

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service, Arkansas Red River Forecast Center
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Tulsa, Oklahoma 74128-3050

Water Supply Outlook

May 7, 2025

ABRFC uses the 1991-2020 AVERAGE runoff volume as our Normal at each point.

Snowfall across the Upper Arkansas River Basin was below normal during April. The Sangre De Cristo Mountains in Southern Colorado and the Canadian River Basin in New Mexico also saw below normal snowfall in April. At the end of April, snowpack conditions were below normal at most points along the upper reaches of the Arkansas River, but significantly below normal across Southern Colorado. The snowpack is also extremely low in the Canadian Basin in New Mexico, where much of the snowpack has melted.

Seasonal runoff (April-September) is forecast to be 79 percent-of-average for the Arkansas River at Salida and 71 percent-of-average below Pueblo Reservoir. Runoff from Grape Creek, the Cucharas River and the Huerfano River is forecast to be 30, 52, and 47 percent-of-average, respectively. Chalk Creek is forecast to provide 72 percent-of-average runoff. Runoff from the Purgatoire River is forecast to be 49 percent-of-average.

In New Mexico, seasonal runoff (March-June) from Rayado and Ponil Creeks is forecast to be 36 and 30 percent-of-average, respectively. The Vermejo and Cimarron Rivers are forecast to be 20 and 19 percent-of-average, respectively.

Water-year-to-date precipitation (October-April) in the mountain headwaters of Colorado is below median, overall. Reports range from 64 percent-of-median at South Colony to 111 percent-of-median at Porphyry Creek. Snowpack above Salida, as measured by (NRCS) SNOTEL sites, is below normal at 59 percent-of-median. Snowpack in the Cucharas and Huerfano basins is almost gone. In the Purgatoire River basin, the snowpack is almost all melted, as well.

New Mexico's water-year-to-date precipitation is below normal. Reports range from 75 percent-of-median at Red River Pass #2 to 99 percent-of-median at Shuree. Unfortunately, the snowpack in the Canadian River basin is mostly melted and is too low to measure.

Reservoir storage in the Arkansas River system is 110 percent-of-median above Pueblo Reservoir and 92 percent-of-median below the reservoir. The upper reservoirs are at 101 percent of last year's total. The lower reservoirs are at 110 percent of last year's total.

The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) issues three-month temperature and precipitation outlooks for the nation. The outlook for May through July calls for increased chances of above normal temperatures in Colorado and New Mexico. The CPC outlook also calls for increased chances for below normal precipitation across New Mexico and especially in Colorado.

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*               can be found on our Web Page at:      *
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*               www.weather.gov/abrfc/water_supply   *
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