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Natural Resources Conservation Service

NEWS RELEASE

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February 1, 2017

Snowpack- Near Record Levels

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

Snowpack in the high-elevation Mountains above Middle Park is at 161 % of the 30-year average. (1980-2010). Last year's snowpack at this time was at 112% of average. It is still early in the winter and snowpack could change significantly by May…But were are off to a darn good start. The snowpack at the Granby snow course located near C lazy U ranch set a new all-time record high.

Snow density is averaging 30%, which means that for a foot of snow there are 3.6 inches of water. That's pretty dense for early in the winter. .

Reported readings for the major river basins in Colorado are also doing well.: The upper Colorado River Basin averages 151%; Gunnison River Basin, 166%; South Platte River Basin, 140%; Yampa and White River Basins, 129%; Arkansas River Basin, 162%; Upper Rio Grande Basin, 151%; San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basins 169%; and the Laramie and North Platte River Basins 131% 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 1st. readings are the most critical for predicting runoff and summer water supplies, as most of our high country snowpack peaks around that time.
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 February 1, 2017- compared to long-term average.

Snow course (SC) or SNOTEL (ST)	Last year		This year		30-year median (1981 - 2010)		Percent of median	
	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content	Snow depth	Moisture content
	----------(inches)----------						---------(%)---------	
Arapaho Ridge ST		13.9		18.8		13.2		142%
Berthoud Summit ST		11.7		13.1		10.6		124%
Buffalo Park ST		9.8		11.8		7.3		162%
Columbine ST		13.4		19.0		14.7		129%
Copper Mountain ST		8.5		12.0		8.0		150%
Corral Creek SC	36	8.7	46	13.9	33	8.0	139%	174 163%
Elliot Ridge ST		9.5		14.6	*New site c*		*New site*	
Fremont Pass ST		9.1		12.7		9.2		138%
Gore Pass SC	35	8.3	38	11.5	27	6.4	141%	180%
Granby SC	28	7.2	41	12.1	17	4.0	241%	303%
Grizzly Peak ST		10.6		17.0		9.0		189%
Jones Pass ST		9.7		10.4		7.9		132%
Lake Irene ST		12.3		18.8		14.1		133%
Lynx Pass ST		7.6		8.8		6.6		133%
Middle Fork Camp SC	33	8.7	38	9.3	27	6.4	141%	145%
Phantom Valley ST		5.0		10.6		6.3		168%
Stillwater Creek ST		6.6		9.1		5.1		178%
Summit Ranch ST		6.6		10.7		6.4		167%
Willow Creek Pass SC	35	7.8	54	13.5	34	8.2	159%	165%
Average (Median)								***161%***

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

Snow course or SNOTEL	Highest Feb. 1 moisture content			Lowest Feb. 1 moisture content		
	(inches)	(%)	(year)	(inches)	(%)	(year)
Arapaho Ridge ST (read since 2003)	19.3	125%	2011	9.4	63%	2003
Berthoud Summit ST	17.1	154%	1984	5.0	45%	1981
Buffalo Park ST (read since 1996)	14.7	167%	1997	4.6	52%	2002
Columbine ST	28.0	170%	1978	5.1	31%	1981
Copper Mountain ST	14.5	167%	1997	3.5	40%	1981
Corral Creek SC (read since 1995)	15.6	154%	1997	***4.3***	***43%***	***2010***
Fremont Pass ST	16.2	156%	1952	5.0	48%	1981
Gore Pass SC	11.7	165%	1997	1.3	18%	1981
Granby SC	12.1	303%	2017	1.1	23%	1981
Grizzly Peak ST	18.9	177%	1996	3.6	34%	1981
Jones Pass ST (read since 2000)	17.2	177%	1997	3.3	34%	1963
Lake Irene ST	26.4	163%	1962	6.0	37%	1977
Lynx Pass ST	13.4	174%	1978	1.6	21%	1981
Middle Fork Campground SC	11.6	178%	1952	1.8	28%	1981
Phantom Valley ST	10.6	166%	1996	2.9	45%	1981
Stillwater Creek ST (read since 1986)	10.8	200%	1997	2.2	41%	1981
Summit Ranch ST	12.1	181%	1984	4.0	60%	1981
Willow Creek Pass SC	17.6	215%	1984	2.2	27%	1981

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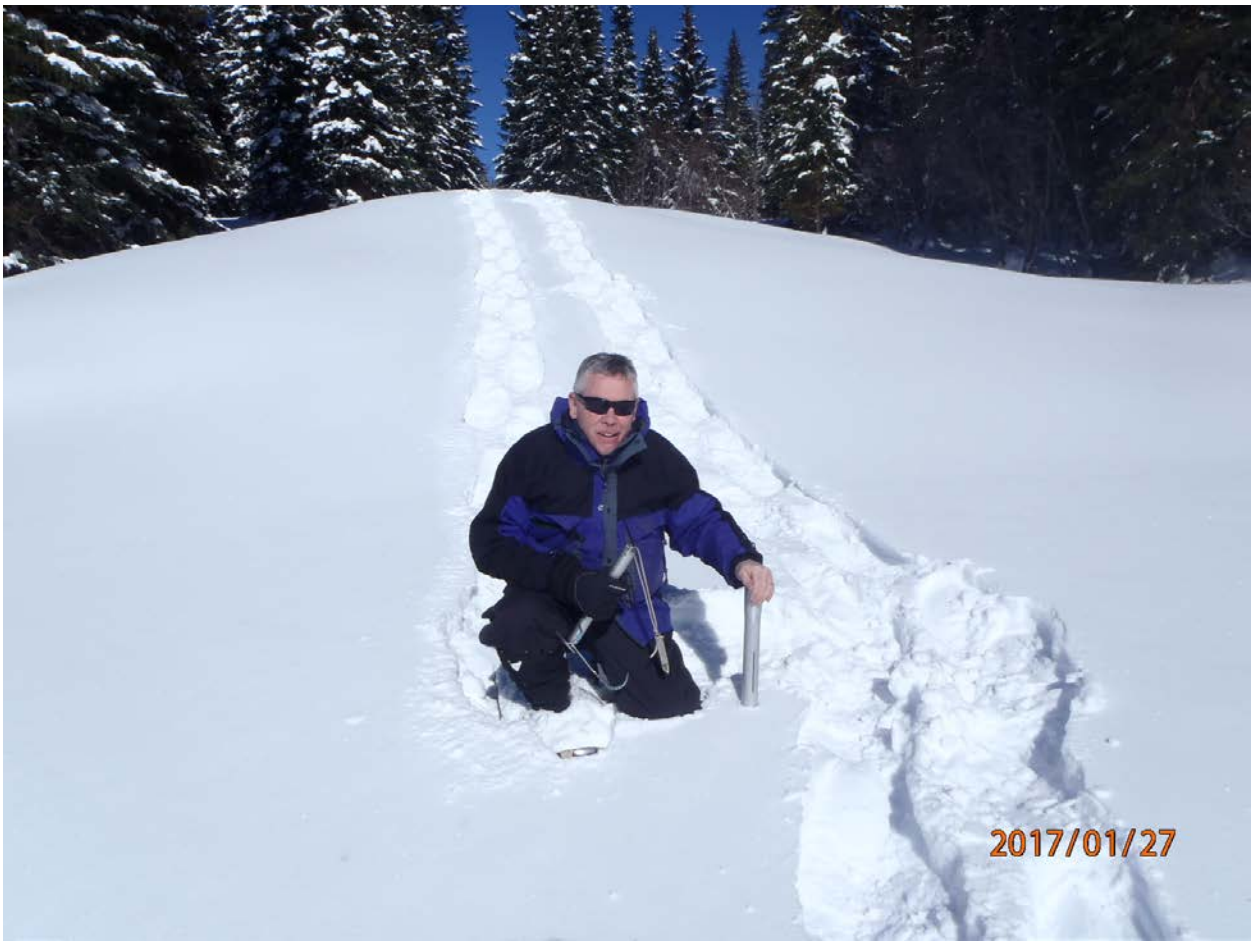

Long time snow surveyor Mark Volt with the NRCS measures near record snowpack near Elk Mountain. Snow courses are read at the end of each month between January and May.