FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Drought Update

SALT LAKE CITY (Jan. 13, 2021) – December storms made a positive rebound for our snowpack. With 95% of Utah's water supply coming from snowpack, we need above-average snowstorms to help refill reservoirs. Utah still has 85 days until the snowpack typically peaks.

"The last four months have been sort of a rollercoaster ride," said Brian Steed, executive director of the Department of Natural Resources. "November was dry, but thankfully December storms put Utah in a better spot. It's important to note that the drought is not over."

At-a-glance highlights (updated Jan. 13, 2022):

- All of the state has been downgraded from exceptional drought; 31.81% remains in extreme drought.
- Statewide snow water equivalent (SWE), or how much water would be in the snowpack if it melted, is 9 inches. This is 131% of median for this time of year and 56% of median peak, which usually occurs around the first of April.
- Thirty-five of Utah's largest 45 reservoirs are below 55% of available capacity. Overall statewide storage is 52% of capacity. This time last year, reservoirs were about 62% of capacity.
- Soil moisture is nearly 11% above median for this time of year. Wet soils are critical to have effective spring runoff.
- Of the 65 measured streams, 23 are flowing below normal. The number of current gauges measuring is down due to ice in streams.

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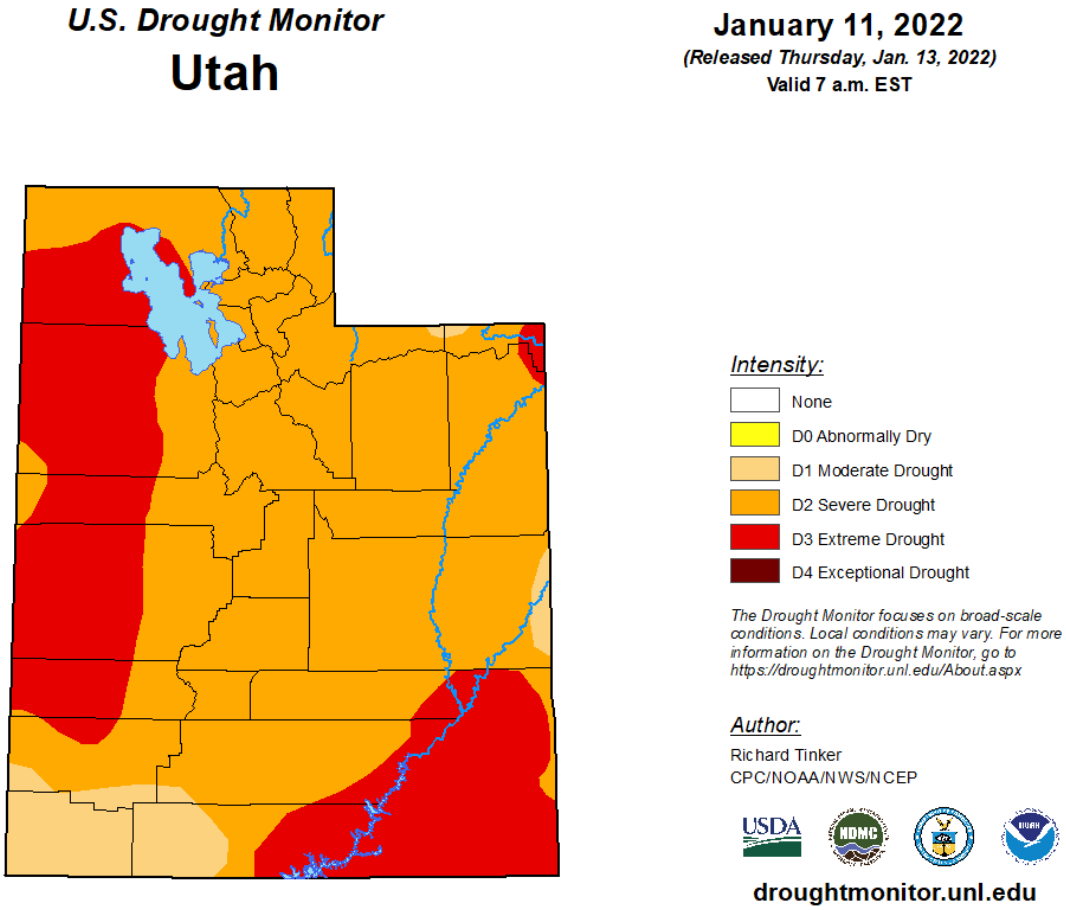
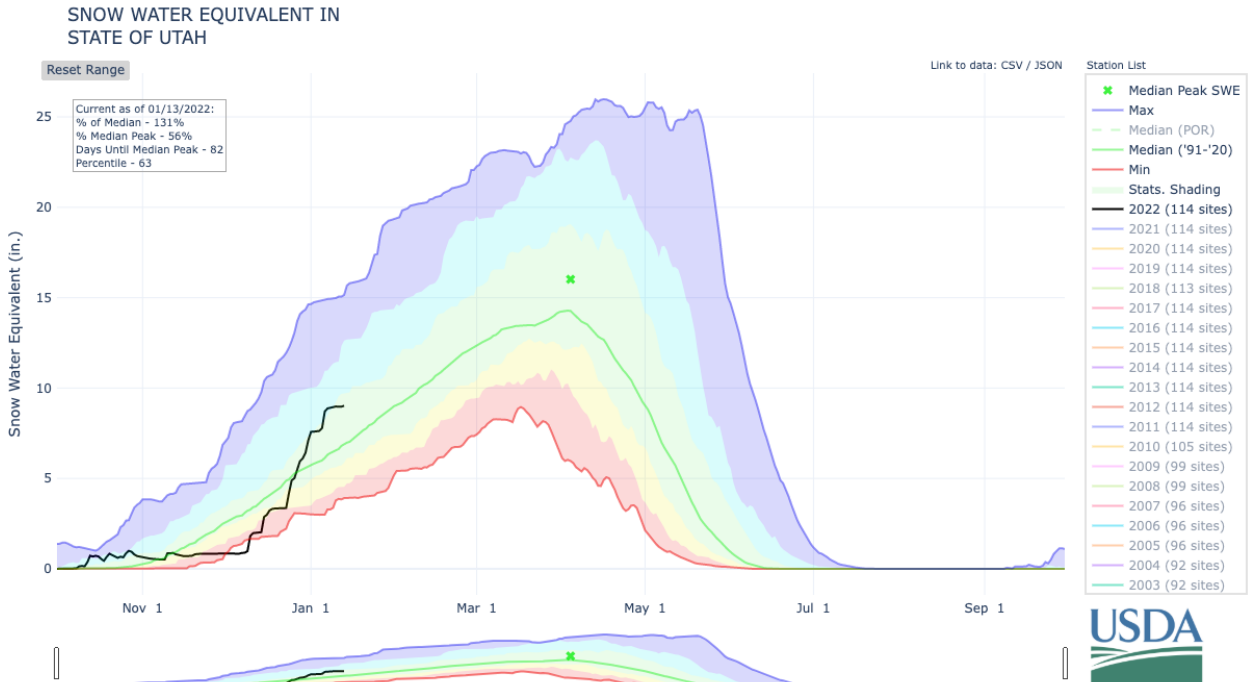


FULL REPORT

Precipitation and soil moisture

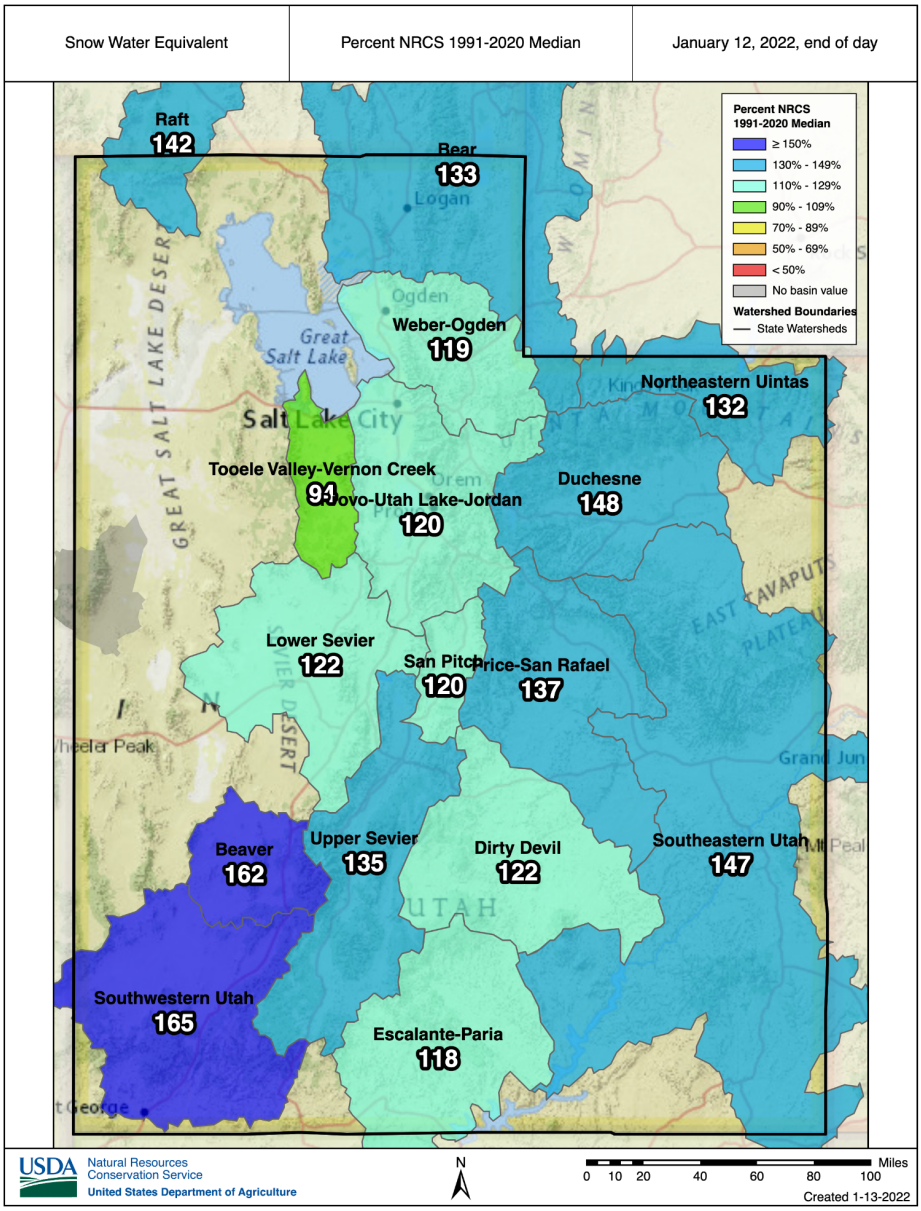
- Snow water equivalent (as measured at NRCS SNOTEL sites) total on Jan. 13 was 9 inches. The median (typical) for this time of year is 6.9 inches. The median peak for the year is 16.0 inches around the first of April. Statewide, there is about 56% of the snow water equivalent we need to reach the median for the year. Since we started the year essentially in debt water-wise, a better-than-average water year is needed.



Snow storms (as measured at mountain SnoTel sites) throughout December have brought the Snow Water Equivalent from lower than ever recorded in the last 30 years to above median. Many more storms of this magnitude are needed to increase the snowpack so we have a strong spring runoff and refill reservoirs.

- Nearly all basins in the state are near or above the median. However, it's important to note that this is the median for this time of year. We still have 82 days until snowpack typically peaks.

- During winter months, soil moisture remains mostly unchanged until temperatures warm and melt begins.



Graphic shows snow water equivalent based on regions. After recent storms, some regions accumulated more snow than others.

Temperature and Evaporation

- Temperature has been 2.4 degrees above average for the last 30 days. Above-average temperatures can melt snow, cause precipitation to fall as less beneficial rain rather than snow, and increase the demand of the air and land for water.

Streamflows

- Twenty-three of Utah's 65 streams reporting data are flowing below normal. Many streams are affected by ice in colder months and are not able to report flows.
- One stream had its seven day average flow reach record low.
- Daily flow from 23 headwater streams has been flowing below the median for this time of year.

Reservoir and Lake Levels

- Major reservoirs statewide are at 52% capacity. Withdrawals from reservoirs generally decrease over the fall and winter months. Snowpack is needed to refill the reservoirs in the spring prior to the higher use summer months.
- Thirty-five out of Utah's 45 reservoirs are below 55% of available capacity.
- After dropping to 4190.2 on Oct. 18, Great Salt Lake's elevation is on the rise at 4190.8, about 7.2 inches below the previous historic record low of 4191.4. Levels are expected to continue to rise now over the winter and early spring until the irrigation season begins again.

January 1, 2022 | Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI)

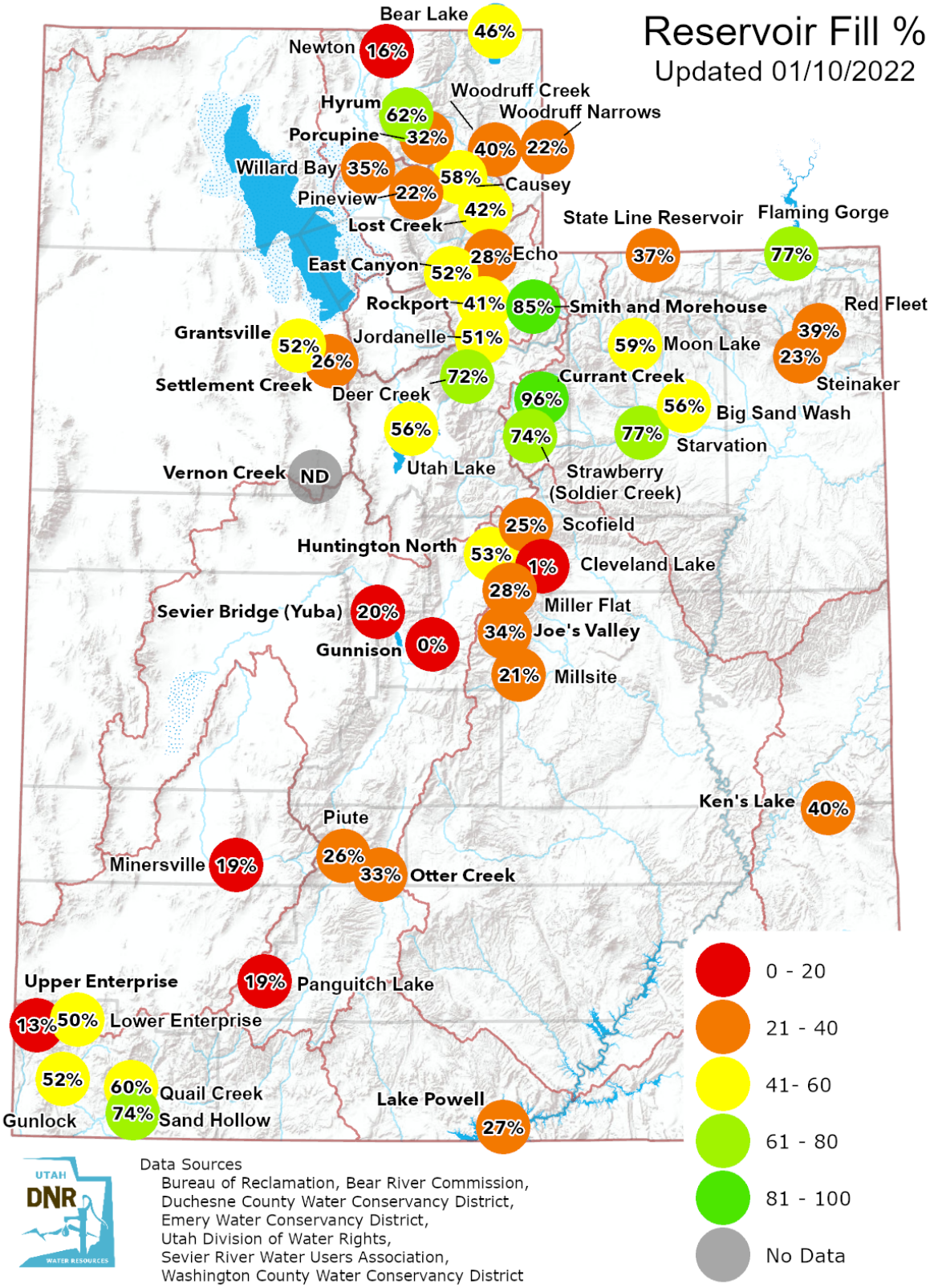
Basin or Region	Reservoir Storage[1] (KAF)[2]	Apr-July Forecast (KAF)[2]	Forecast + Storage (KAF)[2]	SWSI[3]	Percentile[4] (%)	Similar Years
Bear	536.8	172.0	708.8	-0.48	**44**	[1996, 2014]
Woodruff Narrows	12.0	131.0	143.0	0.1	**51**	[2006, 2020]
Little Bear	8.6	47.0	55.6	0.94	**61**	[1993, 2009]
Ogden	27.4	114.0	141.4	0.1	**51**	[2010, 2012]
Weber	163.5	330.0	493.5	0.29	**53**	[1981, 2020]
Provo	733.6	110.0	843.6	-2.44	**21**	[1995, 2003]
Western Uintas	145.4	131.0	276.4	2.62	**81**	[2005, 2019]
Eastern Uintas	17.8	69.0	86.8	-1.45	**33**	[2012, 2015]
Blacks Fork	9.0	103.0	112.0	1.67	**70**	[1985, 1993]
Smiths Fork	5.1	35.0	40.1	2.5	**80**	[2017, 2019]
Price	16.3	50.0	66.3	1.07	**63**	[1987, 2017]
Joes Valley	21.2	60.0	81.2	-0.48	**44**	[1987, 2001]
Ferron Creek	3.8	40.0	43.8	0.29	**53**	[2001, 2008]
Moab	0.9	5.3	6.2	1.85	**72**	[1992, 1997]
Upper Sevier	33.4	71.0	104.4	-0.29	**47**	[1989, 2001]
San Pitch	0.0	16.2	16.2	-0.87	**40**	[2008, 2017]
Lower Sevier	41.8	85.0	126.8	-1.45	**33**	[2014, 2020]
Beaver River	4.1	41.0	45.1	1.84	**72**	[1982, 1997]
Virgin River	28.6	105.4	134.0	2.28	**77**	[2017, 2019]

[1] End of Month Reservoir Storage; [2] KAF, Thousand Acre-Feet; [3] SWSI, Surface Water Supply Index; [4] Threshold for coloring: >75% Green, <25% Red

The Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) is a predictive indicator of total surface water availability within a watershed for the spring and summer water use seasons.

Reservoir Fill %

Updated 01/10/2022



Data Sources

Bureau of Reclamation, Bear River Commission,
Duchesne County Water Conservancy District,
Emery Water Conservancy District,
Utah Division of Water Rights,
Sevier River Water Users Association,
Washington County Water Conservancy District