What’s New?

The first official forecasts are being released by the NRCS Montana Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program for this coming spring runoff season, and the forecasts are being released in a new graphical format. If you are uncomfortable with this new format, the old format can still be found [here](#).

Typically, the NRCS has presented streamflow forecasts as a table format showing the five exceedance probabilities compared to the 30-year average as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forecast Period</th>
<th>90% Exceedance (KAF)</th>
<th>70% Exceedance (KAF)</th>
<th>50% Exceedance (KAF)</th>
<th>30% Exceedance (KAF)</th>
<th>10% Exceedance (KAF)</th>
<th>30yr Avg (KAF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APR-JUL</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Forecast Chart provides a visual alternative to the table. The forecast range is represented by a colored bar. Vertical lines on the bar signify the five forecast exceedances.

![Forecast Chart](#)

Below is an example. The numbers above the forecast bars are the five exceedance probability volumes in thousand acre-feet (KAF). Each exceedance forecast’s percent of average can be estimated by looking at the horizontal axis. The gray line centered above 100% on the horizontal axis represents the 1981-2010 historical average streamflow for the forecast period.

![Forecast Example](#)

In this example, almost all the forecast bars in the basin are shifted right of the gray vertical line indicating forecasts of above average streamflow. The 50% exceedance is represented by the black line in the green portion of the colored bar. For the top most line, this represents a forecast volume of 490KAF, which is ~123% of average. If drier than normal future conditions occur the 70% exceedance forecast may be more likely (455KAF or ~114% of average). If future conditions turn wetter than normal, the 30% exceedance forecast may be more likely (525KAF or ~132% of average). Water users are encouraged to consider the range of forecast exceedances instead of relying solely only on the 50% forecast.