

Snowpack Evaluation

Weather Research and Consulting Services, LLC

This is the April 1, 2021 Washington and Oregon snowpack report, along with comparisons to 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. The report will be updated on or about April 15.

The last half of March was generally cooler and drier than normal. However, there were three weather systems that moved across the region that brought snow to the mountains above 2000 ft ml. As a result, Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) percentages increased slightly compared to median. The Oregon SWE increased 6% and is now 109% of median. This is better than last year's 98% on this date. The snowpack is above or much above normal in the Blue and northern Cascade Mountains, but near to below normal across southern Oregon. The SWE ranges from 152% of median in the Umatilla River Basin to 69% in Lake County. The Washington SWE is up 4% and is 129% of median. Nearly all river basins are much above the median for this date. In fact, Washington's snowpack is the best it has been since 2008 and the fifth best dating back to 1981. The snowpack ranges from 154% of median in the Olympic Mountains to 105% in the Spokane River Basin. April 1 is very near to the snowpack peak and gradual melting takes place through the spring and early summer. The rate of snowmelt is an important factor in determining the severity of the summer fire season. Our snowpack outlook, issued on November 10, predicted an April 1 snowpack of 120% (+/- 20%) of median for both Washington and Oregon. The forecast was about 10% of the actual, which is very good for a lead time of five months.

A graphic of Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) percentages across the western United States is also included for comparison. Areas shaded in blue indicate above normal snowpack, green indicates near normal, and yellow, orange and red below normal. The best snowpacks are located in Washington and northeastern Oregon, the worst in southern California, southern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona. The statewide California snowpack (not shown on map but reported by the California Department of Water Resources) fell slightly since March 15 and is now 59% of normal. This is only slightly better than last year's 53% on this date.

We will continue to monitor snowpack figures through June 1. If you have questions about this report, please contact Weather Research and Consulting Services, LLC using the links at the end of this report.

Oregon and Washington Snowpack Comparison as of April 1, 2021

Oregon

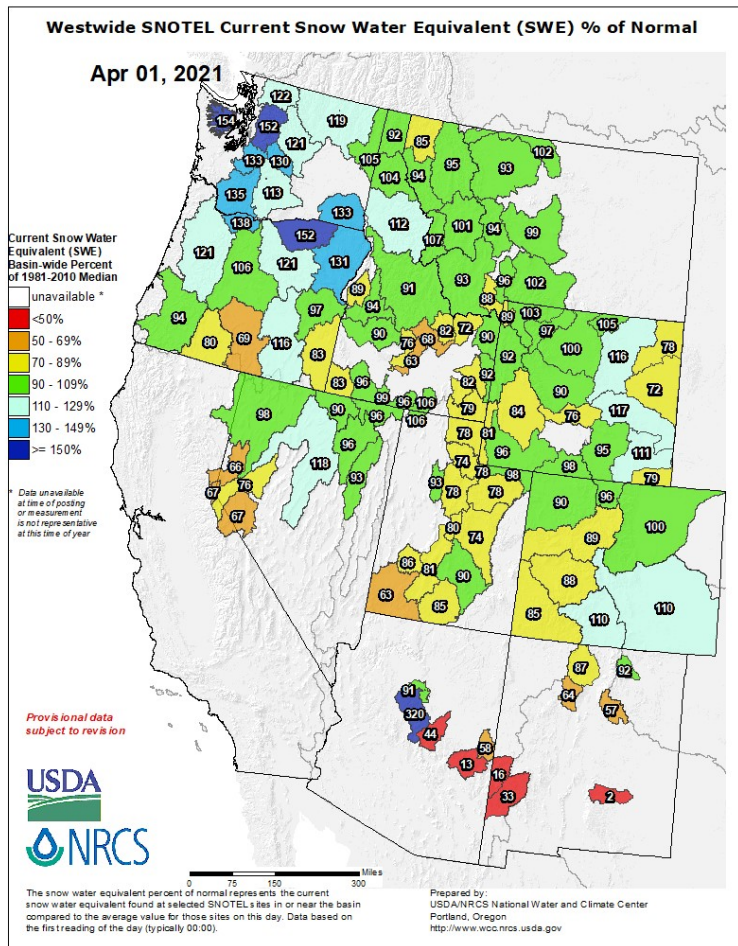
		(Percent of Normal)				
<u>River Basin</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Owyhee	April 1	83	99	132	47	100
Malheur	April 1	97	84	152	44	100
Grande Ronde	April 1	131	118	131	83	115
Umatilla	April 1	152	130	162	84	114
John Day	April 1	121	108	165	62	118
Deschutes	April 1	106	94	110	66	128
Lower Columbia	April 1	138	100	92	91	127
Willamette	April 1	121	100	107	77	140
Rogue/Umpqua	April 1	94	80	117	59	126
Klamath	April 1	80	79	129	52	122
Lake County	April 1	69	89	164	65	132
Harney	April 1	116	93	138	57	110
State AVG		109	98	133	66	119

Note: Red figures indicate the lowest snowpack average in the past 5 years.

Washington

(Percent of Normal)

River Basin	Date	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Spokane	April 1	105	110	88	118	97
Columbia/Methow	April 1	119	103	84	136	121
Chelan/Wenatchee	April 1	121	97	79	105	110
Upper Yakima	April 1	130	89	69	98	103
Lower Yakima	April 1	113	112	92	100	108
Lower Snake	April 1	133	112	100	113	106
Lewis/Cowlitz	April 1	135	111	90	107	137
White/Green	April 1	133	125	82	97	112
Cedar/Snoqualmie	April 1	152	111	66	110	115
Baker/Skagit	April 1	122	110	73	123	114
Olympic	April 1	154	110	75	115	112
State AVG		129	108	82	111	112



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