

Hydrology Report – March 2022

- **Upper Basin precipitation and Temperature**

February was another dry month with only 63% of average precipitation in the Upper Basin bringing this year's cumulative precipitation to 98% of average. Temperatures in the Upper Basin were favorable being 3 to 5 degrees below average.

- **Upper Basin Snowpack and runoff**

The snowpack is currently at 90% of the seasonal average. Due to the dry February the runoff forecast was reduced to 69% of average. It is important that we get more precipitation in April to prevent a bad runoff.

- **Current reservoir status**

As of March 3, 2022, Lake Mead is at an elevation of 1,066.8 feet and has about 8.9 million acre-feet in storage (34% capacity). As of March 8, 2022, Lake Powell is at an elevation of 3,527.2 feet and has about 6.1 million acre-feet in storage (25% capacity). Since this time last year, Lake Mead has decreased about 20 feet and Lake Powell has decreased about 44 feet. Total system storage for the Upper and Lower Basin is around 21.5 million acre-feet (36% capacity).

- **2022 Reservoir Operations**

In calendar year 2022, there will be a Tier 1 shortage under the 2007 Guidelines and there will be a required Drought Contingency Plan contribution for Nevada and Arizona. Accordingly, in 2022, Nevada will be required to reduce consumptive use by 13,000 acre-feet under the 2007 Interim Guidelines and have a Drought Contingency Plan contribution of 8,000 acre-feet. Arizona and Mexico are also required to take shortage and make a water savings contribution in 2022. Those amounts are significantly larger than Nevada's obligations. The total combined volumes for Arizona, Nevada, and Mexico are 613,000 acre-feet in calendar year 2022, which will save the equivalent of about 8 feet in elevation in Lake Mead.

In response to declining runoff and lowering lake levels the 500+ plan was recently initiated with the purpose of storing an additional 500,000 acre-feet in Lake Mead during each of the next two years to prevent reaching critical elevations. The additional conservation is on top of the water savings already required in the 2007 Guidelines and Drought Contingency Plan. The Southern Nevada Water Authority, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Arizona Department of Water Resources, Central Arizona Project, and The Department of Interior have committed 200 million dollars to fund the 500+ plan over the next two years, which will result in about 16 feet of savings in Lake Mead.

- **Water Use in Southern Nevada**

Southern Nevada's consumptive use in January 2022 was 10,821 acre-feet, which is a small decrease compared to last year. In 2021, Southern Nevada consumed less Colorado River water than it is 300,000 acre-feet entitlement: specifically, 50,265 (17%) acre feet less. The Southern Nevada Water Authority stored the unused water in Lake Mead to help maintain water levels. This stored water is accessible to the Southern Nevada in the

future if necessary. The Southern Nevada Water Authority aggressively reduced consumptive uses through turf removal and conservation programs allowing over 2.1 million acre-feet in total to be stored for future use.

- **Reclamation’s Lake Mead Projection**

Reclamation uses computer models to forecast reservoir elevations based on planned water use and anticipated runoff. The most current model (February 24 month study) is forecasting Lake Mead to be at an elevation of 1,050.3 feet by the end of calendar year 2022 (Figure 1).

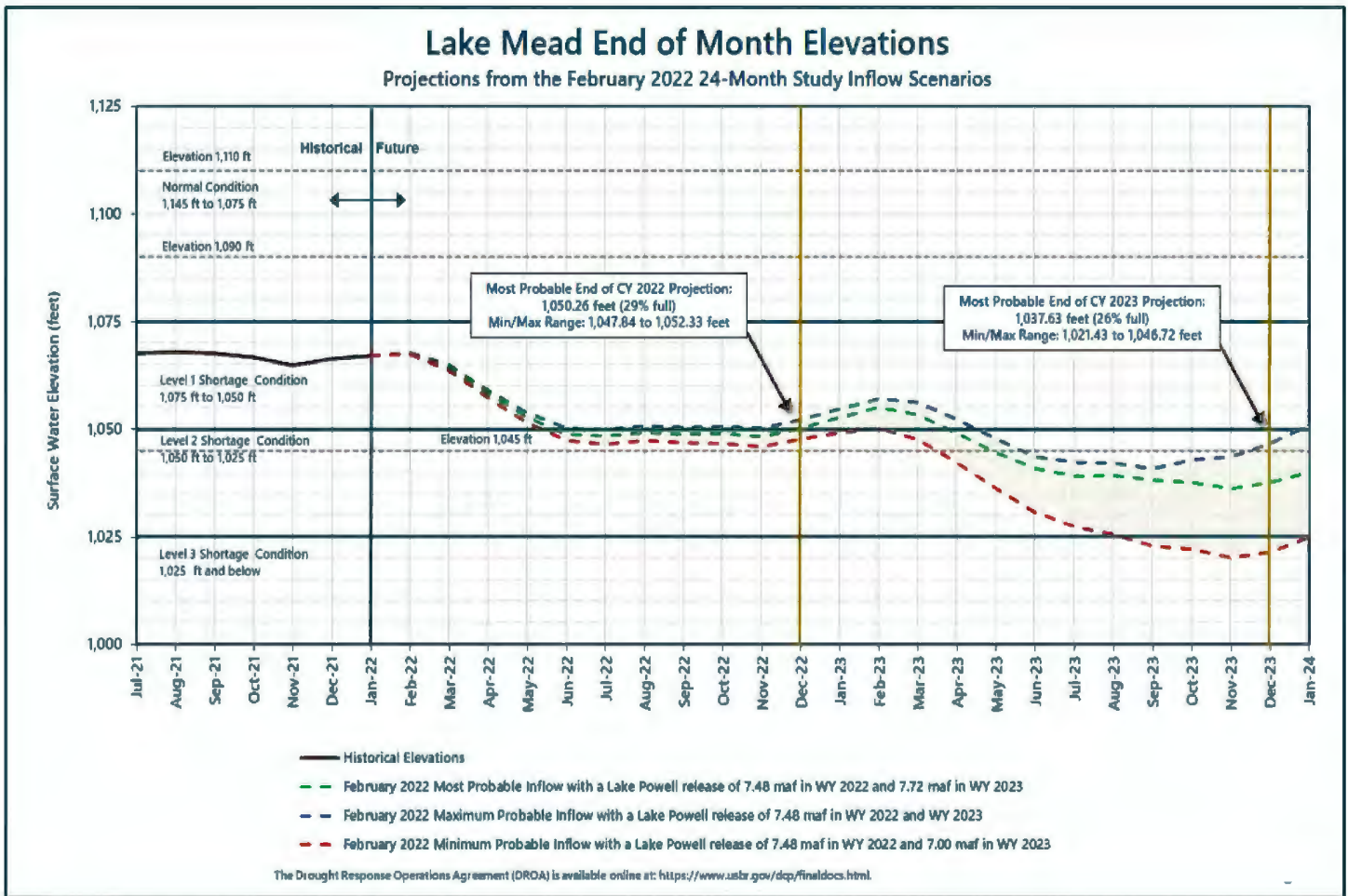


Figure 1. Reclamations February 24 Month Study.



Colorado River Commission of Nevada

Hydrology and Water Use Update

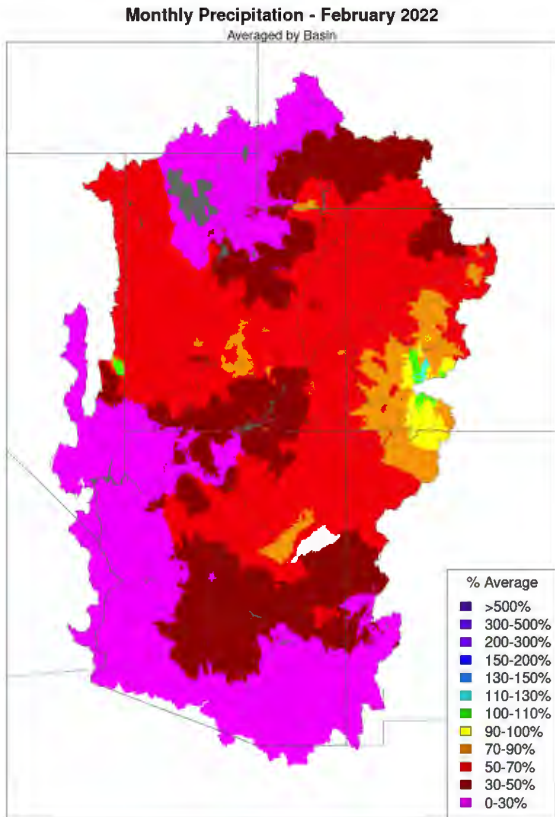
Warren Turkett

March 8, 2022

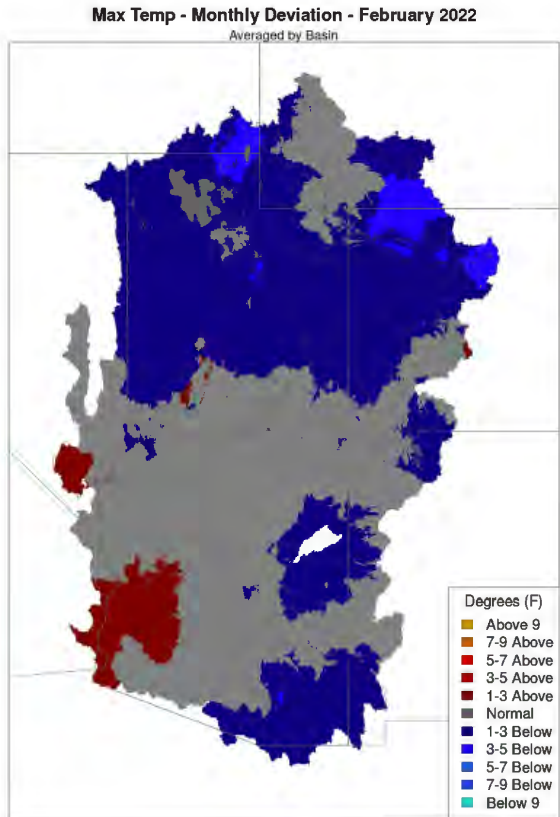




Precipitation and Temperature



Prepared by NOAA, Colorado Basin River Forecast Center
Salt Lake City, Utah, www.cbrfc.noaa.gov



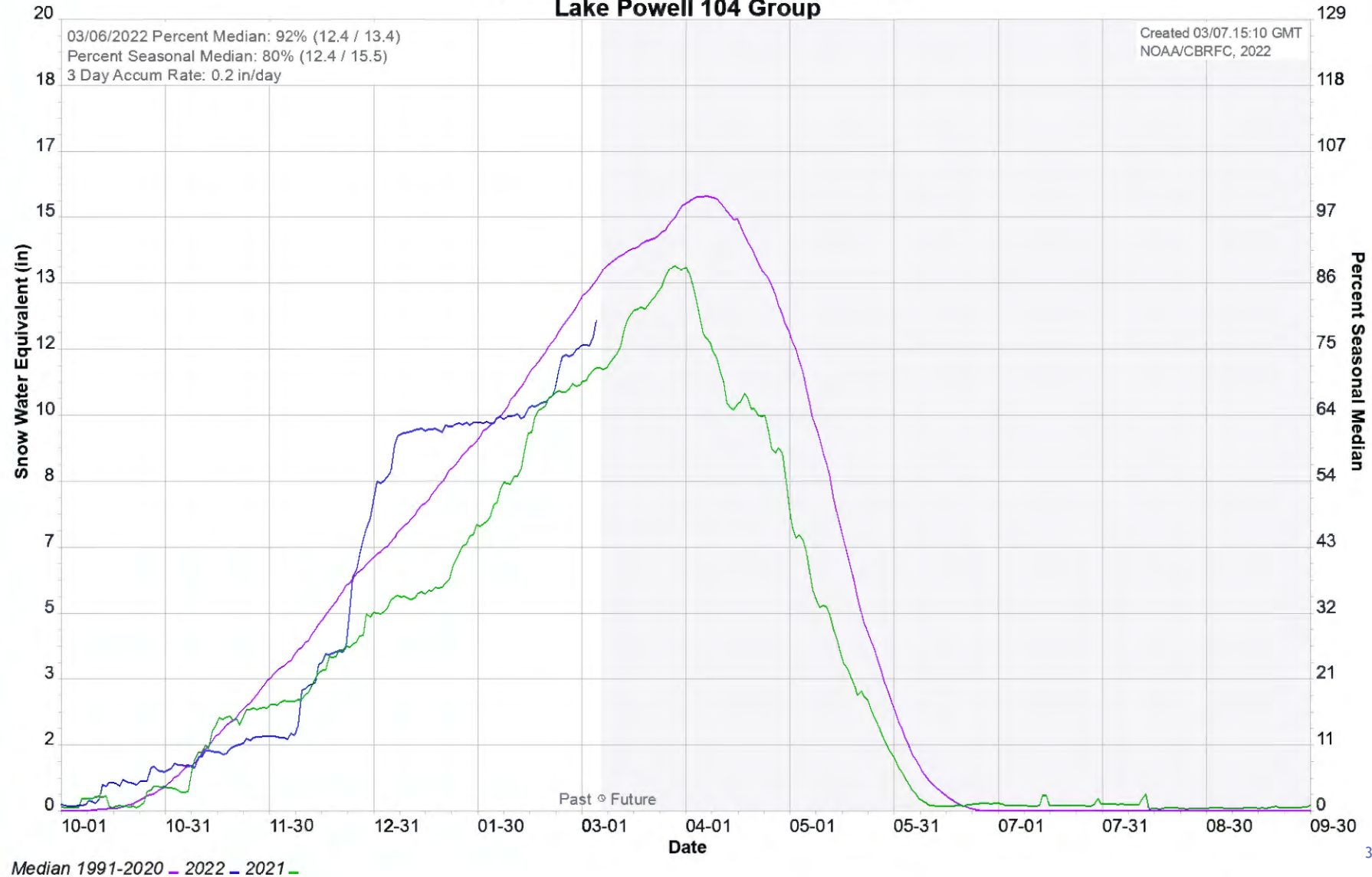
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Lake Powell %Average Precipitation Water Year 2022

| Area | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Water Year |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| UC-Powell | 127 | 45 | 206 | 51 | 63 | 98 |



Colorado Basin River Forecast Center Lake Powell 104 Group





Unregulated Inflow, Current and Projected Reservoir Status

| Projected unregulated inflow to Lake Powell | Acre-Feet | % Average |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Water Year 2022 | 6,583,000 | 69% |
| April thru July 2022 | 4,400,000 | 69% |

| Reservoir | Current Elevation | Current Storage Acre-Feet | Current % Capacity | Projected Elevation on 1/1/2023 ¹ |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Lake Mead | 1,066.8 | 8,948,000 | 34% | 1,050.3 |
| Lake Powell | 3,527.2 | 6,061,000 | 25% | 3,524.4 |

Data retrieved March 3, 2022

¹ Based on Reclamation's February 2021 24 Month Study Most Probable Inflow.



Water Use In Southern Nevada

| Southern Nevada Water Use | 2021 Actual Use in Acre-Feet* |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Nevada Annual Allocation | 300,000 |
| Diversions | 480,322 |
| Return Flow Credits | 235,588 |
| Consumptive Use | 241,735 |
| 2021 Drought Contingency Plan contribution | -8,000 |
| Unused Allocation Available for Banking | 50,265 (17%) |

* 2021 Water use is provisional.

| Southern Nevada Water Use | Diversions | Return Flows | Consumptive Use |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|
| January 2022 | 30,657 | 19,837 | 10,821 |

| Banked Water (through end of 2020) | Acre-Feet |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Ground Water Recharge in So. Nevada | 357,643 |
| Banked in Lake Mead | 865,741 |
| Banked in California and Arizona | 944,071 |
| Total | 2,167,455 |



Summary

Lake Powell

- Water Year 2022¹ has received 98% of average precipitation in the Upper Basin.
- Upper Basin snowpack accumulation is currently 92% of the seasonal median.
- Unregulated inflow for water year 2022 is forecasted to be 69% of average.

Lake Mead

- In calendar year 2022, there will be a Tier 1 shortage under the 2007 Guidelines and required DCP contributions for Nevada and Arizona.
- Over the last 6 years, the Lower Basin has conserved enough water to raise Lake Mead by 65 feet.

Nevada Water Supply

- Southern Nevada has about 9 years of water supply banked. ²
- **In 2021, Southern Nevada used 58,265 af less than our annual allocation.**

| Storage | Elevation (f) | % Capacity | Change since last year |
|-------------|---------------|------------|------------------------|
| Lake Mead | 1,066.8 | 34% | -20.3 ft |
| Lake Powell | 3,527.2 | 25% | -43.8 ft |

Data retrieved March 3, 2022.

¹ Water year is defined as October through September.

² Based on 2021 consumptive use and storage volumes through 2020.