

March 1, 2020

Snowpack in Middle Park Remains Well Above Normal

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Kremmling Field Office snow surveyors Mark Volt and Derrick Wyle took the March 1st. snow survey measurements during the last days of February.

Snowpack in the high elevation mountains above Middle Park is now 133% of the 30-year median. Last year at this time we were at 112 % of median. Snow density is 27%, which means that for one foot of snow there is 3.2 inches of water, which is normal for March 1st.

Reported readings for the major river basins in Colorado are as follows: Colorado River Basin 116%; Gunnison River Basin, 94%; South Platte River Basin, 128%; Yampa and White River Basins, 117%; Arkansas River Basin, 111%; Upper Rio Grande Basin, 97%; San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basins 89%; and the Laramie and North Platte River Basins, 116% of average for this time of year.

Most of the snow courses around Middle Park have been read since the 1940s. Snow course readings are taken at the end of each month, beginning in January and continuing through April. March is historically the snowiest month, and the April 1 readings are the most critical for predicting runoff and summer water supplies, as most of our high-country snowpack peaks around that time. At this point in time, it will take some significant spring snowstorms to bring our snowpack up to normal before summer.

For further information, including real-time snow and precipitation data for SNOTEL (automated Snow Telemetry) sites, visit <http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/index.html>.



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NRCS Kremmling Field Office snow survey for March 1, 2020, compared to long-term average.

Snow course or SNOTEL (SC or ST)	Last year		This year		30-year average (1981 - 2010)		Percent of median	
	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content
							-----(%)-----	
Arapaho Ridge ST		18.9		18.8		16.7		113%
Berthoud Summit ST		13.7		18.0		13.9		135%
Buffalo Park ST		12.0		16.4		10.7		153%
Columbine ST		21.7		27.7		19.8		140%
Copper Mountain ST		12.8		15.4		10.9		141%
Corral Creek SC			49	12.9	48	11.2	102%	115%
Elliot Ridge ST		17.2	18.0	13.2	<i>New site</i>			
Fremont Pass ST		15.1		14.6		11.8		124%
Gore Pass SC			53	14.1	34	8.6	156%	164%
Granby SC			39	9.4	26	6.5	150%	145%
Grizzly Peak ST		15.3		14.8		13.3		112%
Jones Pass ST		12.8		14.12		9.7		145%
Lake Irene ST		18.5		21.5		19.4		120%
Lynx Pass ST		10.2		12.1		8.9		136%
Middle Fork Camp SC		8.4	43	10.8	36	8.7	119%	124%
Phantom Valley ST		7.3		11.6		8.3		141%
Stillwater Creek ST		6.7		9.3		6.7		139%
Summit Ranch ST		8.9		10.9		8.7		125%
Willow Creek Pass SC		11.0	44	11.2	34	9.5	129%	118%
<i>Average for Middle Park</i>								133%



Mark Volt measures near record snow depth and water content at the Gore Pass snow course during the March 1st. snow survey. 52“ of snow and 14.1” of water. The only higher snow measured on Gore Pass for March 1st. was in 1962. The Gore Pass snow course has been read since 1951.

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NRCS Kremmling Field Office snow survey March 1 moisture content records.

Snow course or SNOTEL (SC or ST)	<u>Highest March. 1 moisture content</u>			<u>Lowest March. 1 moisture content</u>		
	(inches)	(%)	(year)	(inches)	(%)	(year)
Arapaho Ridge ST (read since 2003)	23.5	125%	2006	12.8	68%	2010
Berthoud Summit ST	20.3	142%	1996	7.5	52%	1981
Buffalo Park ST (read since 1996)	17.1	188%	2014	6.6	61%	2002
Columbine ST	40.1	183%	1984	8.2	37%	1981
Copper Mountain ST	18.9	169%	1996	4.8	43%	1981
Corral Creek SC (read since 1995)	18.0	137%	1997	6.6	50%	2010
Fremont Pass ST	18.8	146%	2006	6.4	50%	1981
Gore Pass SC	14.3	155%	1962	2.6	28%	1981
Granby SC	13.4	206%	2017	1.8	28%	1981
Grizzly Peak ST	23.7	173%	1996	6.1	45%	1981
Jones Pass ST (read since 2000)	18.1	141%	2006	8.5	66%	2010
Lake Irene ST	32.3	154%	1956	7.1	34%	1977
Lynx Pass ST	17.5	172%	1962	2.8	27%	1981
Middle Fork Campground SC	13.9	160%	1996	3.0	34%	1981
Phantom Valley ST	12.0	143%	1996	3.4	40%	1977
Stillwater Creek ST (read since 1986)	11.4	158%	1997	2.9	40%	1981
Summit Ranch ST	15.4	181%	1996	5.0	59%	1981
Willow Creek Pass SC	20.4	192%	1952	3.8	36%	1977