



AGENDA

IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

Upper Snake River Advisory Committee Meeting No. 3-26

Thursday, March 12th, 2026

10:00 a.m. (MST)

Brad Little
Governor

Jeff Raybould
Chairman
St. Anthony
At Large

Jo Ann Cole-Hansen
Vice Chair
Lewiston
At Large

Dean Stevenson
Secretary
Paul
District 3

Dale Van Stone
Hope
District 1

Albert Barker
Boise
District 2

Brian Olmstead
Twin Falls
At Large

Marcus Gibbs
Grace
District 4

Patrick McMahon
Sun Valley
At Large

Meeting Location(s):

BOISE
Water Center
Conf. Room 648A
322 E. Front St.

IDAHO FALLS
Eastern Regional Office
Main Conference Room
900 N. Skyline Dr.

or

VIDEO conference via Zoom is available upon following the Zoom link login process, contact Neal.Farmer@idwr.idaho.gov for questions or issues in advance of the meeting start time. The purpose of this meeting is to present updated water operations information and data (i.e.-reservoir storage, pool levels & releases; river flow rates, diversion locations and rates; snowpack runoff status & predictions; weather predictions; etc.) for primarily the Upper Snake River Basin System. The Water Board does not vote on any action in this meeting and its purpose is for information transfer.

-
1. Introductions and Attendance
 2. NWS - Weather Forecast
 3. NRCS - Snow Pack / Streamflow Forecasts
 4. USBR - Water Supply / Operations Update
 5. Idaho Power - Reservoir / River Operations
 6. Water District 01 Briefing
 7. IWRB - Managed Recharge Operations
 8. New Business
 9. Adjourn

Committee Member: Brian Olmstead

Americans with Disabilities

The meeting will be held in person and online. If you require special accommodations to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please make advance arrangements by contacting Department staff by email Wesley.hipke@idwr.idaho.gov or by phone at (208) 287-4800.



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Snowpack & Water Supply Update

Upper Snake River Advisory Meeting– March 12, 2026

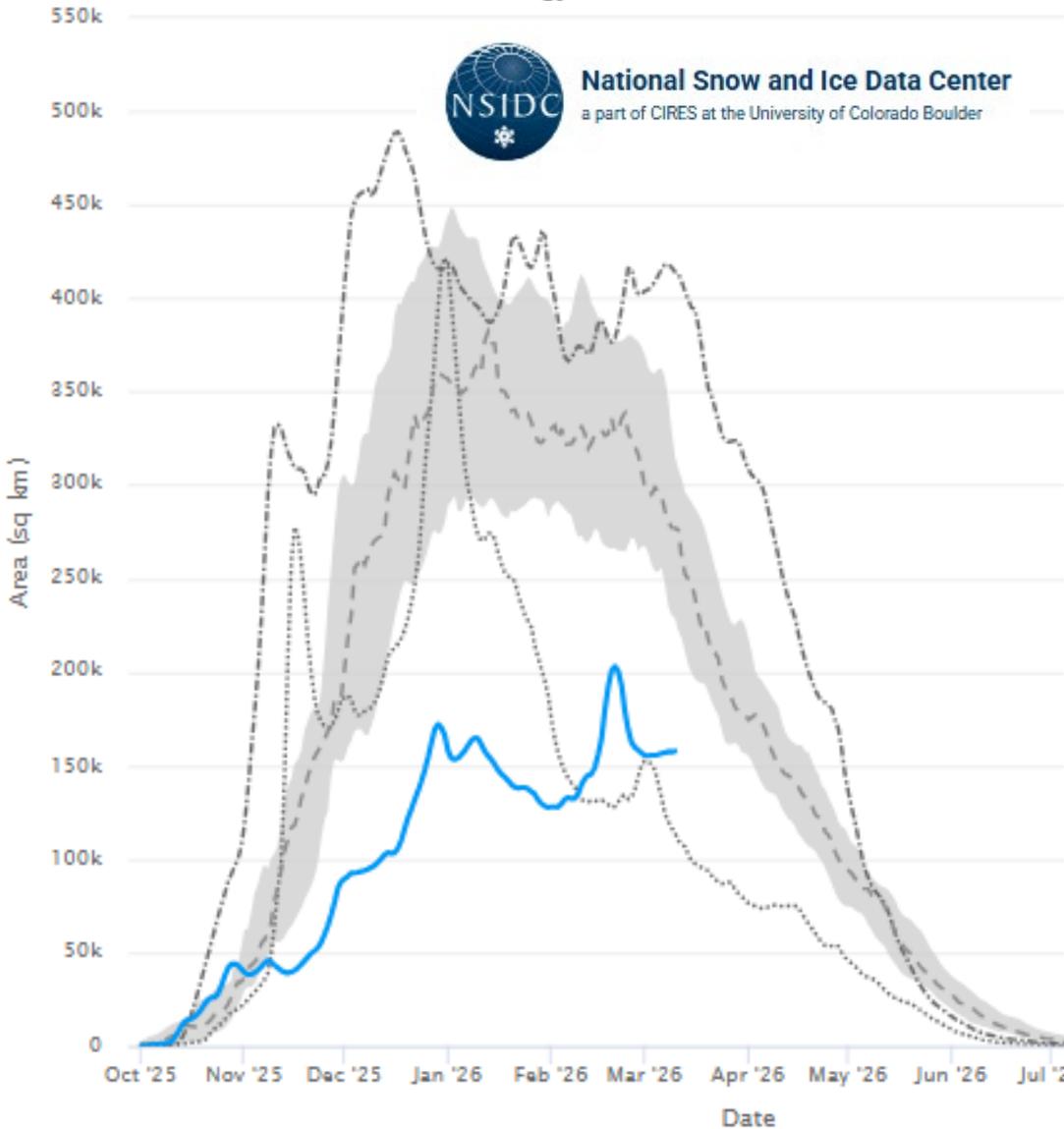
FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

Total Snow Cover Area Pacific Northwest as of 2026-03-10

Climatology calculated over 2001 to 2025



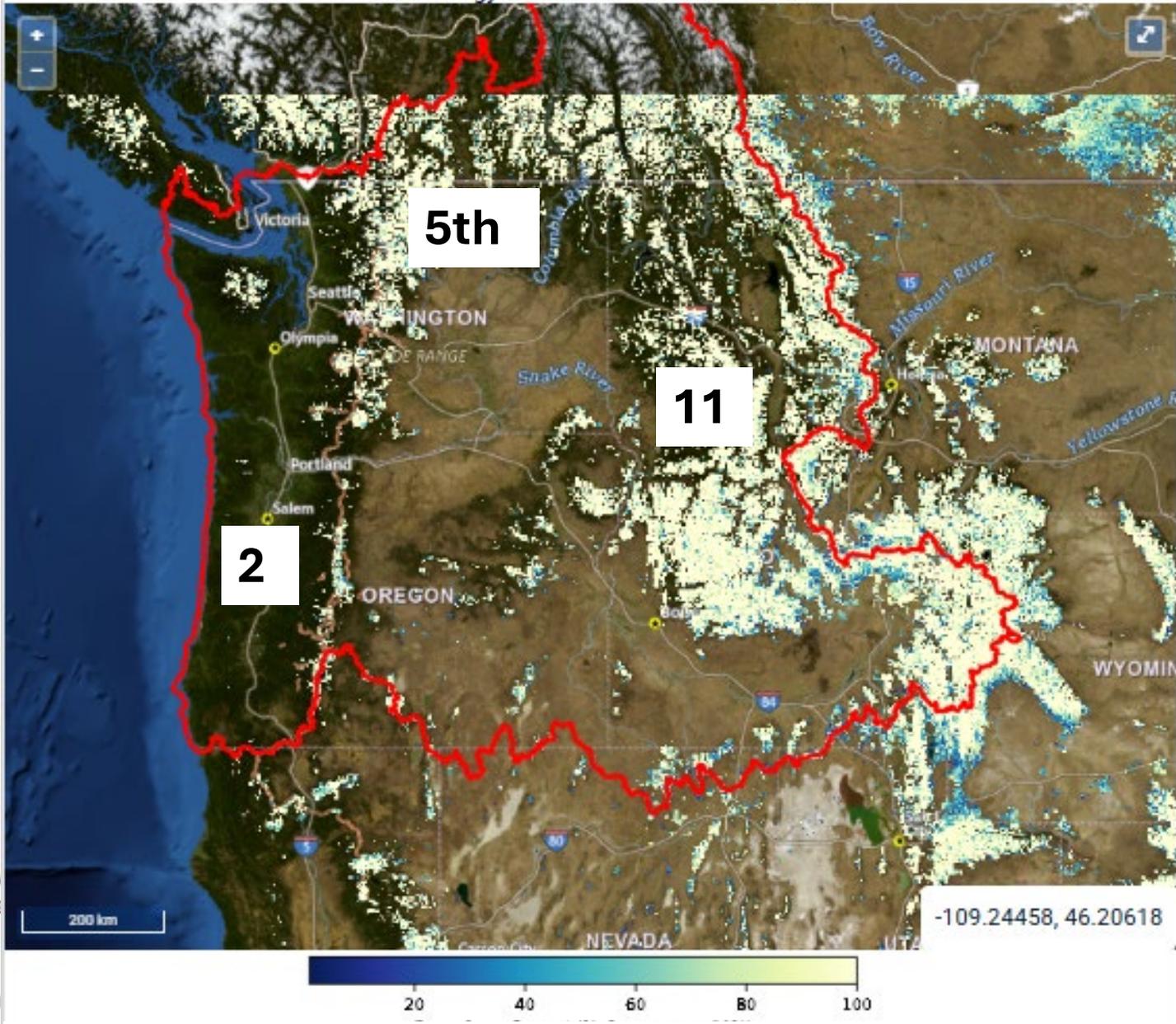
National Snow and Ice Data Center
a part of CIRES at the University of Colorado Boulder



— Year to date
 - - Median
 - ■ - Maximum (2023)
 - ▲ - Minimum (2015)

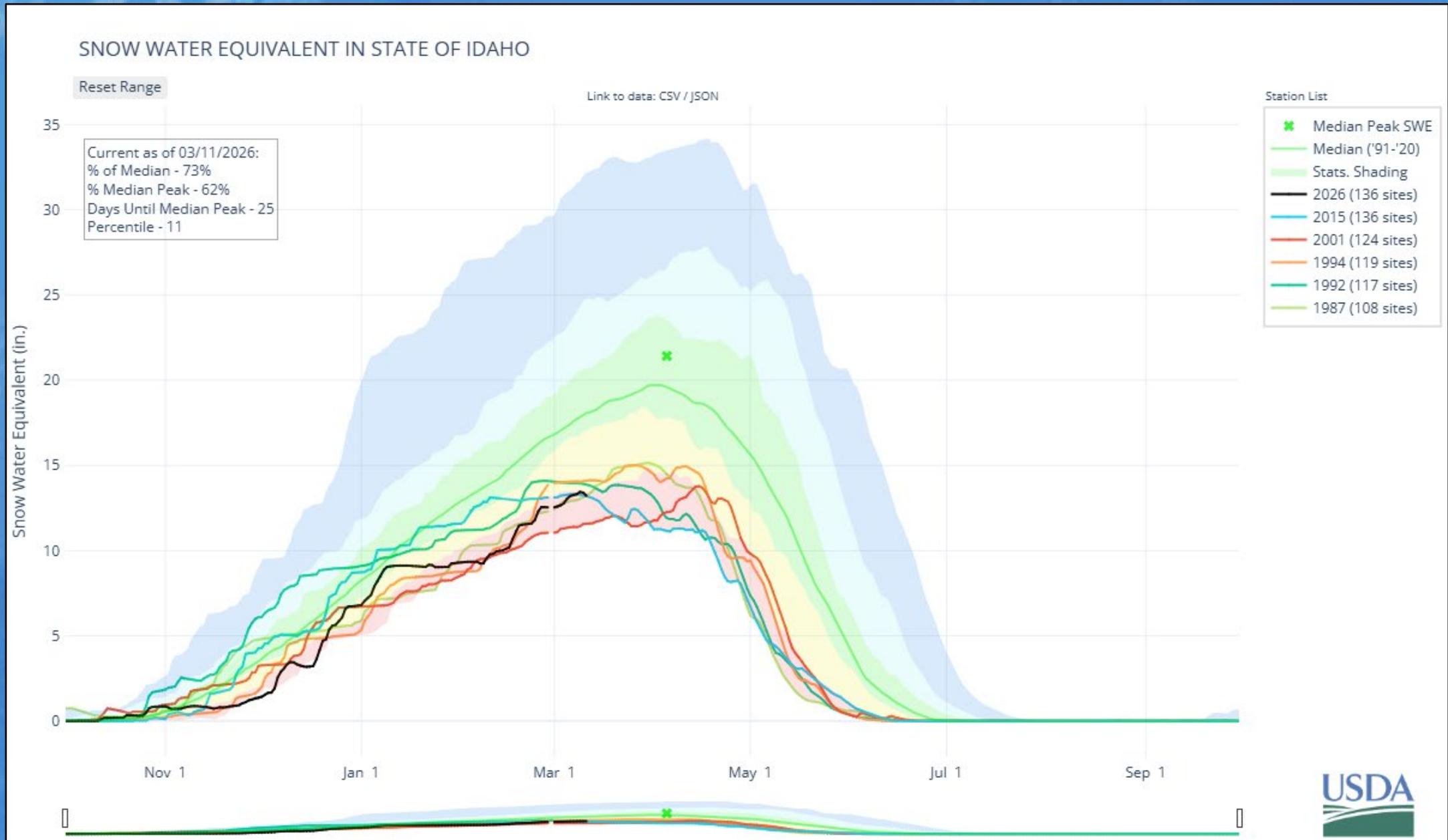
Snow Cover Percent Pacific Northwest as of 2026-03-10

Climatology calculated over 2001 to 2025

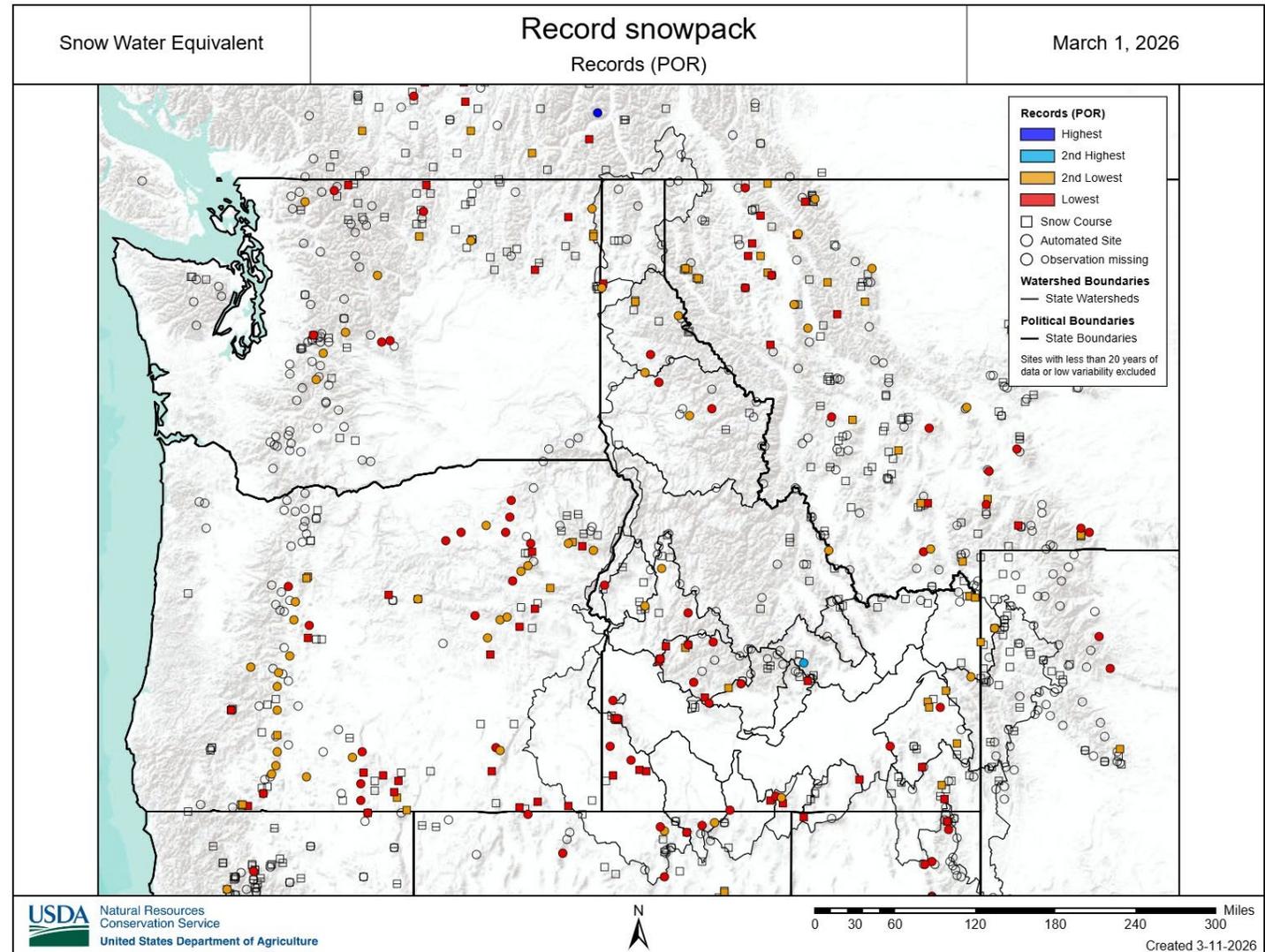
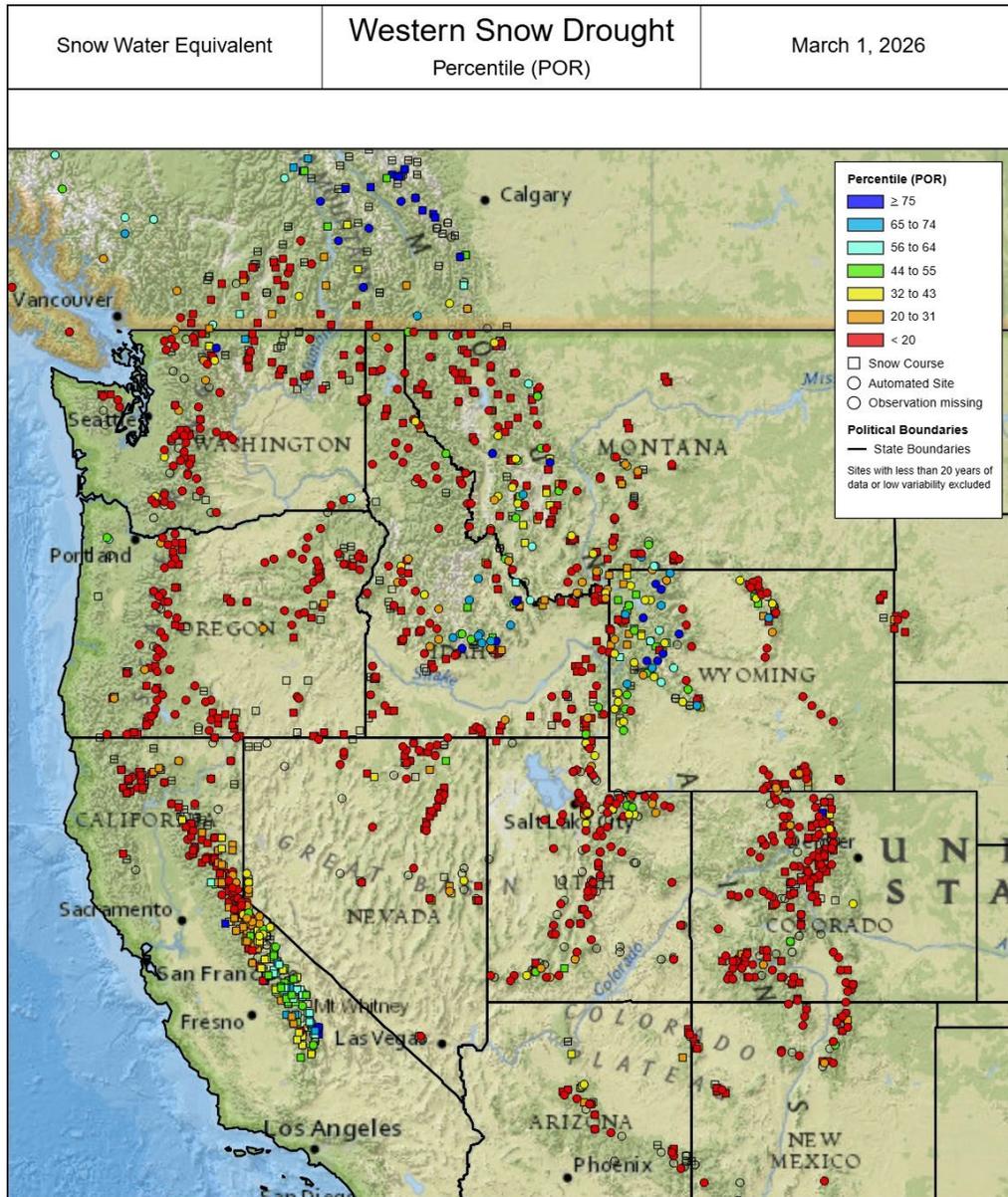




Idaho snowpack conditions: 11th percentile



Pervasive snow drought in the West



Snow Water Equivalent

March 1 snowpack conditions

March 1, 2026

Percent NRCS 1991-2020 Median

Percent NRCS 1991-2020 Median

- ≥ 150%
- 130% to 149%
- 110% to 129%
- 90% to 109%
- 70% to 89%
- 50% to 69%
- < 50%
- No basin value

Watershed Boundaries

▼ Date, Frequency, and Duration

Frequency: Monthly ▼

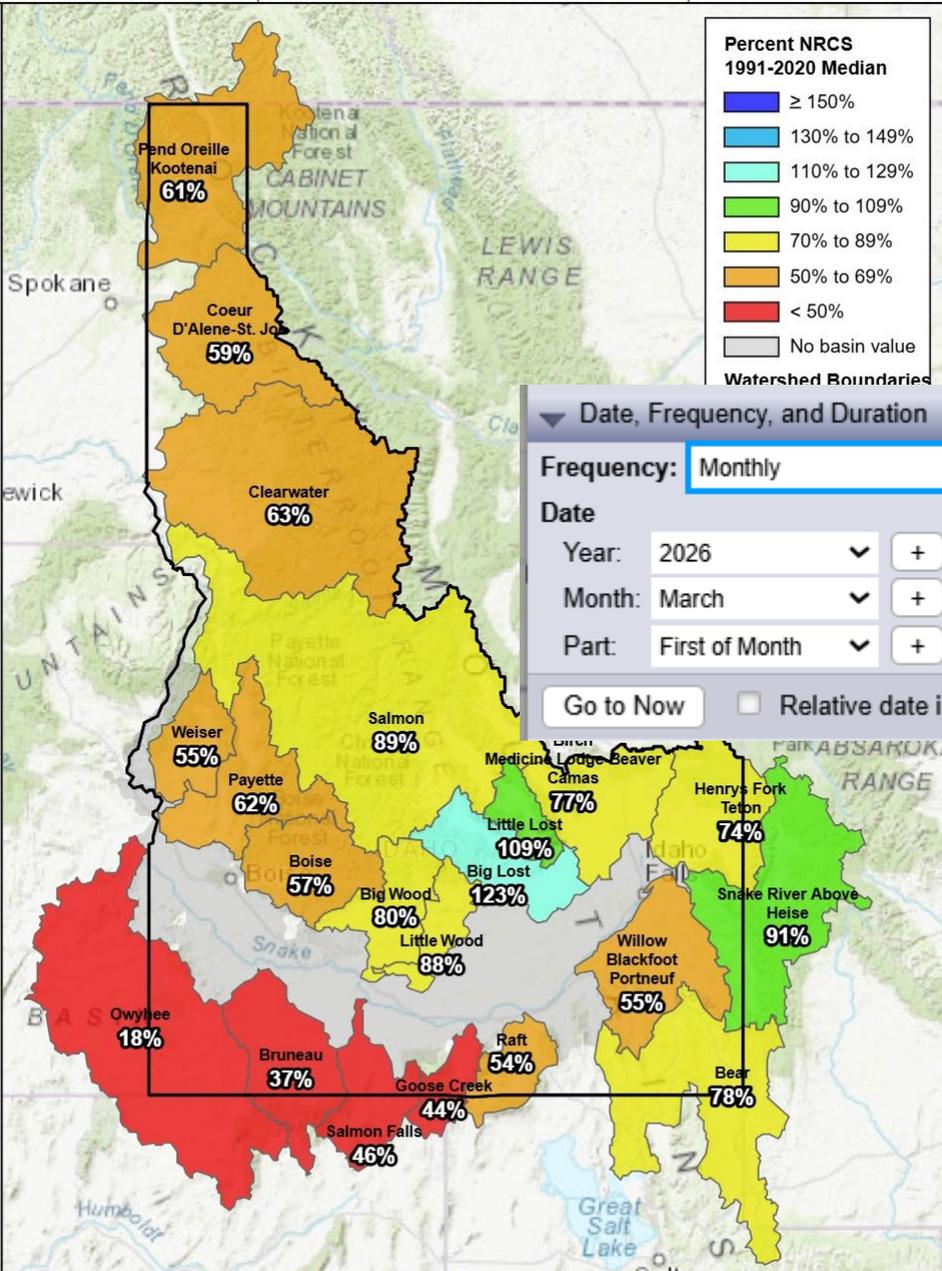
Date

Year: 2026 ▼ + -

Month: March ▼ + -

Part: First of Month ▼ + -

[Go to Now](#) Relative date in URL



Snow Water Equivalent

March 1 snowpack conditions

March 1, 2026, first of day

Percent NRCS 1991-2020 Median

Percent NRCS 1991-2020 Median

- ≥ 150%
- 130% to 149%
- 110% to 129%
- 90% to 109%
- 70% to 89%
- 50% to 69%
- < 50%
- No basin value

Watershed Boundaries

▼ Date, Frequency, and Duration

Frequency: Daily ▼

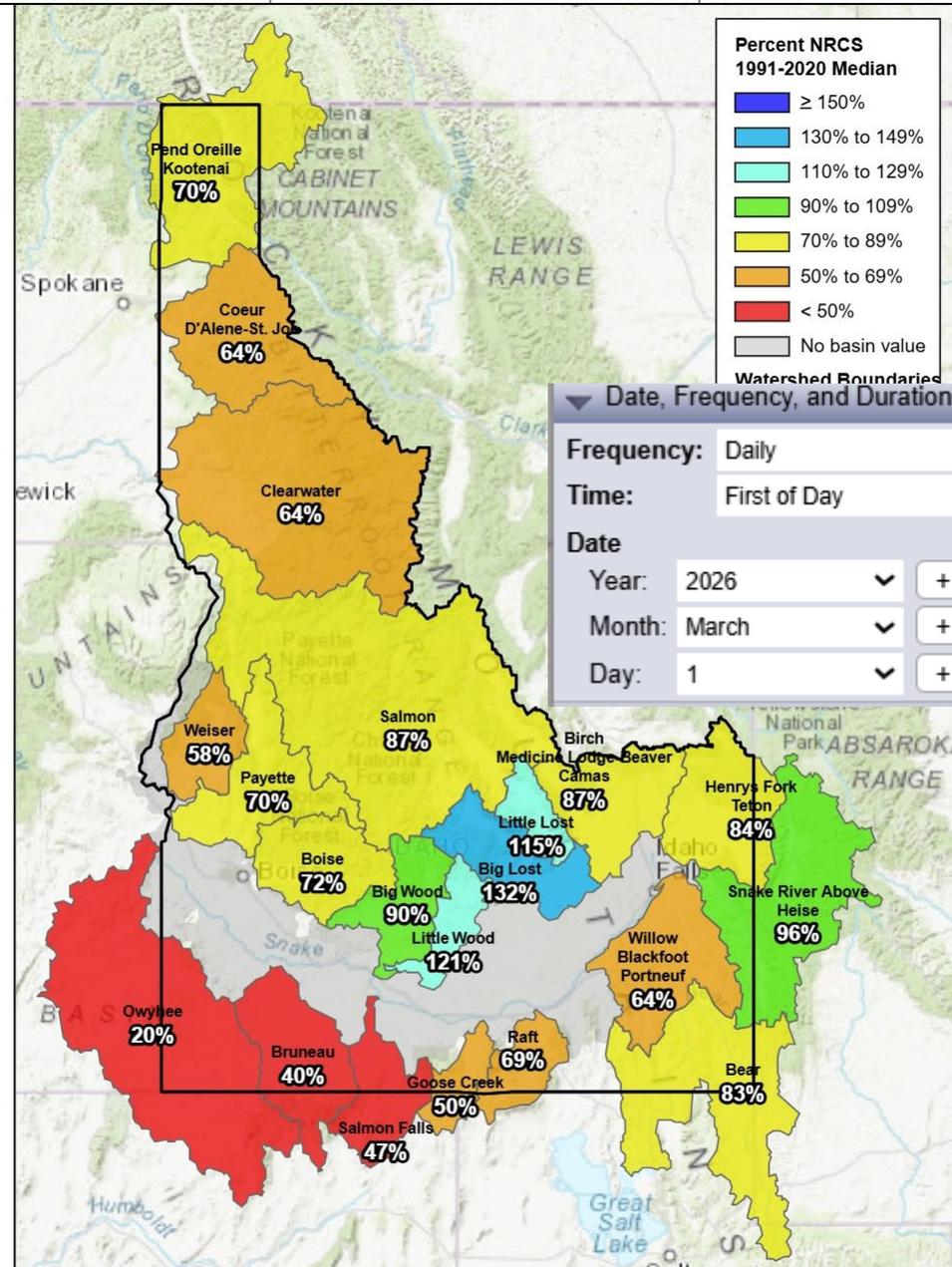
Time: First of Day ▼

Date

Year: 2026 ▼ + -

Month: March ▼ + -

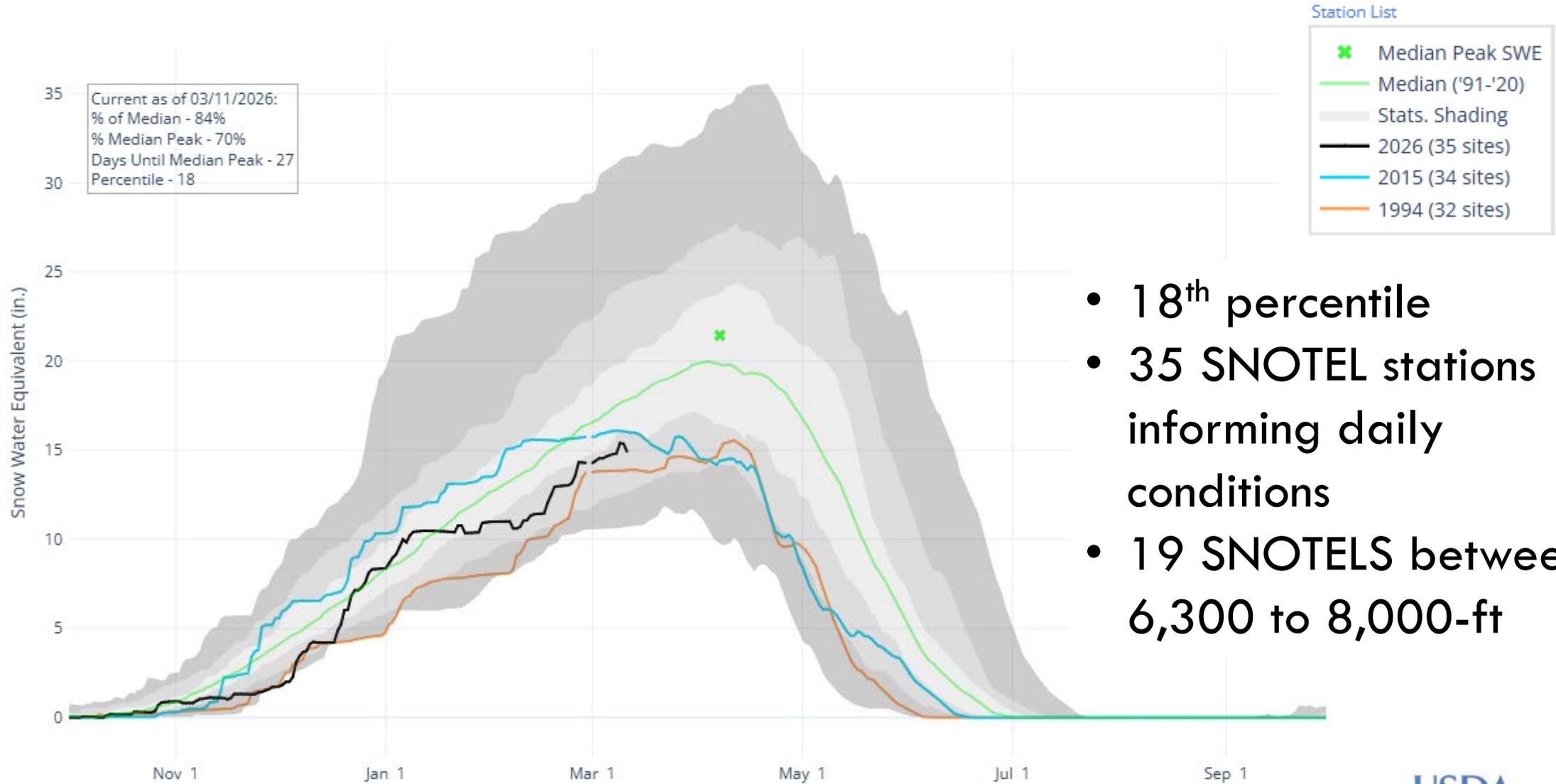
Day: 1 ▼ + -





SWE above Milner is 84% of normal

SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN SNAKE AB MILNER



- 18th percentile
- 35 SNOTEL stations informing daily conditions
- 19 SNOTELS between 6,300 to 8,000-ft

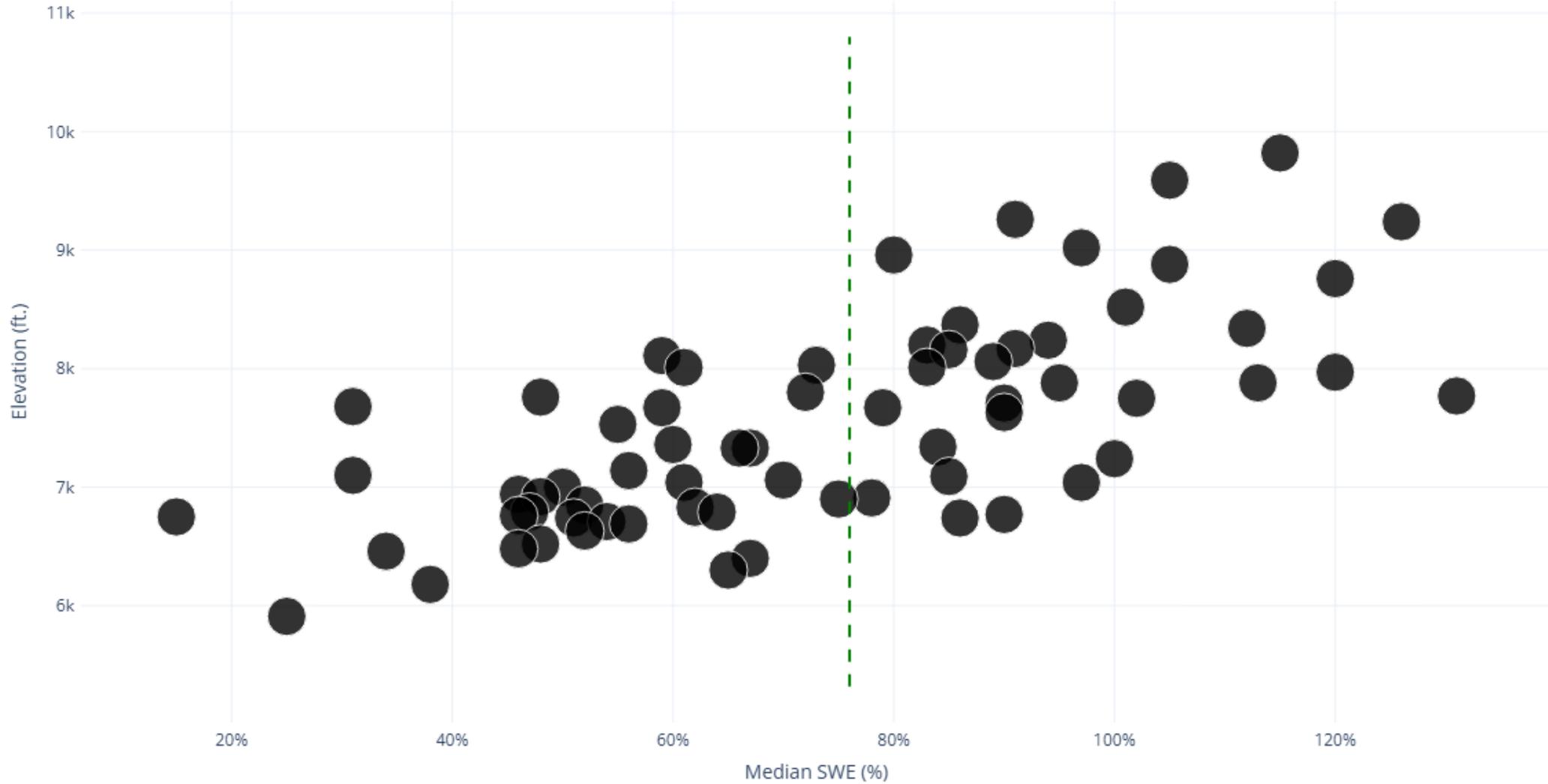




SWE above Milner is 84% of normal

SNOWPACK BY ELEVATION IN SNAKE AB MILNER MARCH 1, 2026

[Link to data: CSV / JSON](#)



Overall Trendline Basin Median (%)

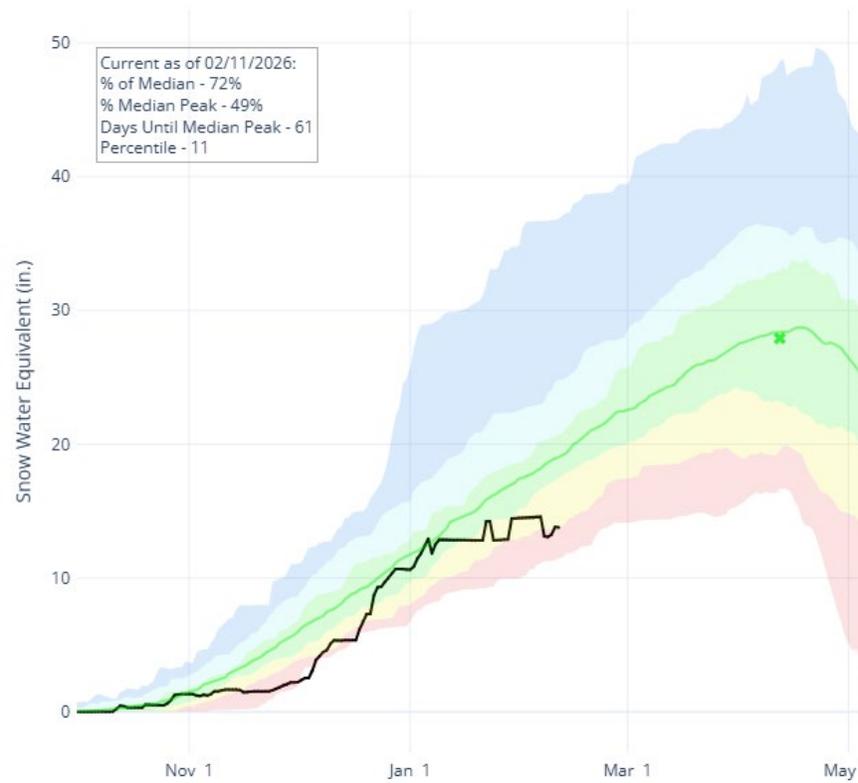
<https://nwcc-apps.sc.egov.usda.gov/basin-plots/?state=ID>



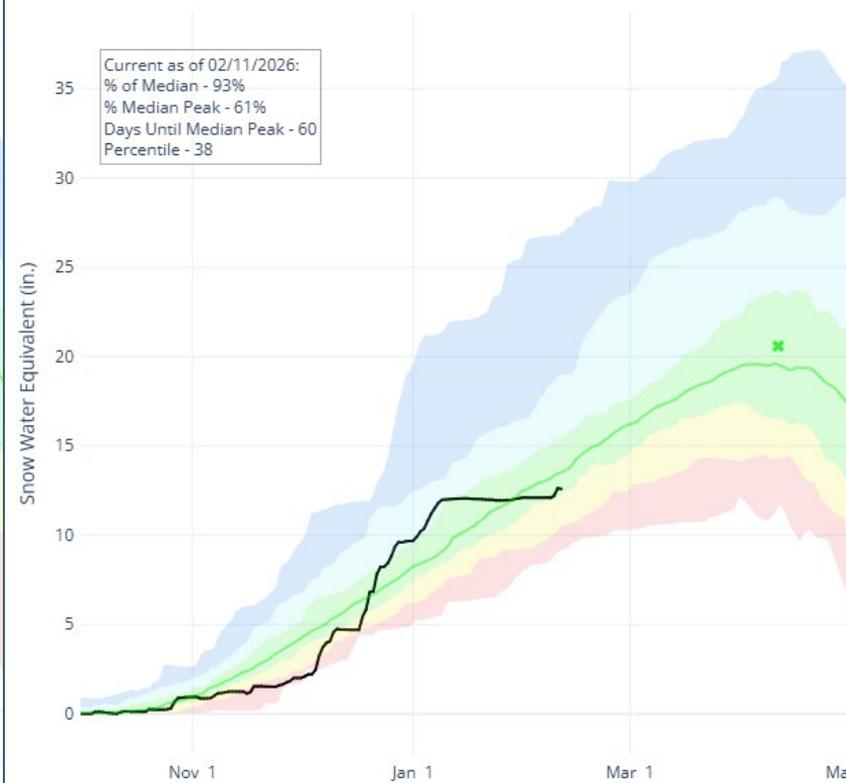


Basin-wide snowpack conditions

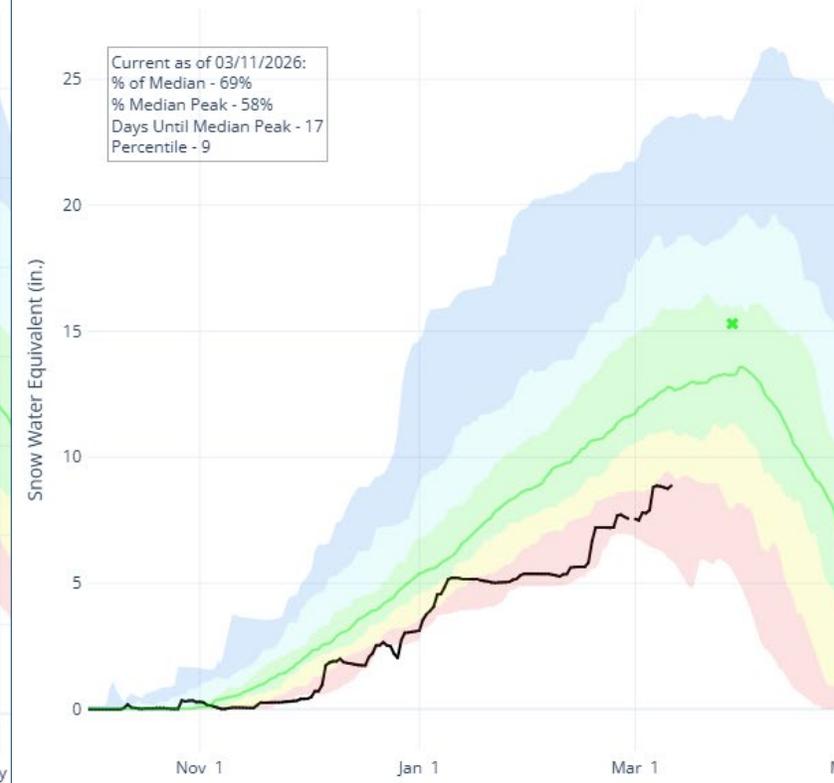
SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN HENRYS FORK-TETON



SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN SNAKE RIVER ABOVE HEISE



SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN WILLOW-BLACKFOOT-PORTNEUF



Henrys Fork-Teton

SWE = 76%
9th percentile

Headwaters

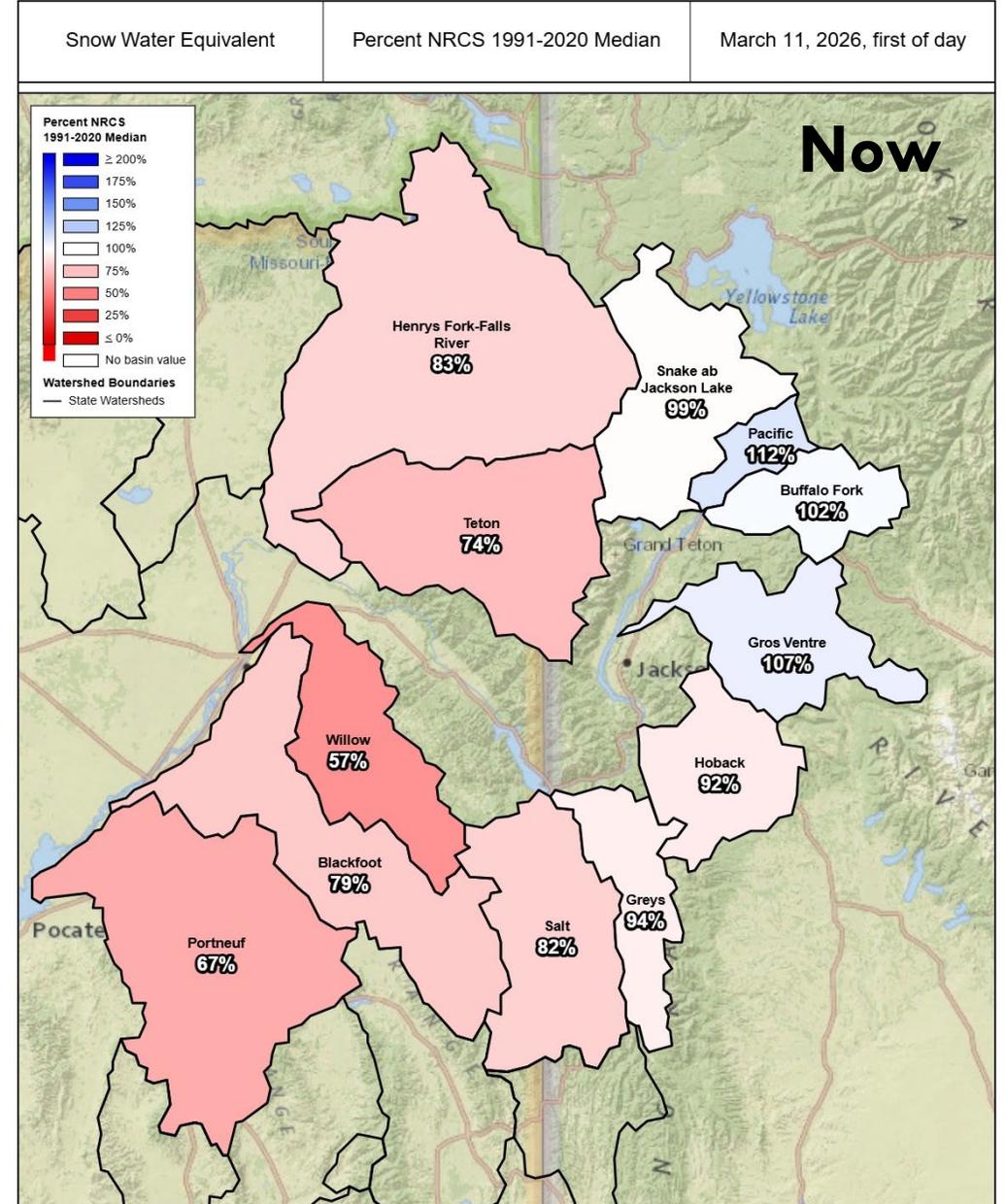
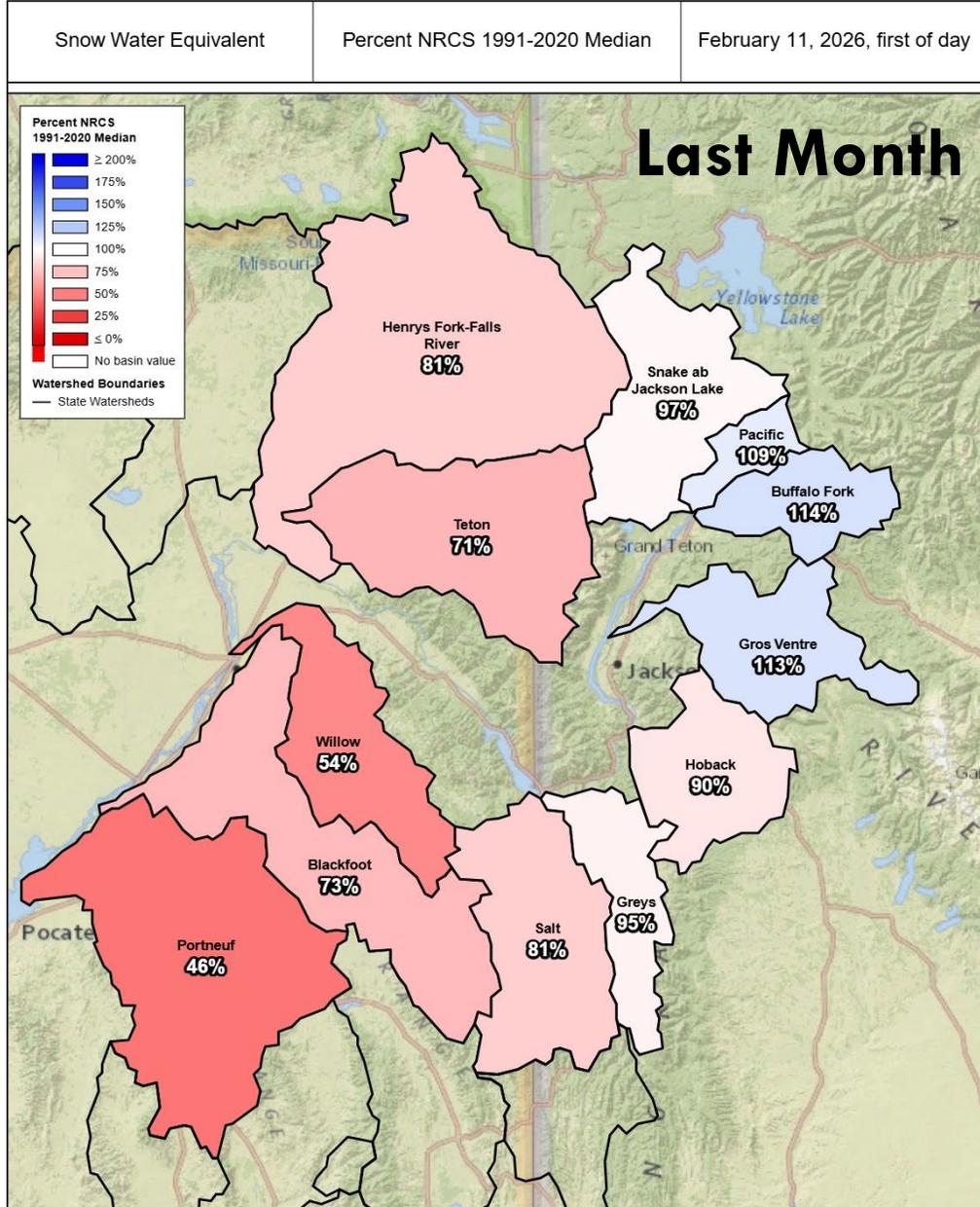
SWE = 93%
33rd percentile

WBP

SWE = 69%
9th percentile

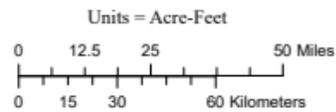
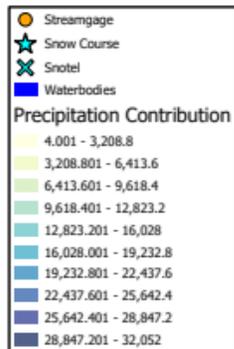
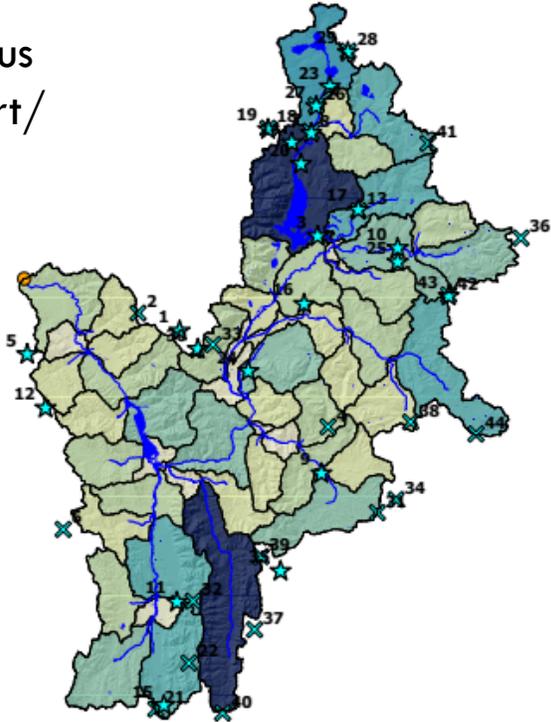


Sub-basin snowpack conditions





SUBBASIN ANNUAL PRECIPITATION CONTRIBUTION SNAKE R NR HEISE

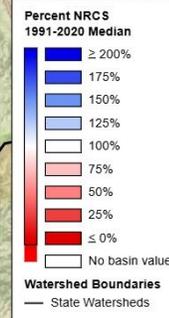
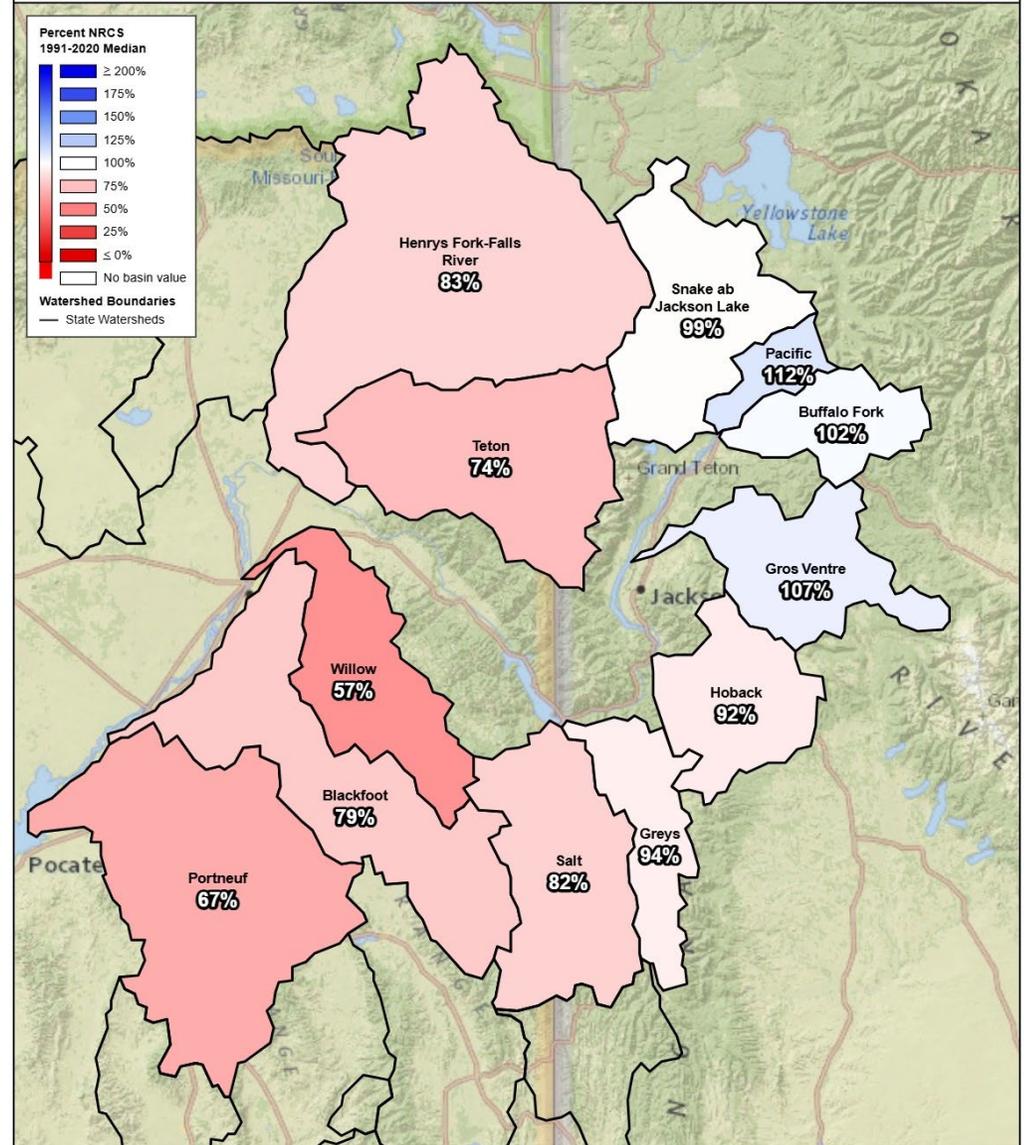


Potential runoff for each sub-basin calculated as the average annual precipitation multiplied by basin area.

Snow Water Equivalent

Percent NRCS 1991-2020 Median

March 11, 2026, first of day

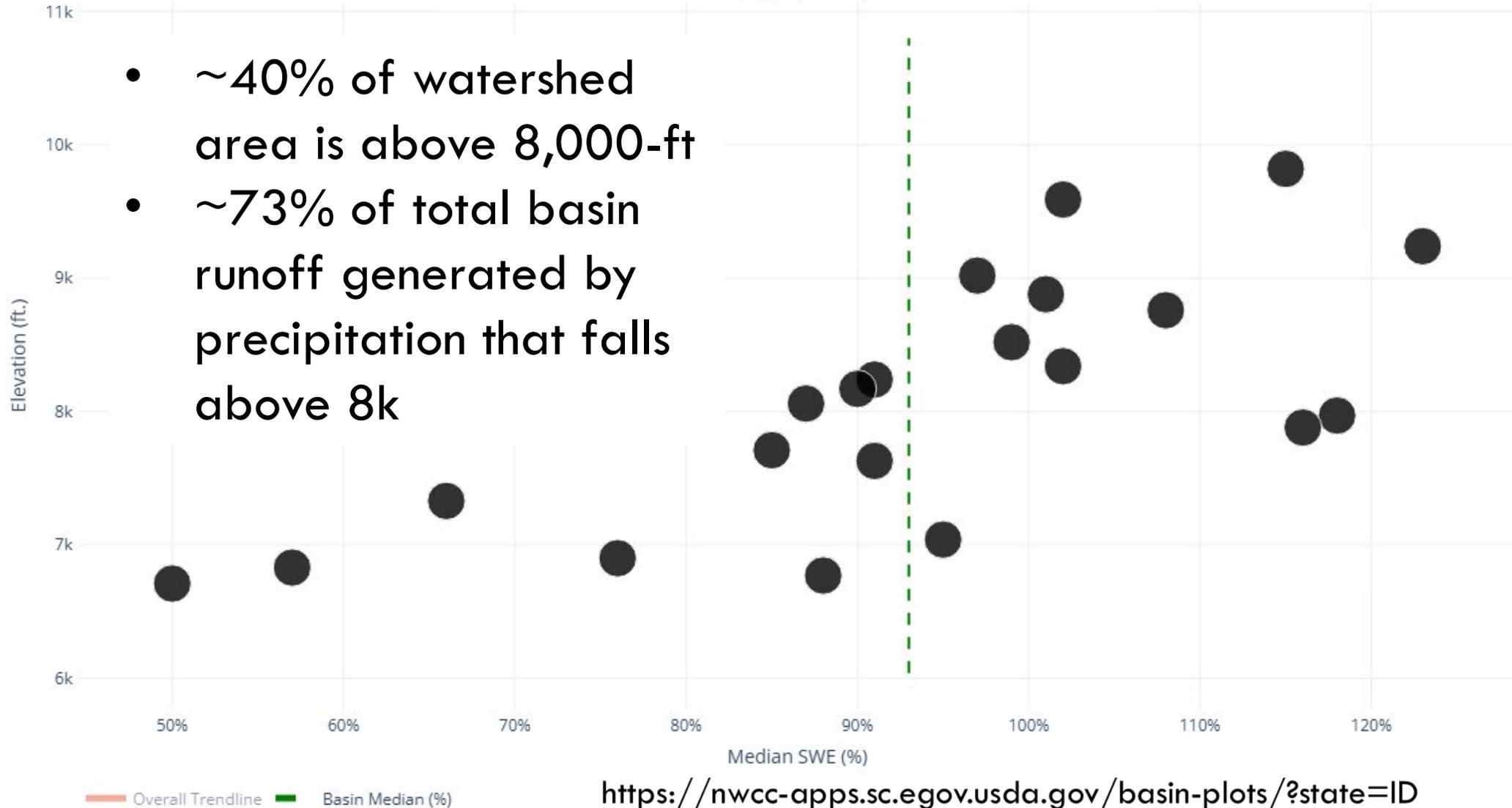


Snowpack by elevation: Snake above Heise

SNOWPACK BY ELEVATION IN SNAKE RIVER ABOVE HEISE MARCH 11, 2026

[Link to data: CSV / JSON](#)

- ~40% of watershed area is above 8,000-ft
- ~73% of total basin runoff generated by precipitation that falls above 8k

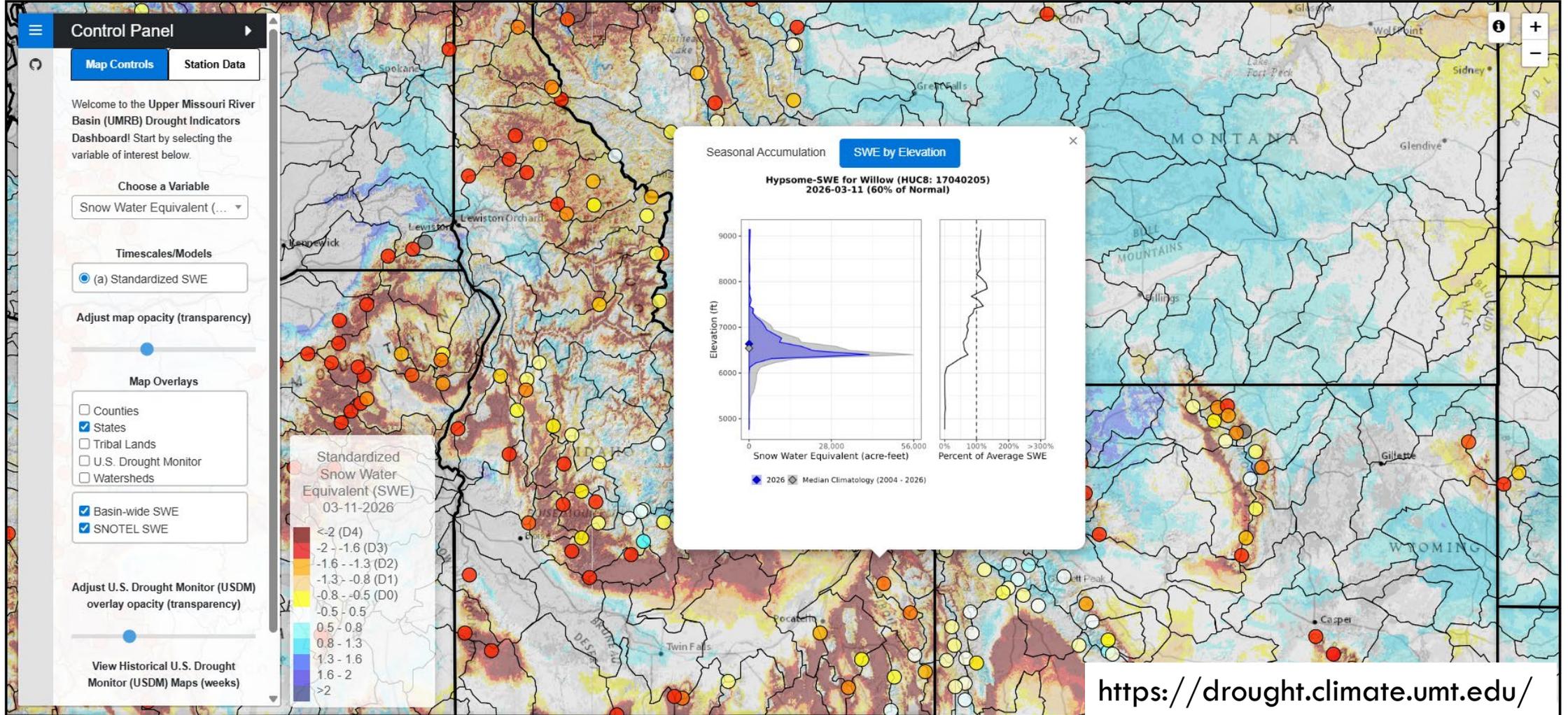


<https://nwcc-apps.sc.egov.usda.gov/basin-plots/?state=ID>



Snowpack by elevation tool (modeled)

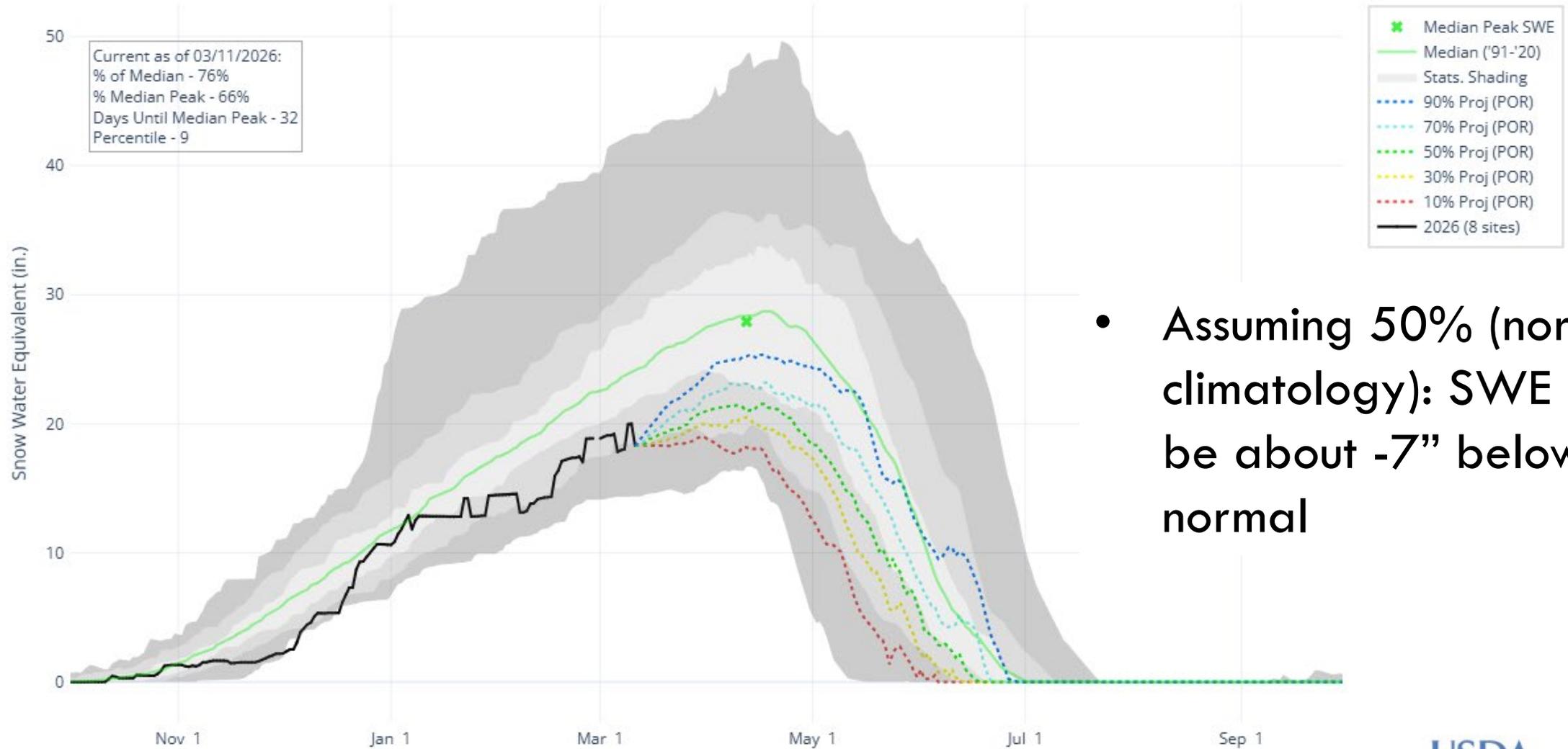
Standardized SWE for 03-11-2026





Potential snowpack conditions on April 1

SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT PROJECTION IN HENRYS FORK-TETON



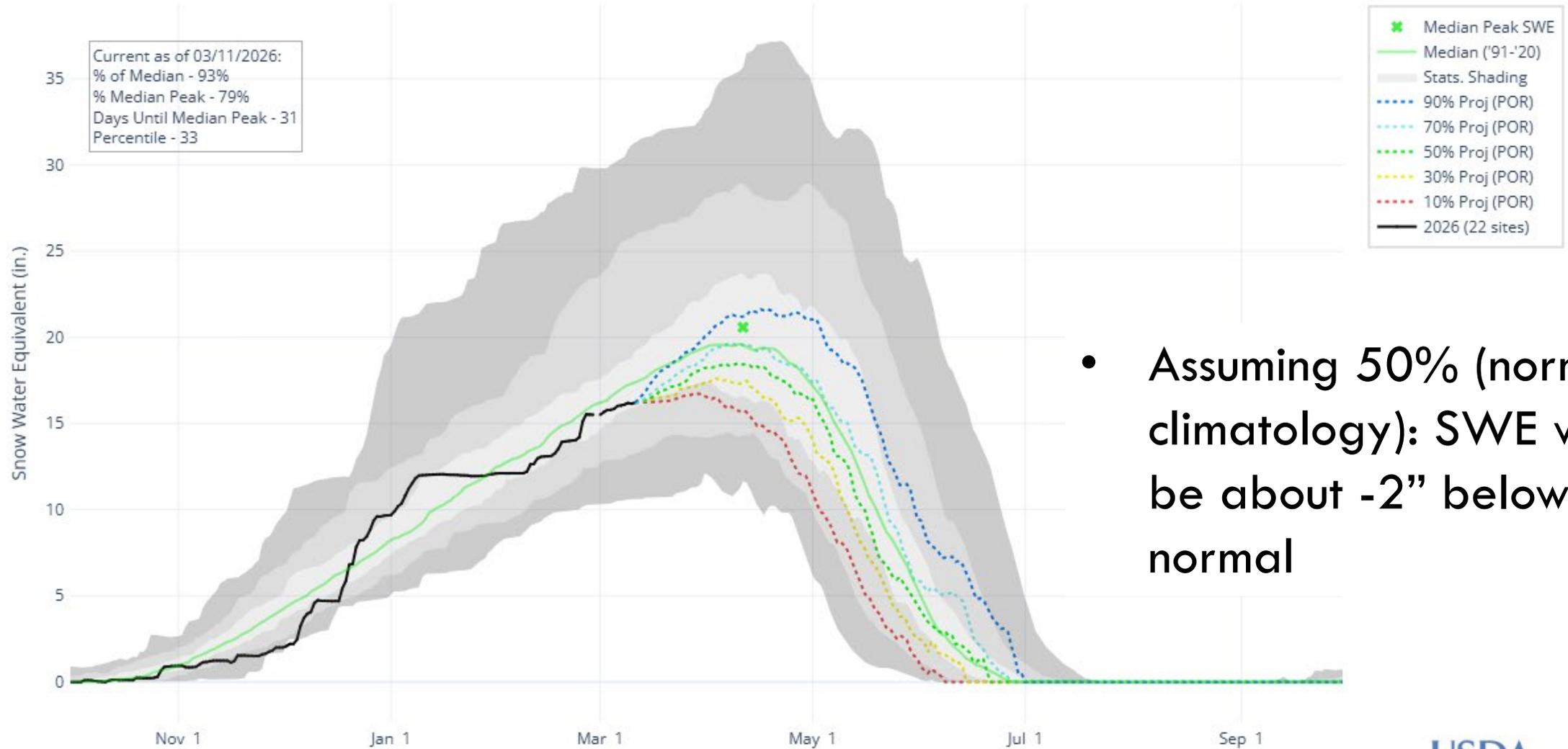
- Assuming 50% (normal climatology): SWE will be about -7" below normal





Potential snowpack conditions on April 1

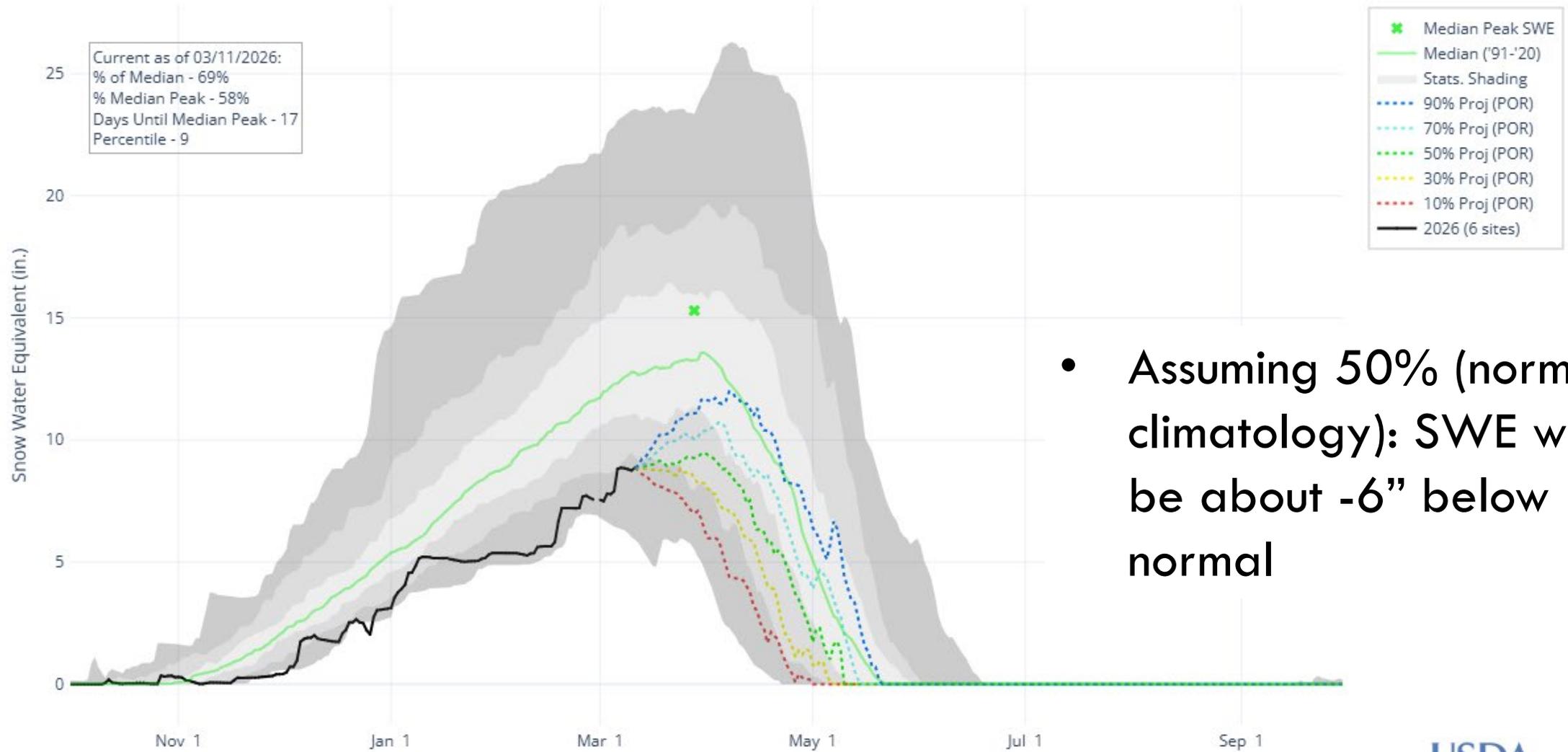
SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT PROJECTION IN SNAKE RIVER ABOVE HEISE



- Assuming 50% (normal climatology): SWE will be about -2" below normal



SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT PROJECTION IN WILLOW-BLACKFOOT-PORTNEUF



- Assuming 50% (normal climatology): SWE will be about -6" below normal



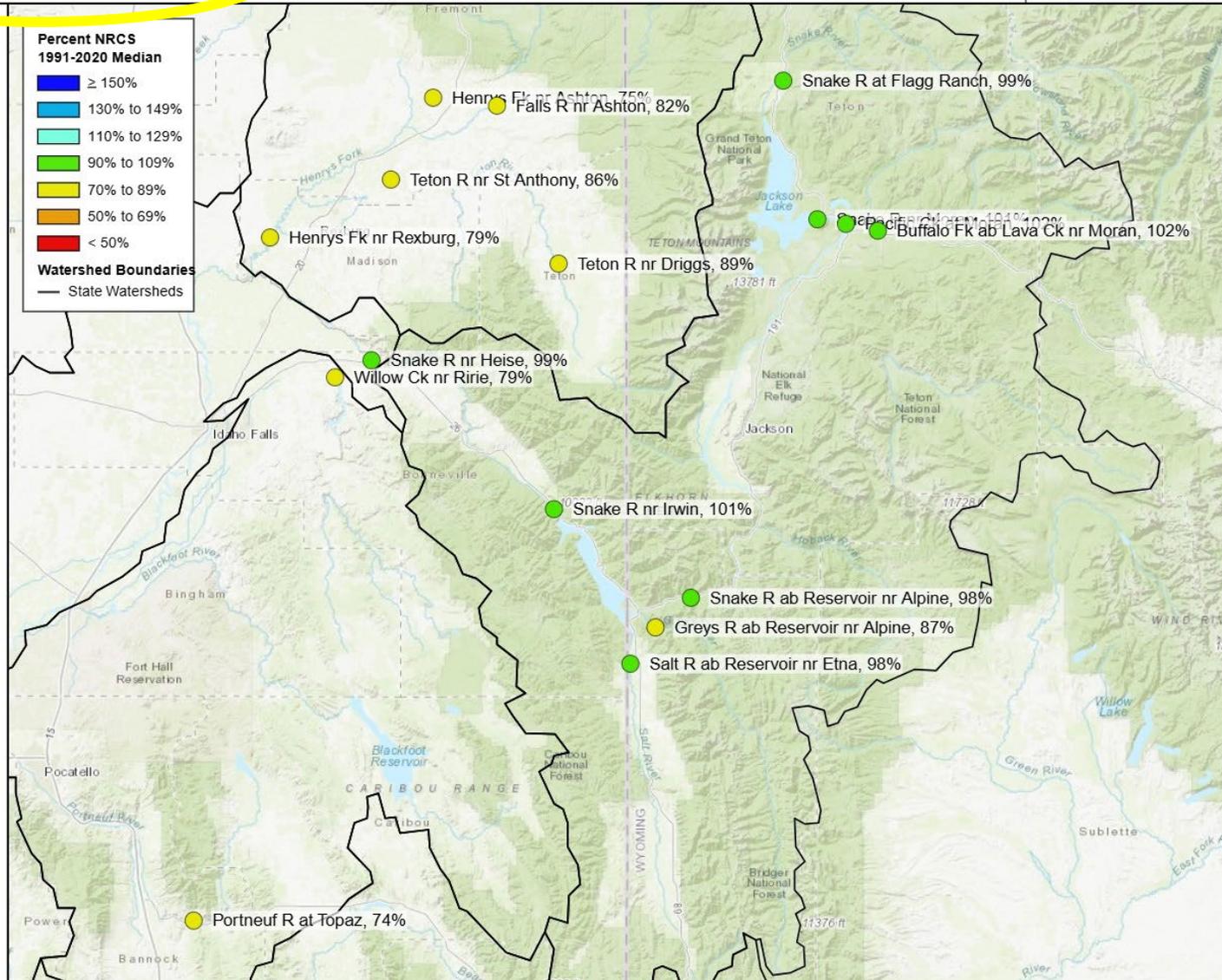
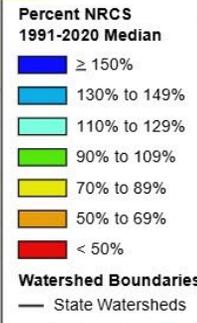
Streamflow Forecasts on March 1

Streamflow Forecast Volume,
50% Exceedance Probability

March 1 Streamflow Forecasts

Percent NRCS 1991-2020 Median

Primary Period, March 1, 2026



BASIN FORECAST PLOTS

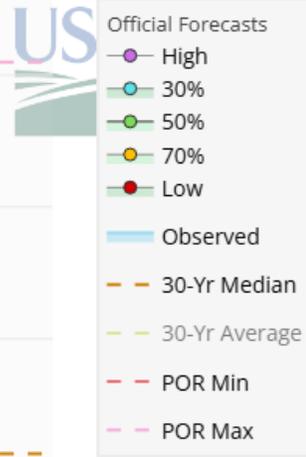
FORECAST EVOLUTION PLOTS

Alaska

Alaska

Forecast Evolution

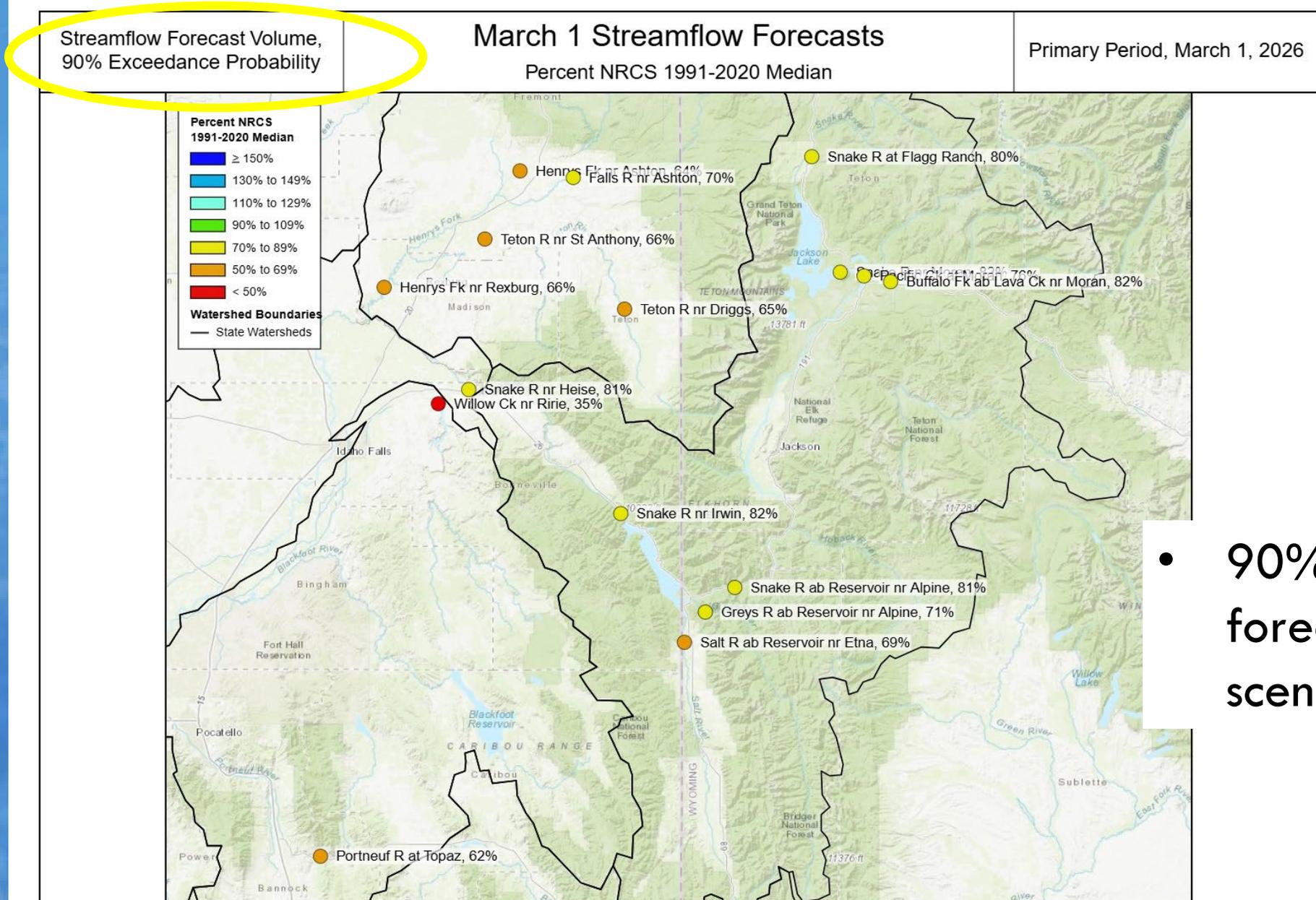
Snake R nr Heise
WY2026 APR-JUL



- 99% of normal @ 50% exceedance
- 81% of normal @ 90% exceedance (drier scenario)



Streamflow Forecasts on March 1



- 90% exceedance forecasts = drier scenario



Streamflow Forecasts on March 1

WILLOW-BLACKFOOT-PORTNEUF

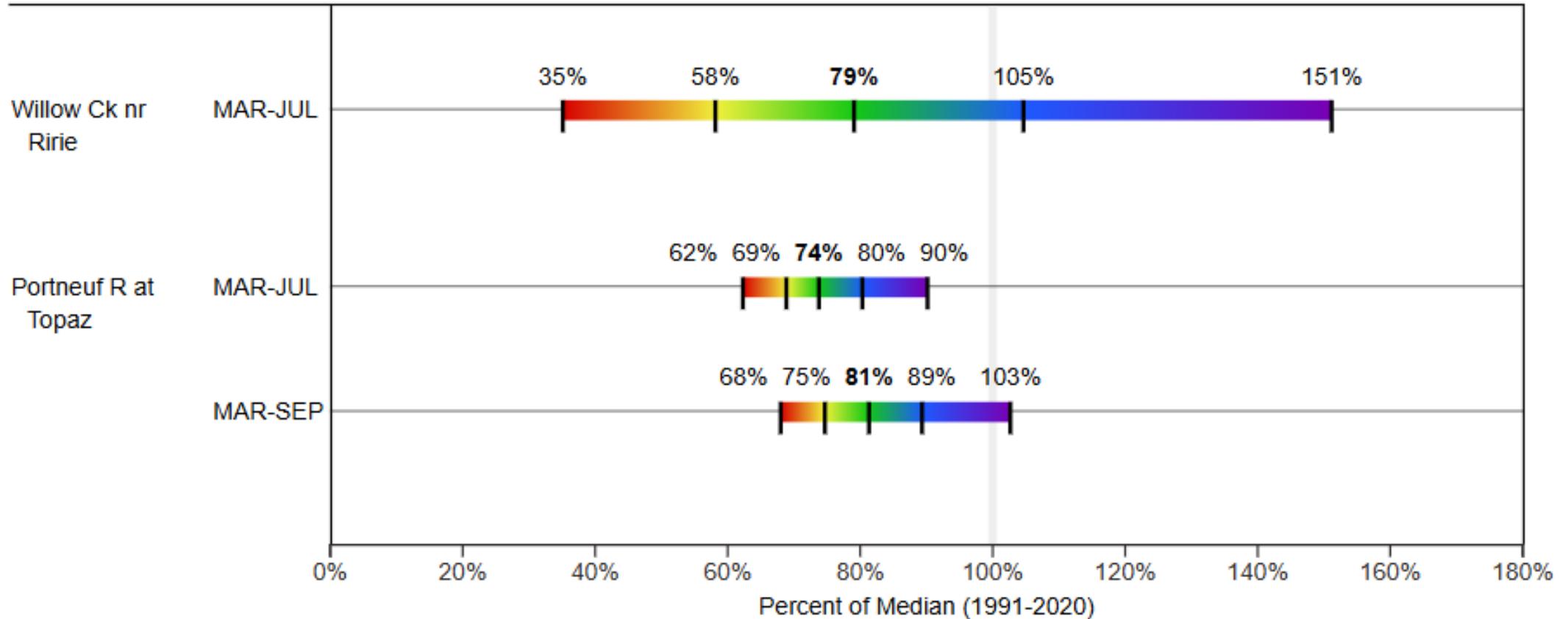
Water Supply Forecasts

March 1, 2026

Forecast Exceedance Probabilities

<----- Drier ----- Future Conditions ----- Wetter ----->

Labels on chart represent volumes of water expressed as percent of median (1991-2020 period).





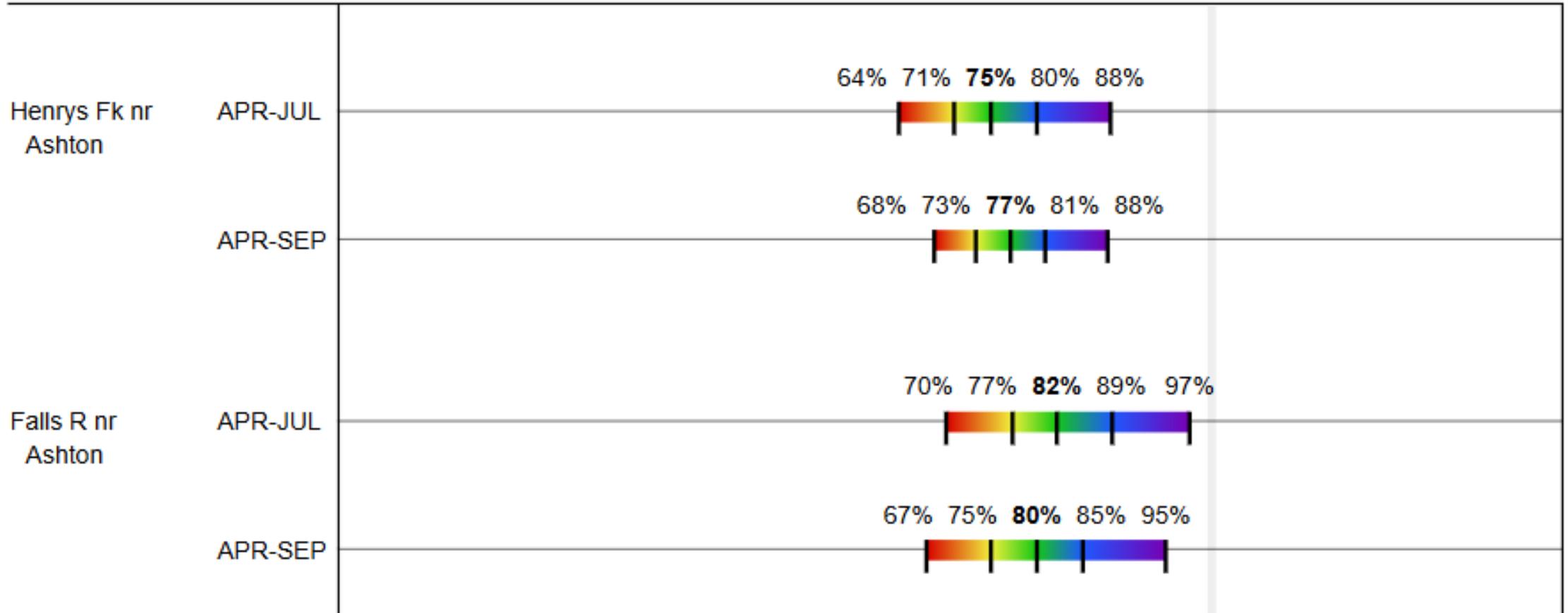
Streamflow Forecasts on March 1

HENRY'S FORK-TETON Water Supply Forecasts March 1, 2026

Forecast Exceedance Probabilities

<----- Drier ----- Future Conditions ----- Wetter ----->

Labels on chart represent volumes of water expressed as percent of median (1991-2020 period).



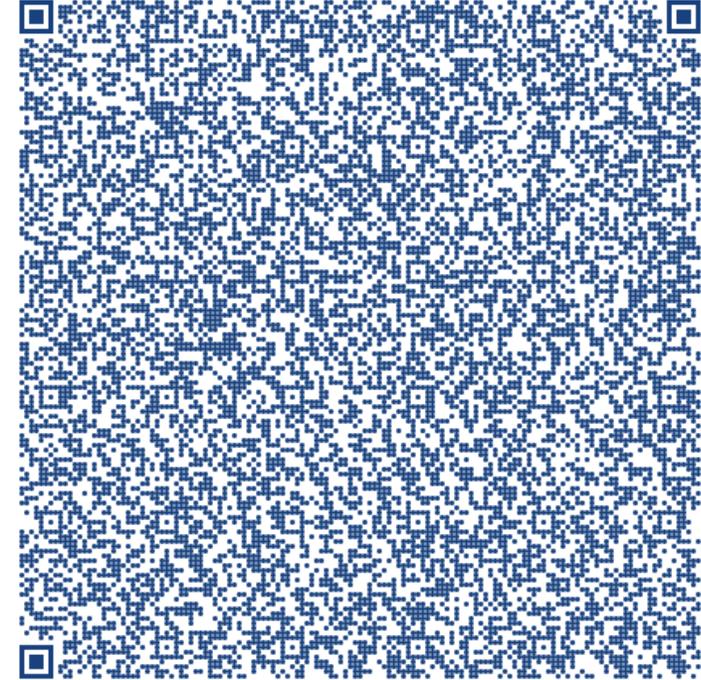


Find up to date information here

Idaho Snow Survey webpage



Interactive conditions map



Email: Erin.Whorton@usda.gov



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

March 2026 Upper Snake Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: March 12, 2026

Presenter: Brian Stevens



Current Conditions

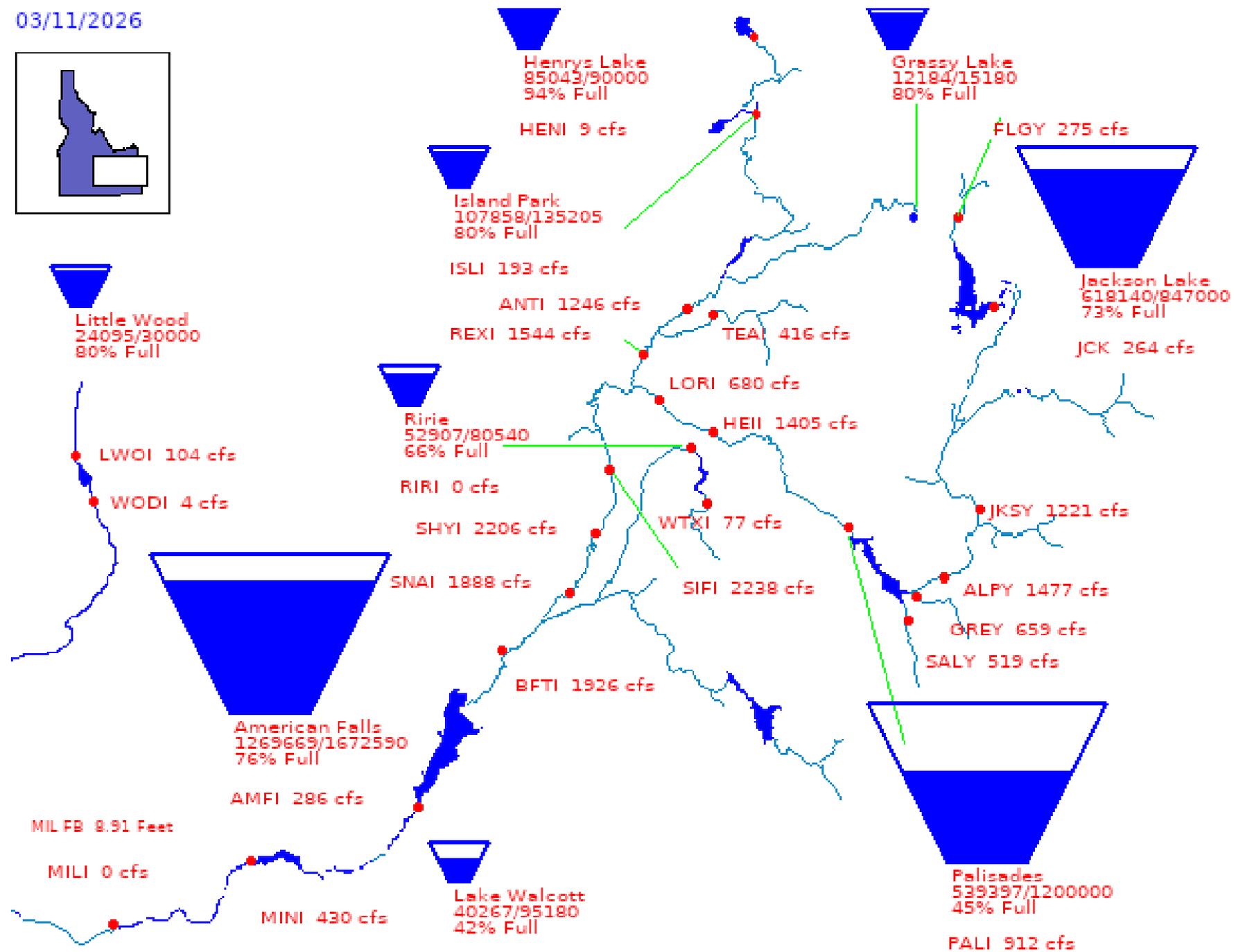
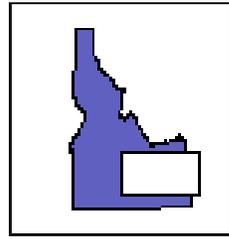
2.64 MAF in storage

65% full

94% of 91'-20' Average

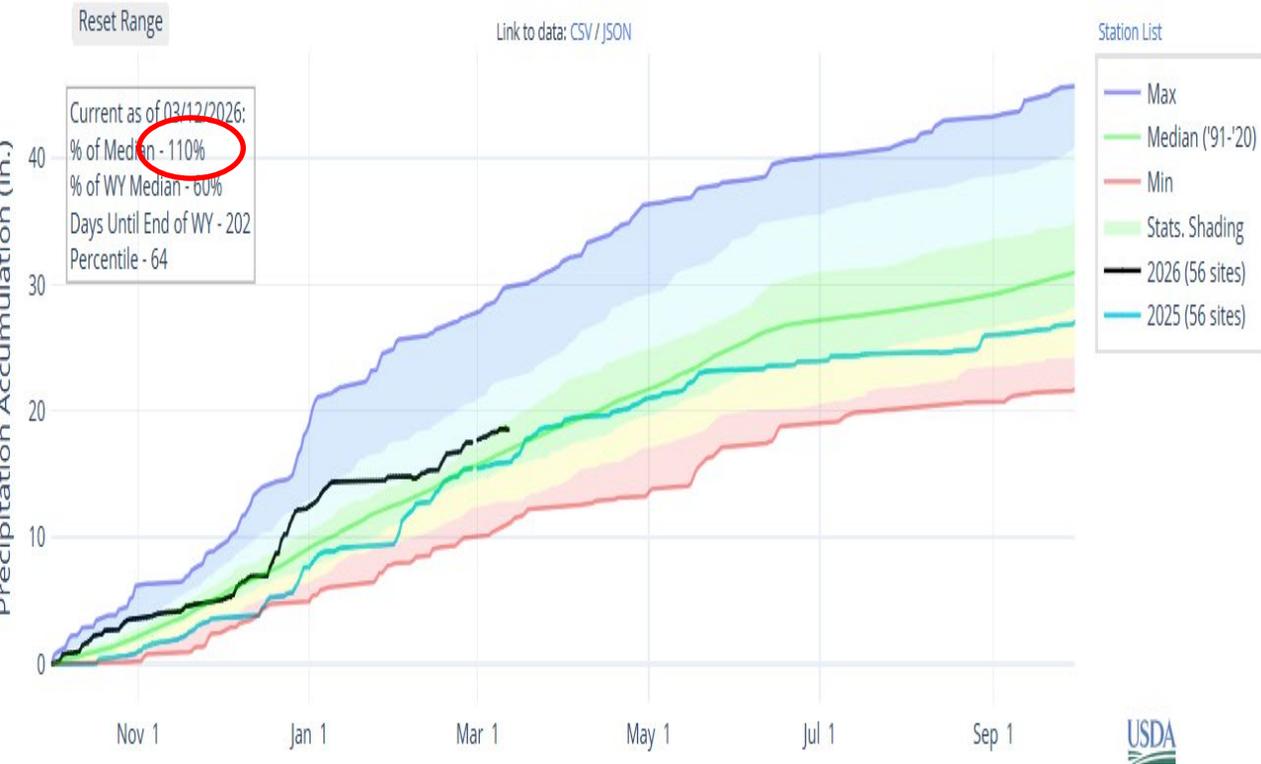
548 KAF lower than last year

03/11/2026

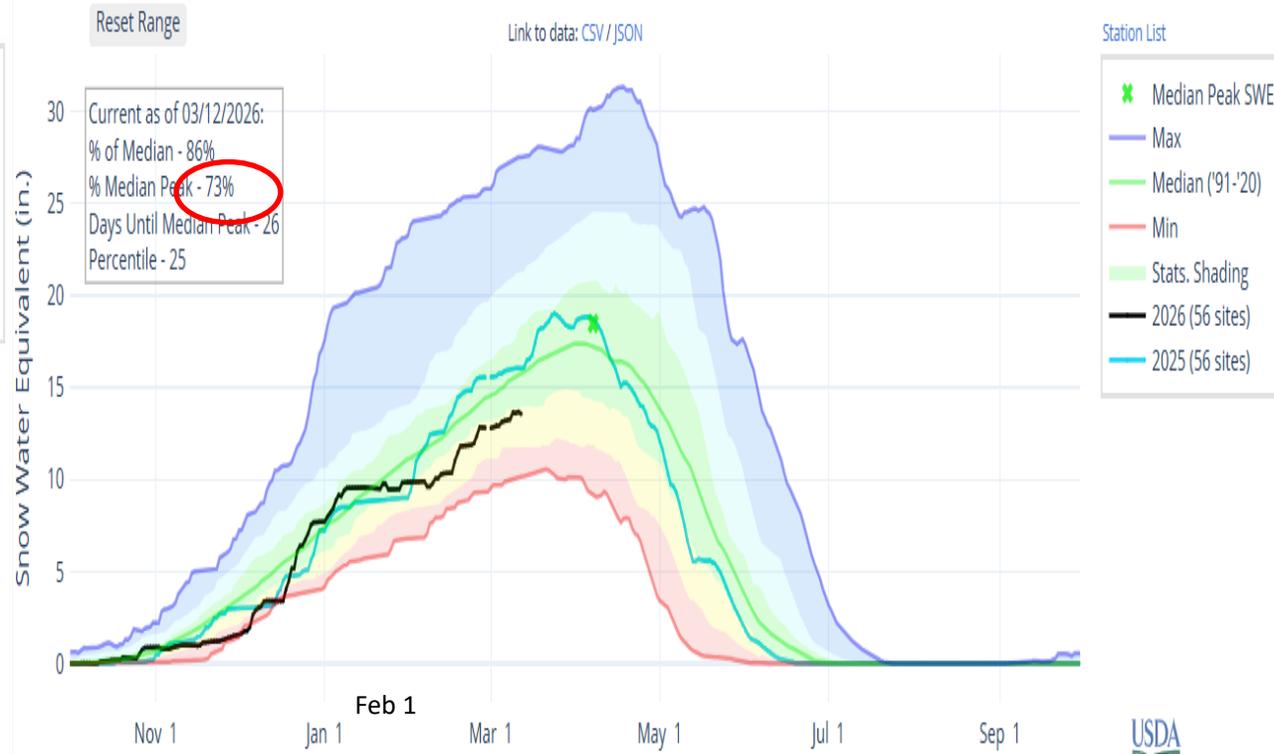


Precipitation

PRECIPITATION ACCUMULATION IN UPPER SNAKE

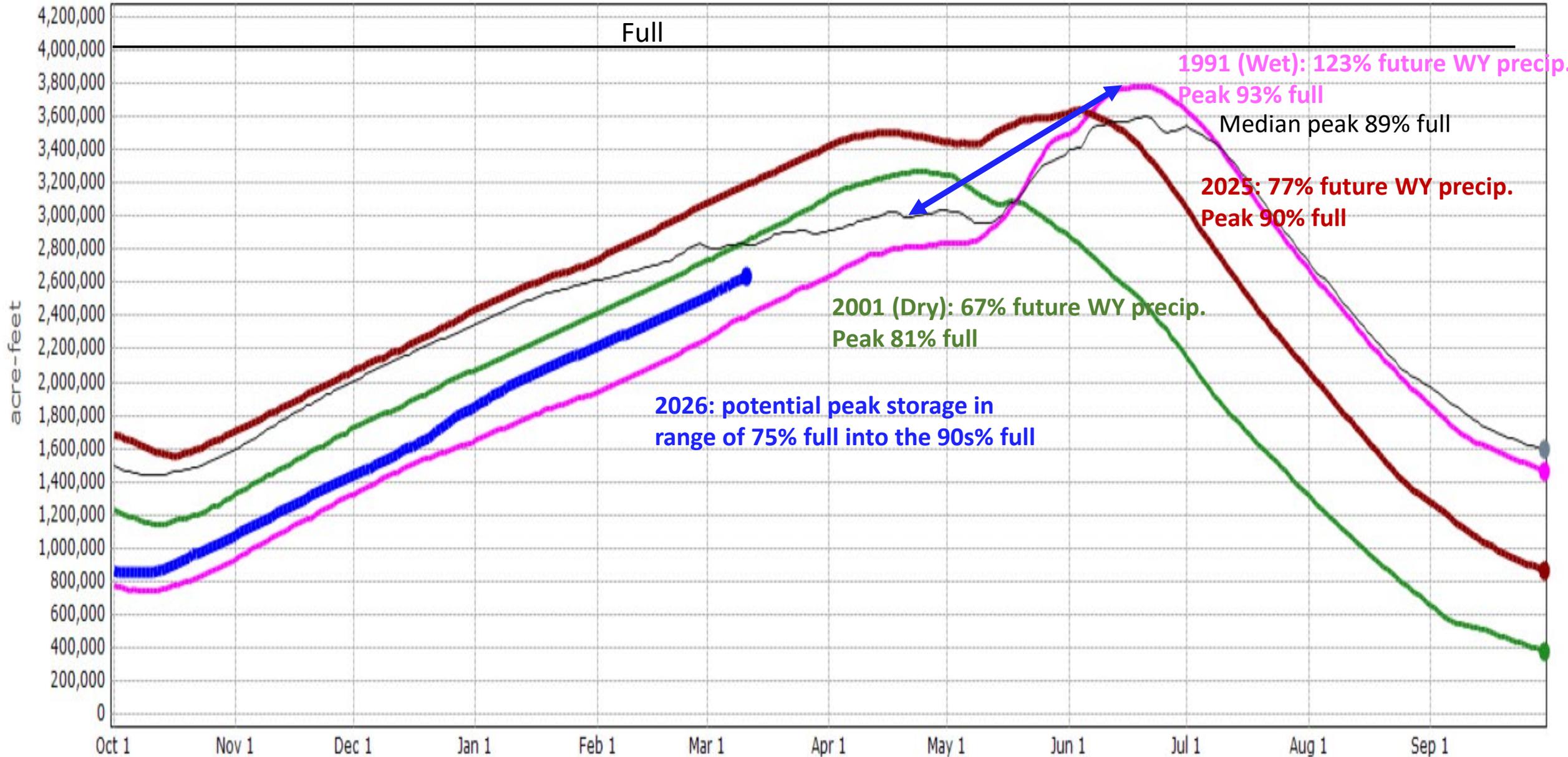


SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN UPPER SNAKE



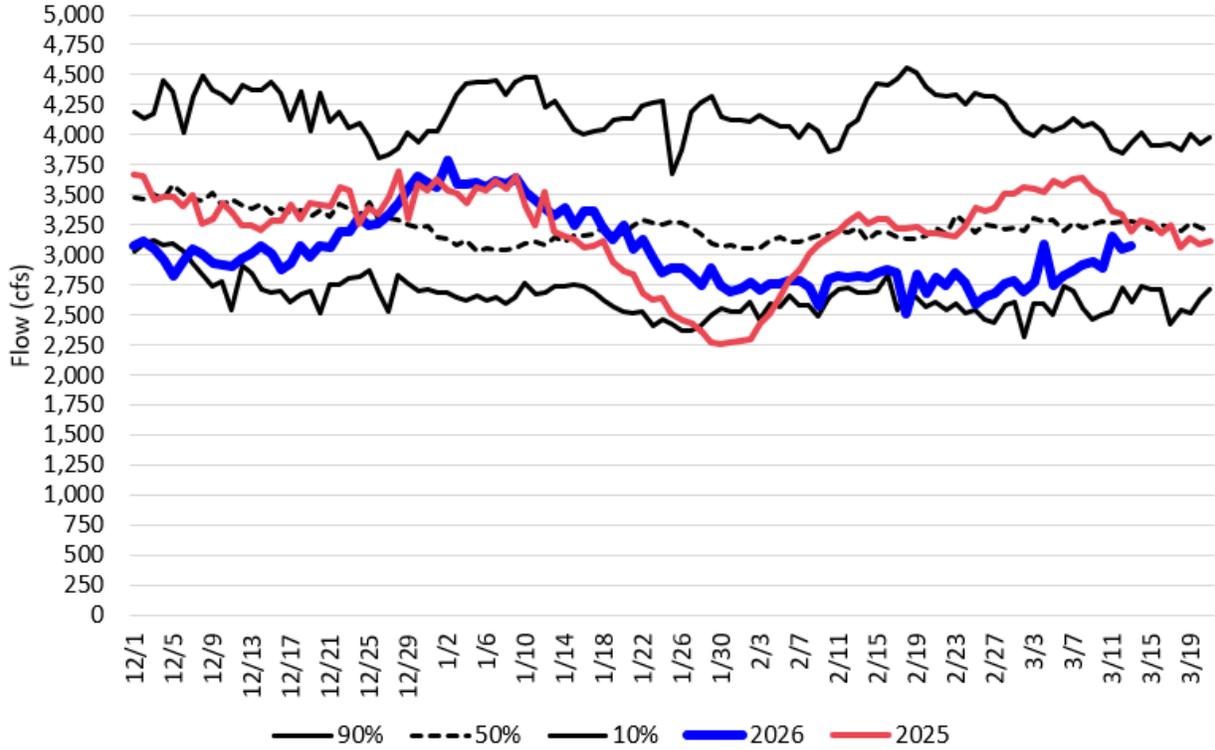
Upper Snake System Storage Outlook

■ 2026 ■ 2001 ■ 1991 ■ 2025 — 50%

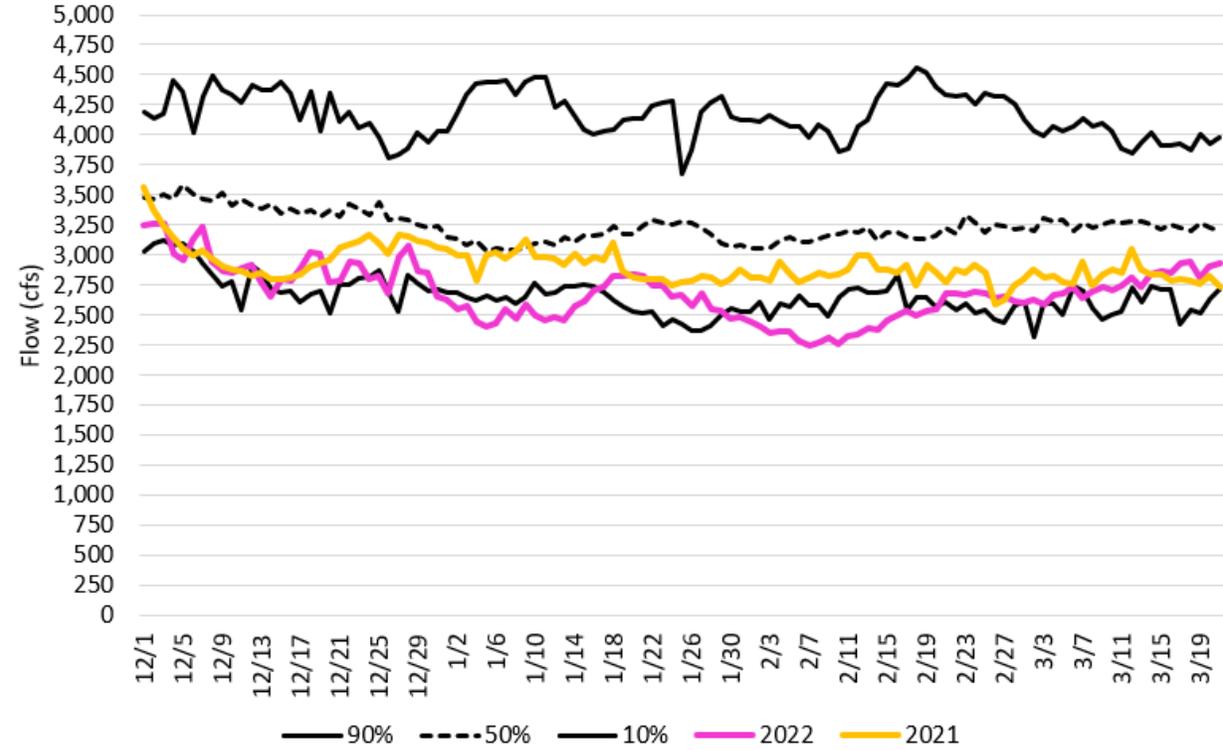


Baseflow in the Mainstem Snake River

Unregulated Local Gain into American Falls Reservoir
Below BOR Upper Valley Dams, Hydromet Values, 1991-2020

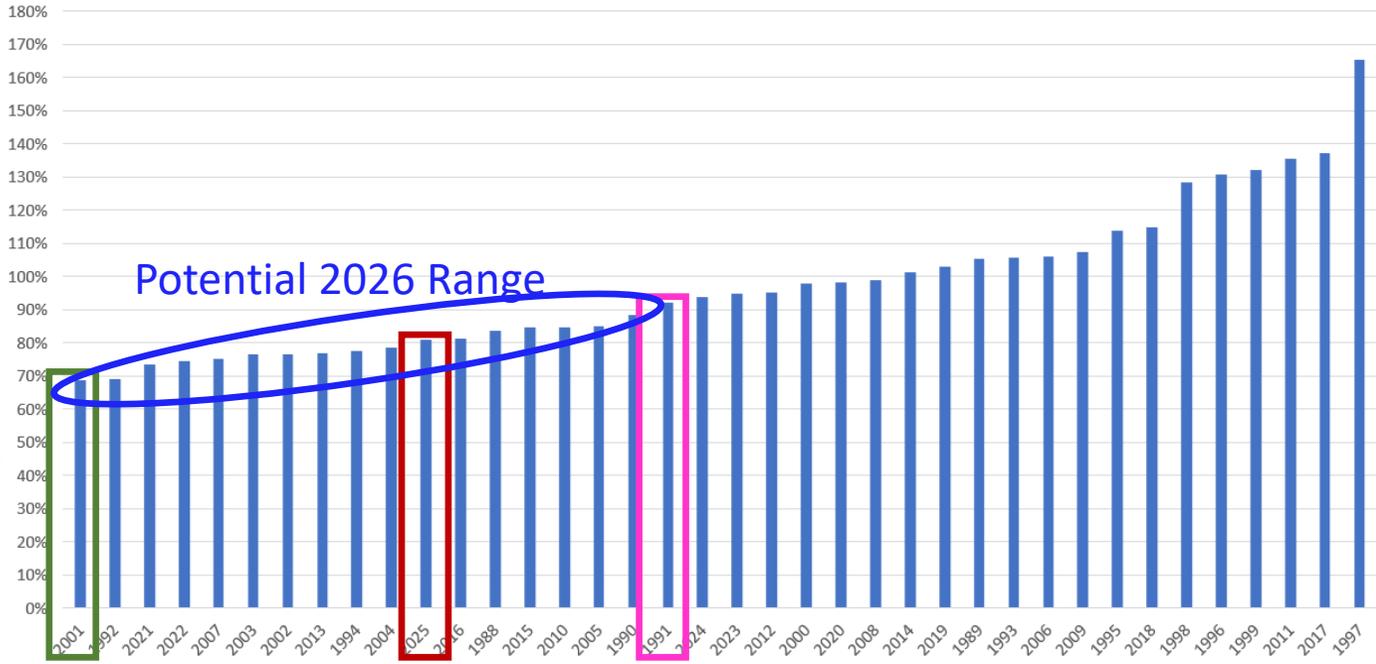
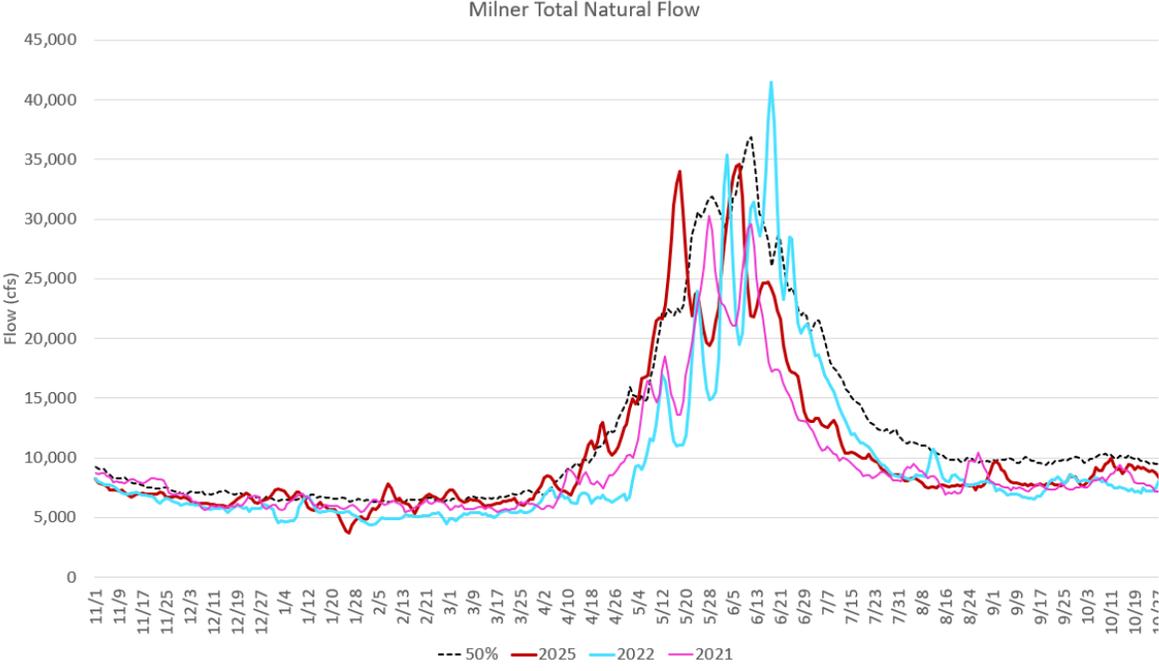


Unregulated Local Gain into American Falls Reservoir
Below BOR Upper Valley Dams, Hydromet Values, 1991-2020



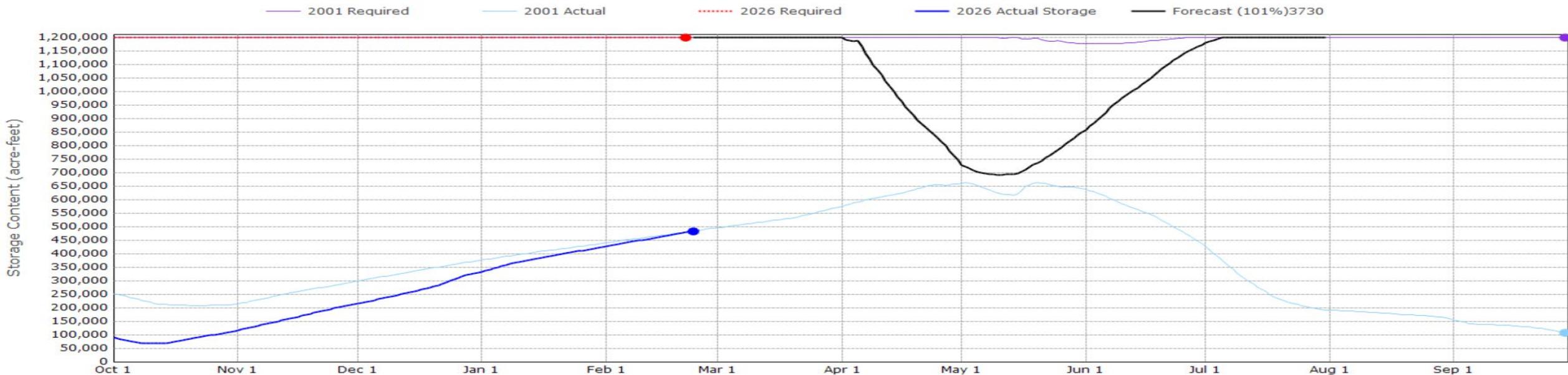
Natural Flow Outlook

Nov-Oct Milner Natural Flow



Year	nrcs soil moisture	amf local baseflows	early march nrcs snow	early march UA snow	nrcs future precip.	resulting% runoff	
2001	-	98%	66%	77%	67%	69%	<80%
2021	record low	81%	93%	88%	66%	74%	<90%
2022	abv norm	75%	86%	88%	93%	75%	<100
2025	blw norm	89%	107%	123%	77%	81%	<120
1991	-	90%	82%	77%	123%	92%	>120
2024	abv norm	100%	106%	111%	78%	94%	
2023	blw norm	74%	119%	160%	130%	95%	
2026	abv norm	85%	87%	77%	70%-100%	70%-80%	*Potentially
2026 NRCS					88%		*Potentially

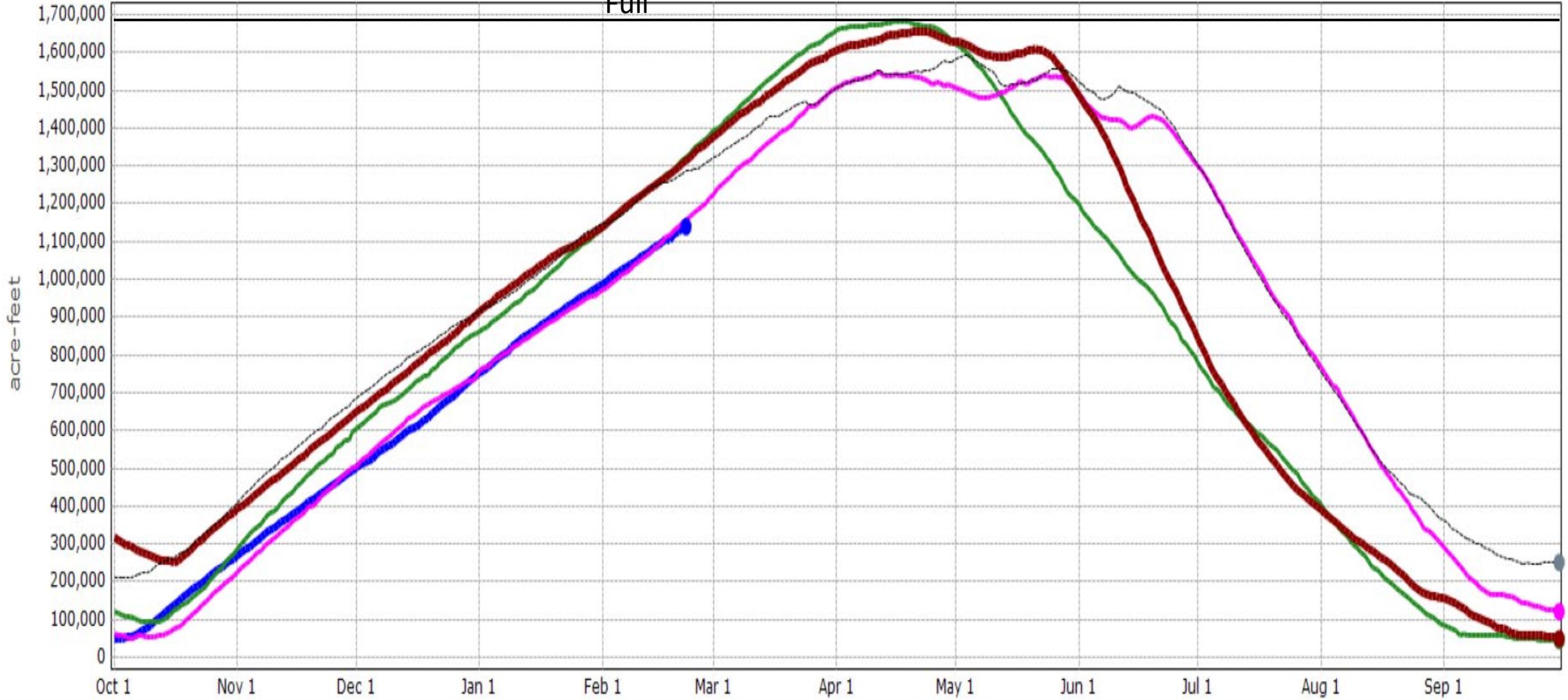
Palisades FRM Outlook



American Falls Reservoir Storage

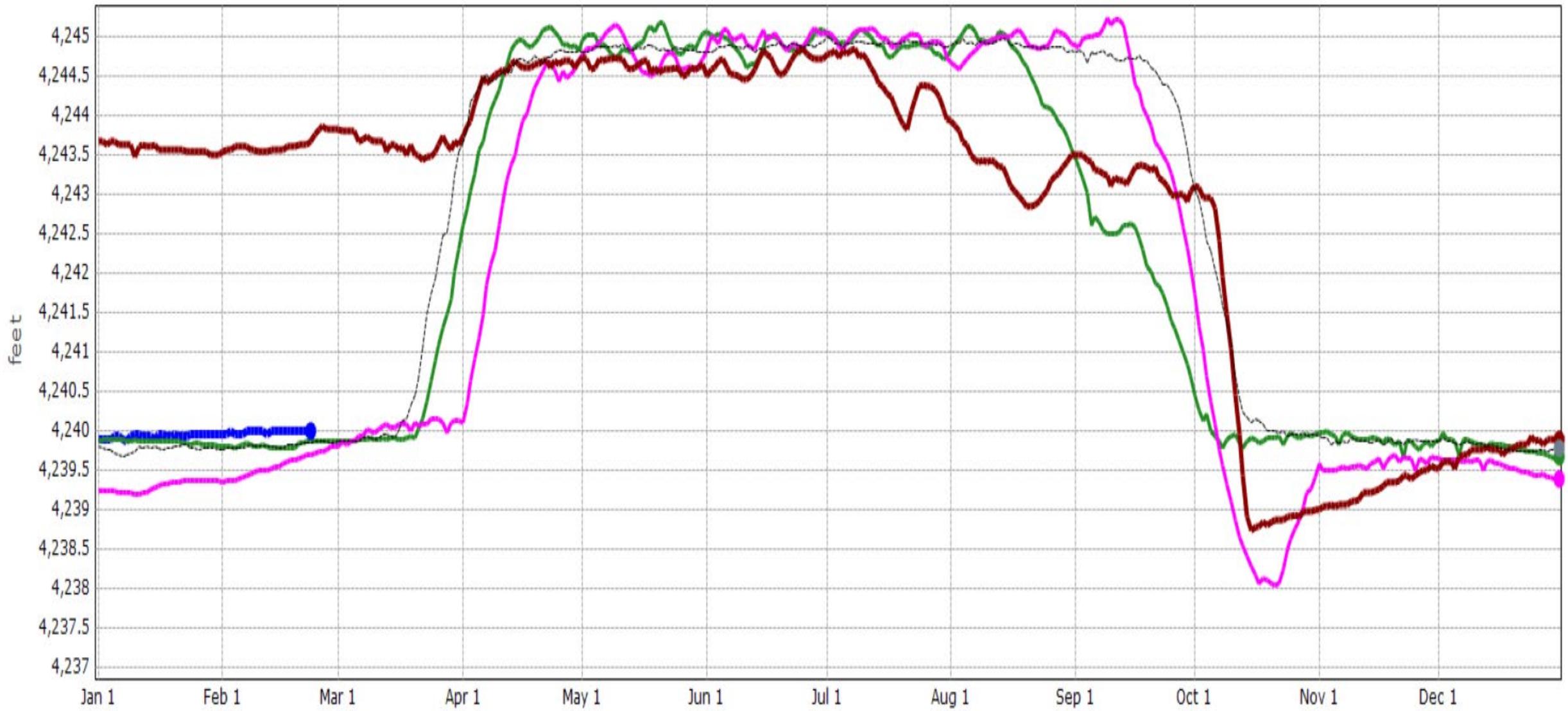
■ 2026 ■ 2001 ■ 1991 ■ 2025 --- 50%

Full



Lake Walcott Forebay

■ 2026 ■ 2001 ■ 1991 ■ 2025 - - 50%



Notes

1. No Milner spill in the outlook
2. Potentially Palisades/Jackson FRM in the May timeframe
3. Flow Augmentation Rainbow Chart Outlook
4. Coordination
 1. 3/17 River Operations Subcommittee Meeting
 2. BOR staffing is stretched more than before – setting up group Teams channels for operations coordination with irrigation partners
5. 2026 Windshield Snow Survey
 1. Friday May 15th
 2. Public Information Meeting previous day, Thursday May 14th

WY 2026		
Carryover	1,177	kaf
	Apr-Sept	Flow Aug
less than	76%	0
less than	90%	60
less than	109%	60
less than	131%	150
greater than	131%	185

Contacts for Operations and Information

Snake River Area Office

Ryan Alcorn - Area Manager
208-292-9353, ralcorn@usbr.gov

Upper Snake Field Office

Mike Hilliard – Assistant Area Manager
208-677-6901, mhilliard@usbr.gov

Brian Stevens – Water Operations Manager
208-677-6908 (office), 208-650-4106 (mobile)
bstevens@usbr.gov

Columbia-Pacific Northwest Regional Office

Chris Runyan – Hydraulic Engineer, Real Time Operations
208-378-5273 (office), 208-912-3338 (mobile)
crunyan@usbr.gov

Pete Cooper – Hydraulic Engineer, Real Time Operations
208-378-5037 (office), 986-200-5902 (mobile)
pcooper@usbr.gov

Snake River Operations Web Sites

Upper Snake water information site -

<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/upperSnake/index.html>

USBR HydroMet - <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/>

Northwest River Forecast Center - <http://www.nwrffc.noaa.gov/rfc/>

NRCS SNOTEL Data - <http://www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/>

Upper Snake Advisory Committee

Idaho Power Update

John Hildreth

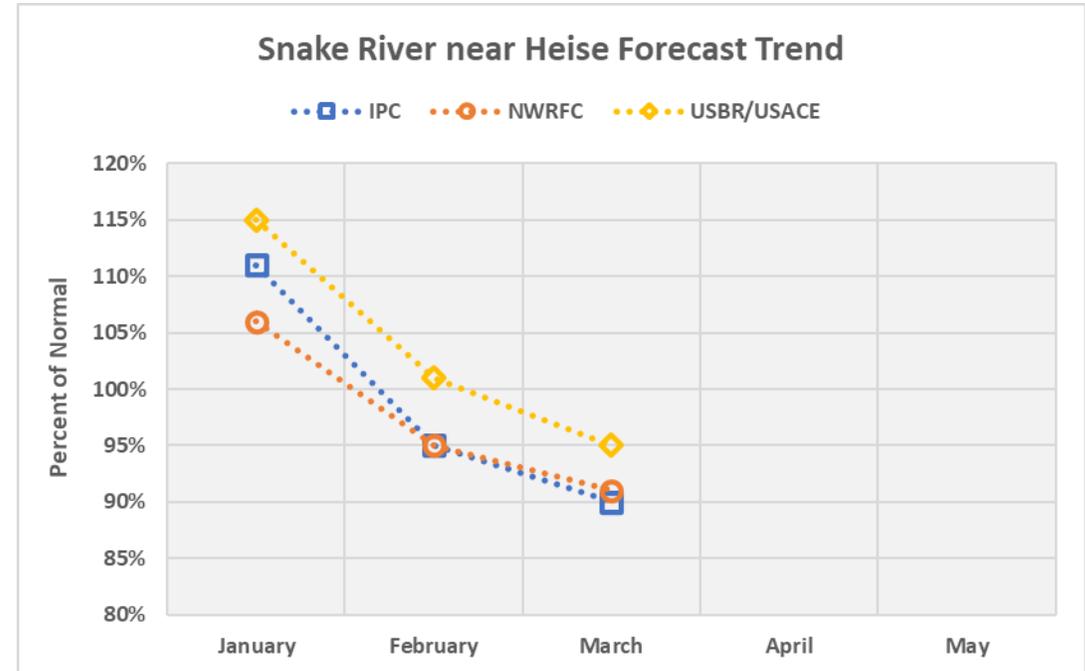
3/12/2026

WY2026 Upper Snake Operations

March-July Heise Natural Forecast (KAF)					
	10% Exceedance	Median	Percent of Normal	90% Exceedance	30-yr Average (RFC)
IPC	3,788	3,175	90%	2,774	3,517
NWRFC	4,235	3,197	91%	2,412	3,517
USBR/USACE		3,350	95%		3,517

- Forecast Assumptions

- Similar winter/spring reservoir operations to 2025
- Minimum flow releases at all projects until April, then transition to irrigation delivery



Bruneau River Forecast



BRUNEAU - NEAR HOT SPRINGS (HOT11) Forecasts for Water Year 2026

Official Water Supply

ESP with 10 Days QPF Ensemble: 2026-03-11 Issued: 2026-03-11

Forecast Period	Forecasts Are in KAF				30 Year Average (1991-2020)
	90 %	50 %	% Average	10 %	
APR-SEP	45	75	41	133	183
APR-JUL	43	73	41	126	176
JAN-SEP	88	120	53	176	225
JAN-JUL	86	117	54	170	217
OCT-SEP	105	136	56	193	242

Experimental Water Supply

HEFS with 15 days EQPF Ensemble: 2026-03-11 Issued: 2026-03-11

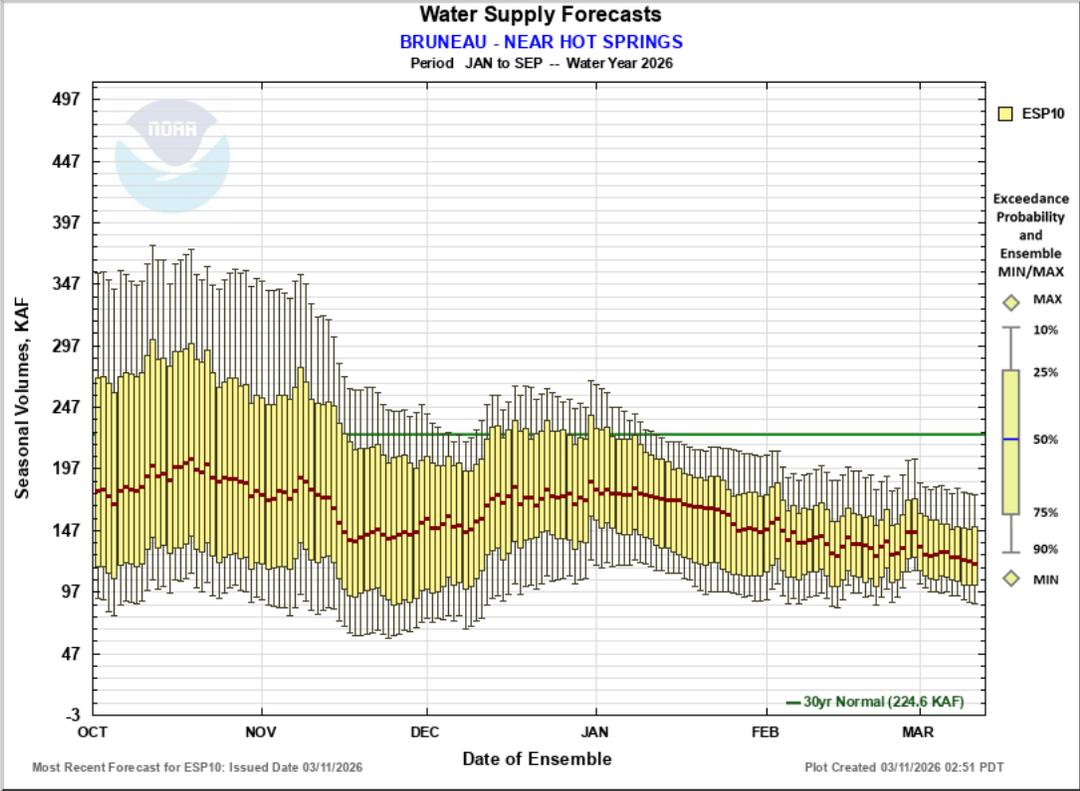
Forecast Period	Forecasts Are in KAF				30 Year Average (1991-2020)
	90 %	50 %	% Average	10 %	
APR-SEP	48	77	42	129	183
APR-JUL	46	75	43	123	176
JAN-SEP	89	120	53	173	225
JAN-JUL	87	117	54	166	217
OCT-SEP	106	137	57	189	242

Reference

ESP with 0 Days QPF Ensemble: 2026-03-11 Issued: 2026-03-11

Forecast Period	Forecasts Are in KAF				30 Year Average (1991-2020)
	90 %	50 %	% Average	10 %	
APR-SEP	65	98	54	153	183
APR-JUL	62	94	53	144	176
JAN-SEP	101	134	59	185	225
JAN-JUL	99	129	59	177	217
OCT-SEP	118	150	62	202	242

Move the mouse over the desired "Forecast Period" to display a graph.



Most Recent Forecast for ESP10: Issued Date 03/11/2026 Plot Created 03/11/2026 02:51 PDT

Max Scale Scale To Data Scale To Last 45 Days Show Min/Max Ensemble Volume Show Tooltips Help

BRUNEAU - NEAR HOT SPRINGS (HOT11) Period Rankings - 1971 to 2026

APR-SEP Normal -- 183 (KAF)

Rank	Year	Period Volume (KAF)	Percent of Normal	Exceedance Probability*
45	2013	93.53	51	78.947 %
46	1994	92.41	50	80.702 %
47	2015	92.10	50	82.456 %
48	2007	91.65	50	84.211 %
49	1987	77.82	43	85.965 %
50	2026	75.48	41	87.719 %
51	2014	74.73	41	89.474 %
52	1981	74.57	41	91.228 %
53	2001	73.59	40	92.982 %
54	2012	72.68	40	94.737 %
55	2021	68.46	37	96.491 %
56	1992	43.77	24	98.246 %

Summary of Columbia River FRM - March

1-Mar Water Supply Forecast

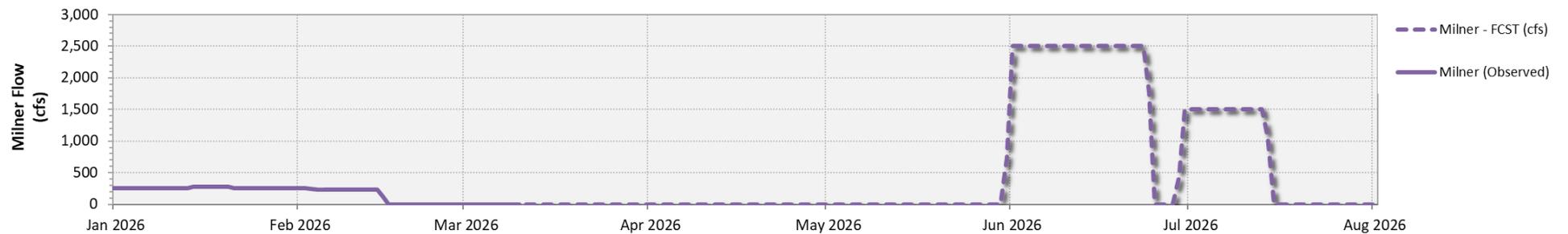
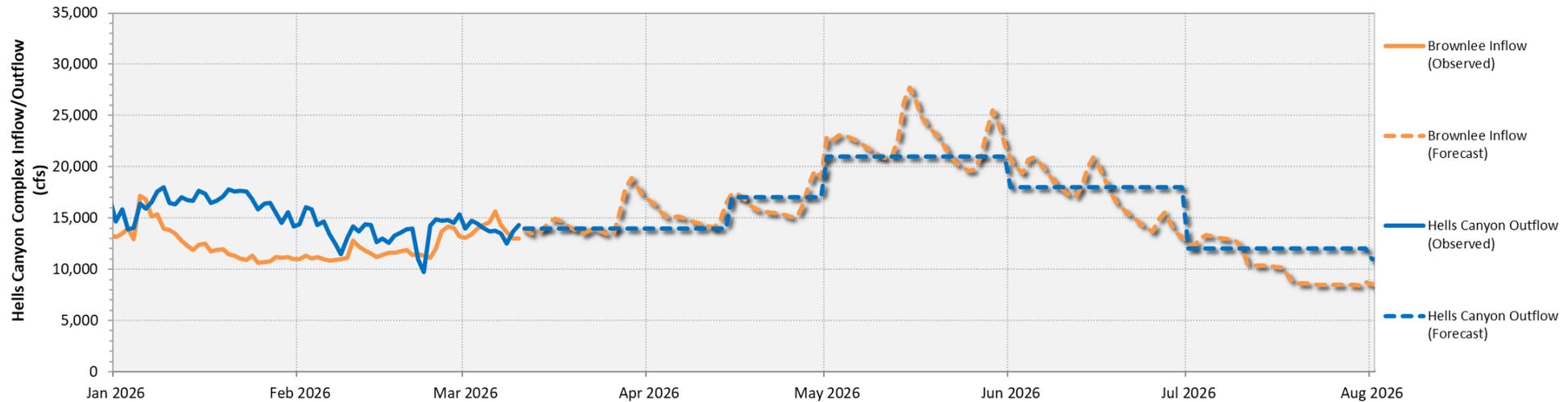
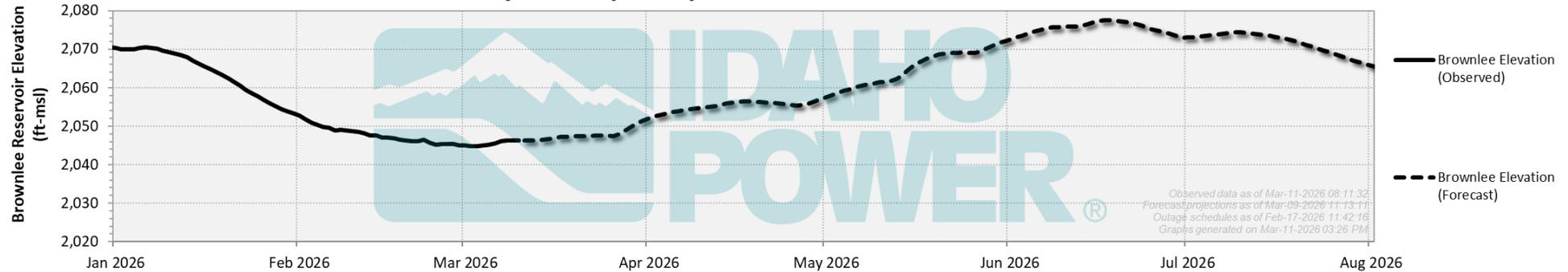
Project	MCDB	ARDB	DCDB	LIB	HGH	DWR	BRN	GCL	TDA
Apr-Jul, kaf						2002	4079		
Apr-Jul %normal (2)						81%	80%		
Apr-Jul change, kaf (1)						250	-200		
Apr-Aug, kaf	12216	23646	2291	6738				60971	84282
Apr-Aug %normal (2)	109%	107%	112%	111%				105%	94%
Apr-Aug change, kaf (1)	-87	-248	-30	-93				2865	1640
May-Sep, kaf					1505				
May-Sep %normal (2)					85%				
May-Sep change, kaf (1)					-57				

System Elevation Requirements

Project	MCDB	ARDB	DCDB	LIB	HGH	DWR	BRN	GCL	TDA
Jan 31, ft	-	1430.7	-	2374.4	3543.1	1554.9	2077	1290	
Feb 28/29, ft	-	1425.1	-	2383.9	3547.0	1567.2	2054.2	1290.0	
Mar 31, ft	-	1414.1	-	2380.2	3548.2	1570.1	2054.2	1279.3	
Apr 15, ft	-	-	-	-	3548.0	1581.1	2058.2	1265.5	
Apr 30, ft	-	1414.1	-	2380.2	3547.9	1571.2	2058.5	1255.7	

WY 2026 HCC Operations

Hells Canyon Complex Operations - Median Case Inflow Forecast



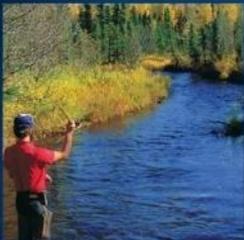


IWRB Managed Recharge Program
Upper Snake River Advisory Committee
Meeting

Neal Farmer – Recharge Program

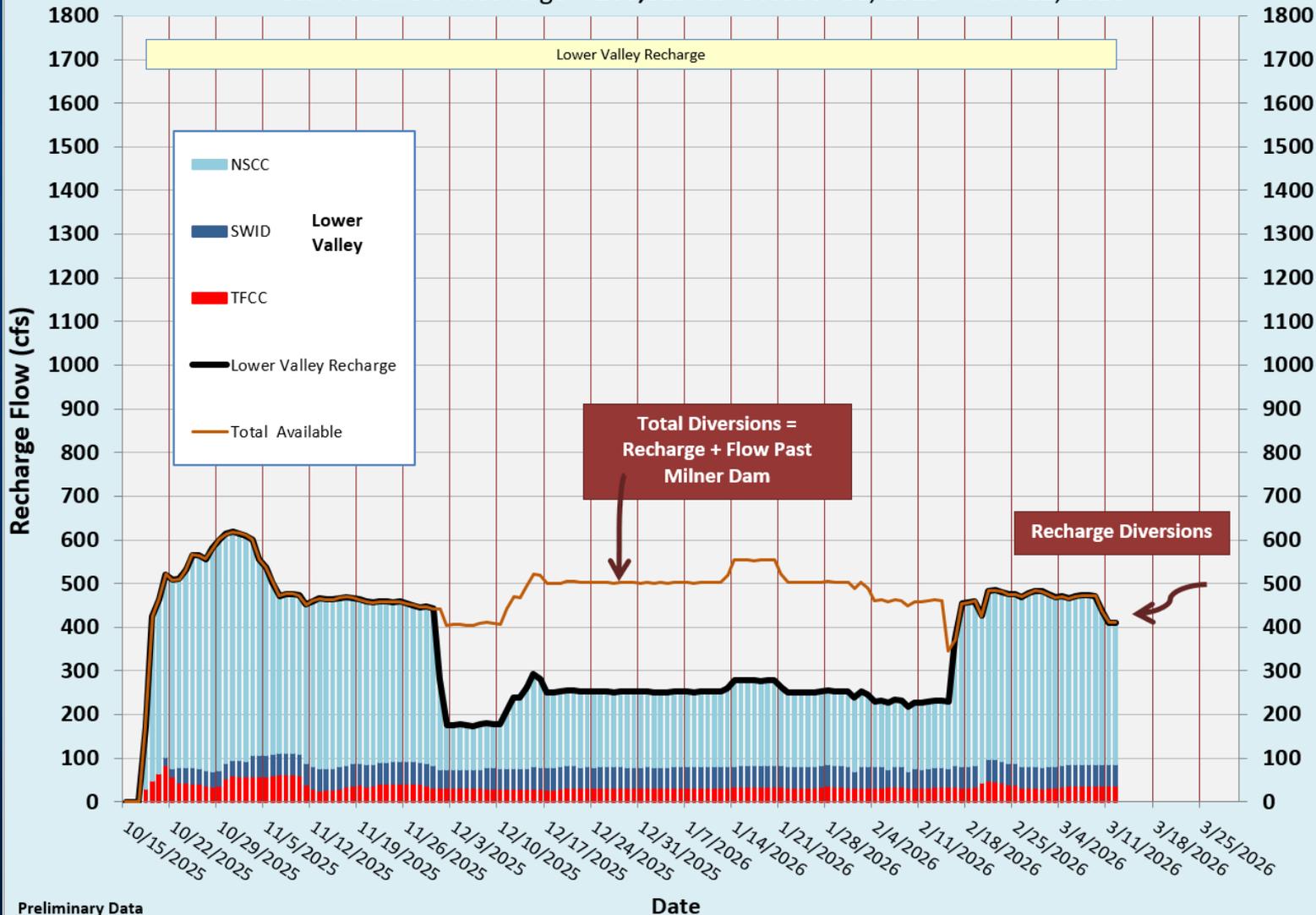
Neal.Farmer@idwr.idaho.gov

March 12, 2026

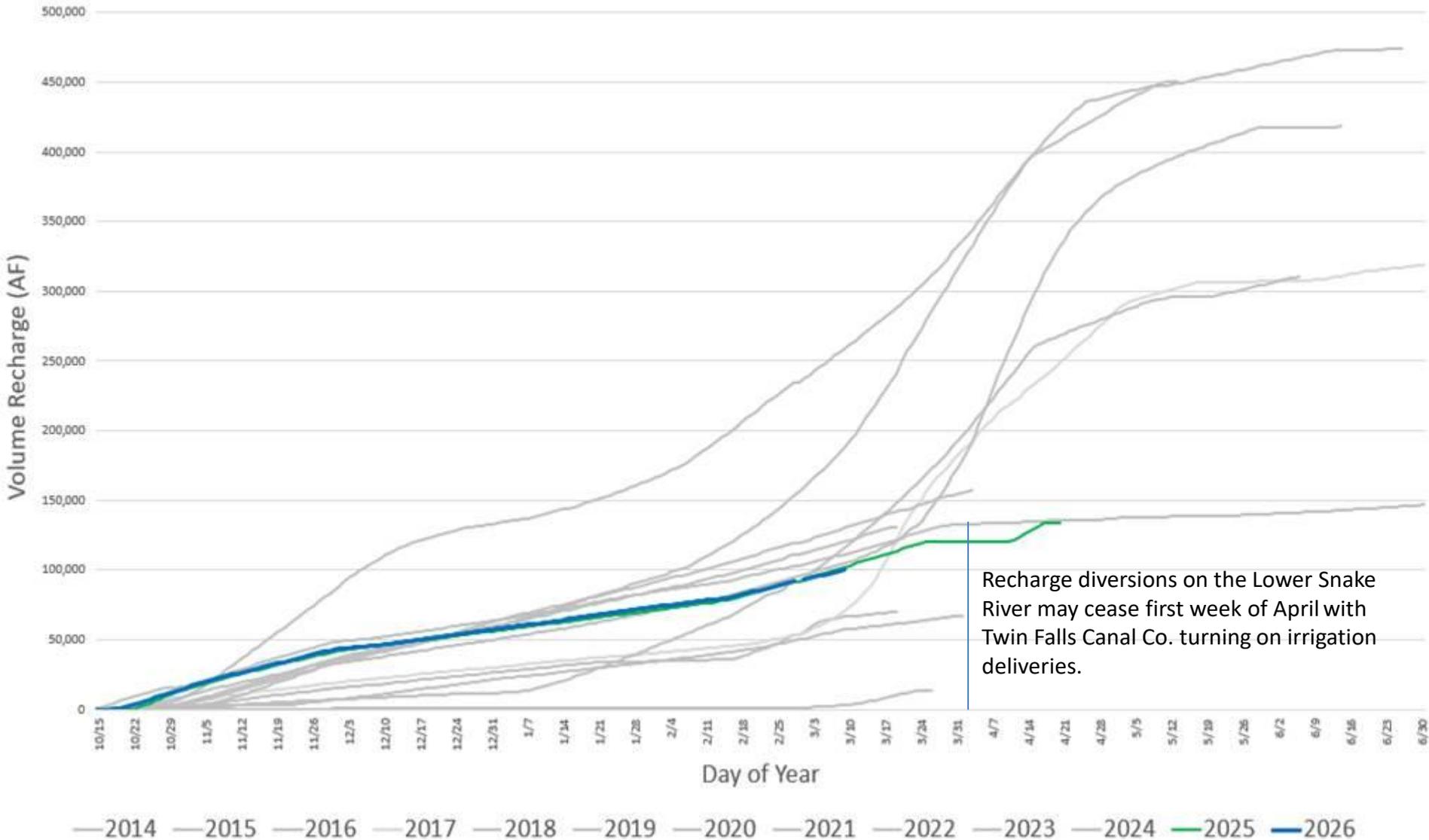


IWRB Natural Flow Recharge - 2025/2026 Season

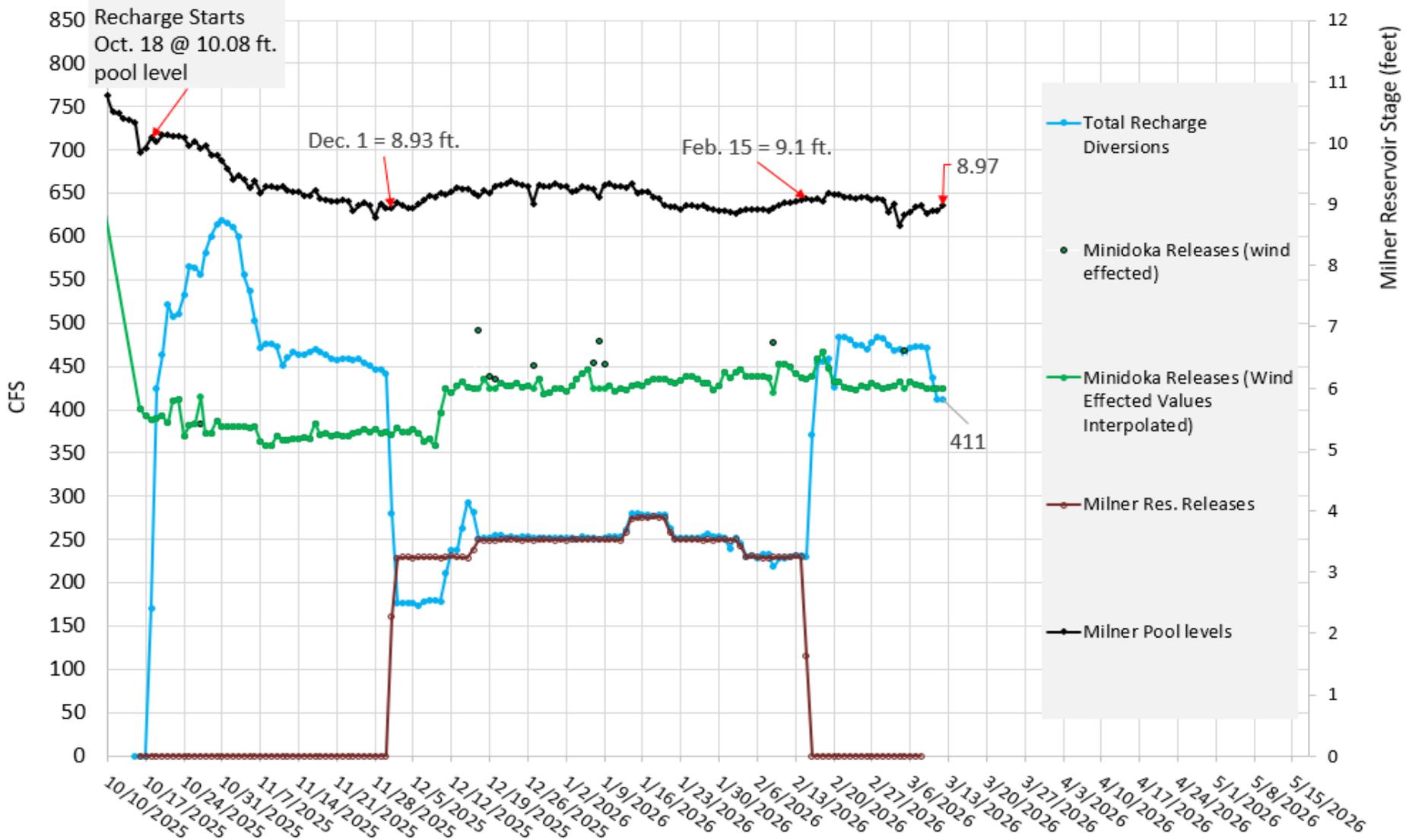
Total Volume of Recharge = **103,019 AF** October 18, 2025 - Mar. 12, 2026



Natural Flow Recharge By Year



Milner Reservoir Water Budget (provisional)

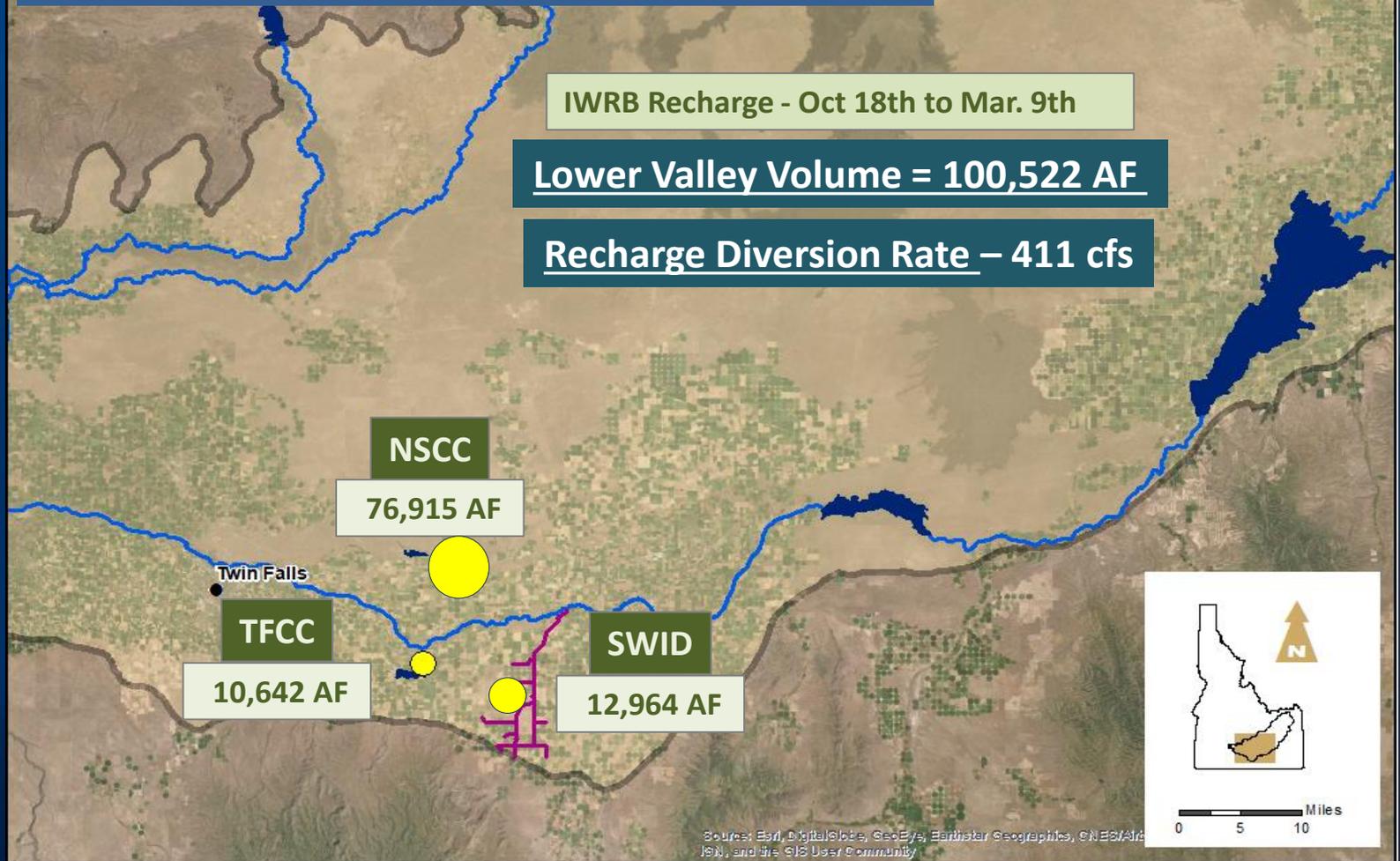


Total Natural Flow Water Recharged 2025-2026 Season 100,522 AF

IWRB Recharge - Oct 18th to Mar. 9th

Lower Valley Volume = 100,522 AF

Recharge Diversion Rate – 411 cfs



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

