6	554.9	556.4	619.0
Lake Mohave	1710.0	1647.0	1676.0	1810.0
Lake Mead	10531.0	10318.0	20452.0	26159.0
Lake Powell	11390.2	11429.5	17338.0	24322.0
Basin-wide Total	24197.8	23949.4	40022.4	52910.0
# of reservoirs	4	4	4	4

Watershed Snowpack Analysis February 1, 2017	# of Sites	% Median	Last Year % Median
NORTHWESTERN ARIZONA	2	234%	109%

**Basinwide Summary: February 1, 2017**  
**(Averages/Medians based on 1981-2010 reference period)**

Snowpack Summary for February 1, 2017
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<b>SALT RIVER BASIN</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Baldy	SNOTEL	9125	28	7.7	6.4	120%	4.5	70%
Beaver Head	SNOTEL	7990	4	1.4	3.4	41%	3.2	94%
Buck Spring	SC	7400	12	5.4	2.0	270%	2.6	130%
Coronado Trail	SNOTEL	8400	5	1.8	3.2	56%	2.5	78%
Hawley Lake	SNOTEL	8300	40	11.1			10.8	
Coronado Trail	SC	8350	8	1.4	2.0	70%	2.8	140%
Fort Apache	SC	9160	35	9.5	6.8	140%	6.6	97%
Hannagan Meadows	SNOTEL	9020	21	7.4	8.3	89%	5.2	63%
Maverick Fork	SNOTEL	9200	30	10.3	6.8	151%	5.6	82%
Nutriosio	SC	8500	5	1.2	1.2	100%	1.2	100%
Nutriosio	SNOTEL	8500	2	1.0			0.4	
Wildcat	SNOTEL	7850	10	2.3	3.0	77%	3.1	103%
Workman Creek	SNOTEL	6900	20	6.9	4.5	153%	9.0	200%
<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>116%</b>		<b>97%</b>
# of sites						11		11

<b>VERDE RIVER BASIN</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Baker Butte	SNOTEL	7300	26	6.2	4.3	144%	5.9	137%
Baker Butte No. 2	SC	7700	32	9.0	6.9	130%	7.9	114%
Baker Butte Smt	SNOTEL	7700	38	9.8			9.9	
Bar M	SNOTEL	6393	12	4.4			4.3	
Chalender	SC	7100	11	1.4	1.8	78%	3.1	172%
Chalender	SNOTEL	7100	15	3.3			3.9	
Fort Valley	SC	7350	16	3.8	1.8	211%	2.3	128%
Fort Valley	SNOTEL	7350	12	2.9			2.1	
Fry	SNOTEL	7200	30	8.6	5.0	172%	7.5	150%
Happy Jack	SNOTEL	7630	30	7.5	3.8	197%	6.3	166%
Happy Jack	SC	7630	24	7.0	3.2	219%	4.2	131%
Mormon Mountain	SNOTEL	7500	32	9.1	4.0	228%	6.2	155%
Mormon Mountain Summit #2	SC	8470	46	9.6	7.7	125%	9.3	121%
Mormon Mtn Summit	SNOTEL	8500	40	12.3			8.0	
Newman Park	SC	6750	16	4.4	2.0	220%	5.1	255%
White Horse Lake	SNOTEL	7180	19	5.8	3.4	171%	4.7	138%
Williams Ski Run	SC	7720	32	9.8	5.6	175%	6.6	118%
<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>166%</b>		<b>140%</b>
# of sites						12		12

<b>SAN FRANCISCO PEAKS</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Snow Bowl #2	SC	11200	75	21.0	11.6	181%	9.6	83%
Snowslide Canyon	SNOTEL	9730	78	25.5	10.0	255%	8.2	82%
<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>215%</b>		<b>82%</b>
# of sites						2		2

<b>SAN FRANCISCO-UPPER GILA RIVER BASIN</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Beaver Head	SNOTEL	7990	4	1.4	3.4	41%	3.2	94%
Coronado Trail	SNOTEL	8400	5	1.8	3.2	56%	2.5	78%
Coronado Trail	SC	8350	8	1.4	2.0	70%	2.8	140%
Frisco Divide	SNOTEL	8000	8	2.0	2.5	80%	2.2	88%
Hannagan Meadows	SNOTEL	9020	21	7.4	8.3	89%	5.2	63%
Lookout Mountain	SNOTEL	8500	11	2.6	2.3	113%	2.5	109%
Nutriosio	SC	8500	5	1.2	1.2	100%	1.2	100%
Nutriosio	SNOTEL	8500	2	1.0			0.4	
Signal Peak	SNOTEL	8360	12	3.5	3.9	90%	5.0	128%

Silver Creek Divide	SNOTEL	9000	29	7.5	6.1	123%	6.2	102%
State Line	SC	8000	8	1.9	1.8	106%	2.2	122%

<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>88%</b>		<b>95%</b>
# of sites						10		10

<b>LITTLE COLORADO RIVER BASIN</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Baker Butte	SNOTEL	7300	26	6.2	4.3	144%	5.9	137%
Baker Butte No. 2	SC	7700	32	9.0	6.9	130%	7.9	114%
Baker Butte Smt	SNOTEL	7700	38	9.8			9.9	
Baldy	SNOTEL	9125	28	7.7	6.4	120%	4.5	70%
Buck Spring	SC	7400	12	5.4	2.0	270%	2.6	130%
Cheese Springs	SC	8700	22	5.6	4.2	133%	4.2	100%
Fort Apache	SC	9160	35	9.5	6.8	140%	6.6	97%
Heber	SNOTEL	7640	27	8.0	4.6	174%	6.2	135%
Lake Mary	SC	6930	19	5.1	3.0	170%	3.5	117%
Maverick Fork	SNOTEL	9200	30	10.3	6.8	151%	5.6	82%
Promontory	SNOTEL	7930	43	12.8	7.2	178%	12.3	171%

<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>152%</b>		<b>114%</b>
# of sites						10		10

<b>CENTRAL MOGOLLON RIM</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Baker Butte	SNOTEL	7300	26	6.2	4.3	144%	5.9	137%
Baker Butte No. 2	SC	7700	32	9.0	6.9	130%	7.9	114%
Baker Butte Smt	SNOTEL	7700	38	9.8			9.9	
Heber	SNOTEL	7640	27	8.0	4.6	174%	6.2	135%
Promontory	SNOTEL	7930	43	12.8	7.2	178%	12.3	171%

<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>157%</b>		<b>140%</b>
# of sites						4		4

<b>CHUSKA MOUNTAINS</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Beaver Spring	SC	9220	38	11.3	7.7	147%	8.9	116%
Beaver Spring	SNOTEL	9200	36	11.9			9.5	
Bowl Canyon	SC	8980	44	11.2	5.8	193%	7.6	131%
Hidden Valley	SC	8480	29	9.1			6.6	
Missionary Spring	SC	7940	14	3.2	3.6	89%	2.4	67%
Tsaile Canyon #1	SC	8160	29	8.4	4.8	175%	5.7	119%
Tsaile Canyon #3	SC	8920	39	9.9	6.3	157%	7.7	122%
Whiskey Creek	SC	9050	44	13.6	6.3	216%	8.9	141%
Navajo Whiskey Ck	SNOTEL	9050	38	11.9			8.7	

<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>167%</b>		<b>119%</b>
# of sites						6		6

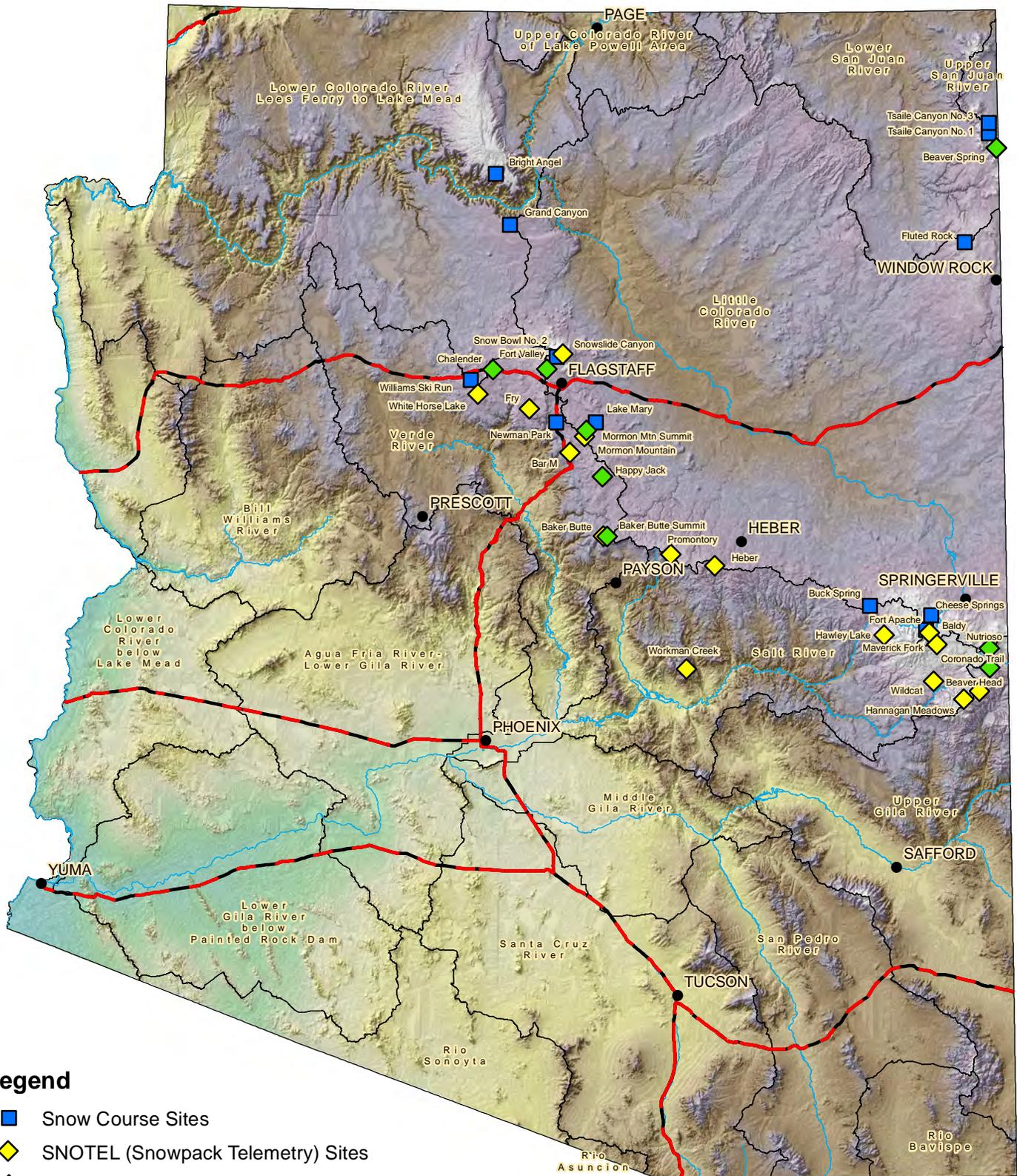
<b>DEFIANCE PLATEAU</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Fluted Rock	SC	7800	15	2.9	2.6	112%	3.2	123%

<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>112%</b>		<b>123%</b>
# of sites						1		1

<b>NORTHWESTERN ARIZONA</b>	Network	Elevation (ft)	Depth (in)	SWE (in)	Median (in)	% Median	Last Year SWE (in)	Last Year % Median
Bright Angel	SC	8400	49	13.7	5.4	254%	5.8	107%
Grand Canyon	SC	7500	17	4.3	2.3	187%	2.6	113%

<b>Basin Index</b>						<b>234%</b>		<b>109%</b>
# of sites						2		2

# Arizona Snow Survey Data Sites



## Legend

- Snow Course Sites
- ◆ SNOTEL (Snowpack Telemetry) Sites
- ◆ SNOTEL and Snow Course Sites
- Basin Boundaries

