



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Media Contacts**

Michael Sanchez  
Utah Division of Water Resources  
385-226-8967  
[masanchez@utah.gov](mailto:masanchez@utah.gov)

## **Drought Update**

**SALT LAKE CITY** (March 10, 2022) – Late February and early March storms gave a slight boost to Utah’s snowpack, but is still below median for this time of year. With 95% of Utah’s water supply coming from snowpack, we need above-average snowstorms to help refill reservoirs. Utah still has 25 days until the snowpack typically peaks.

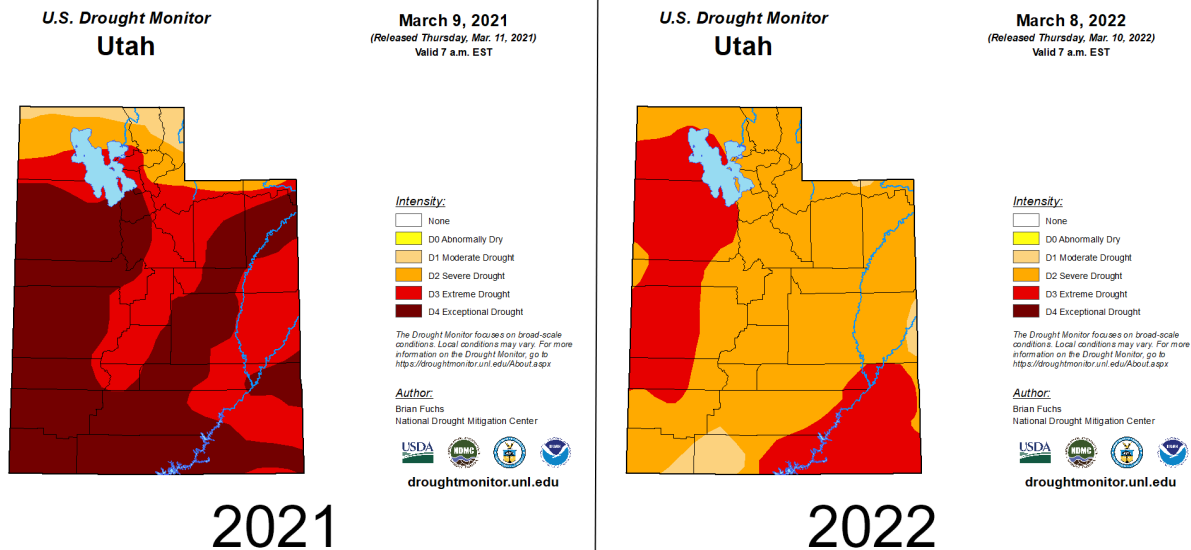
“The good news is that we have almost double the moisture in our soil compared to this time last year, which will improve runoff efficiency,” said Brian Steed, executive director of the Department of Natural Resources. “The bad news is that reservoir storage is significantly lower than this time last year, with a statewide average of about 55% of capacity.”

### **At-a-glance highlights:**

- 33.34% of Utah is in extreme drought, 96.93% of the state is in severe drought.
- Statewide snow water equivalent (SWE), or how much water would be in the snowpack if it melted, is 11.4 inches. This is 86% of median for this time of year and 71% of median peak, which usually occurs around the first of April.
- Twenty-eight of Utah’s largest 45 reservoirs are below 55% of available capacity. Overall statewide storage is 55.5% of capacity. This time last year, reservoirs were about 65% of capacity.
- Soil moisture is nearly 7.3% above median for this time of year, which is much better than last year. Wet soils are critical to have effective spring runoff.
- Of the 77 measured streams, 48 are flowing below normal. Less gauges are measuring streamflow because of ice in the streams.

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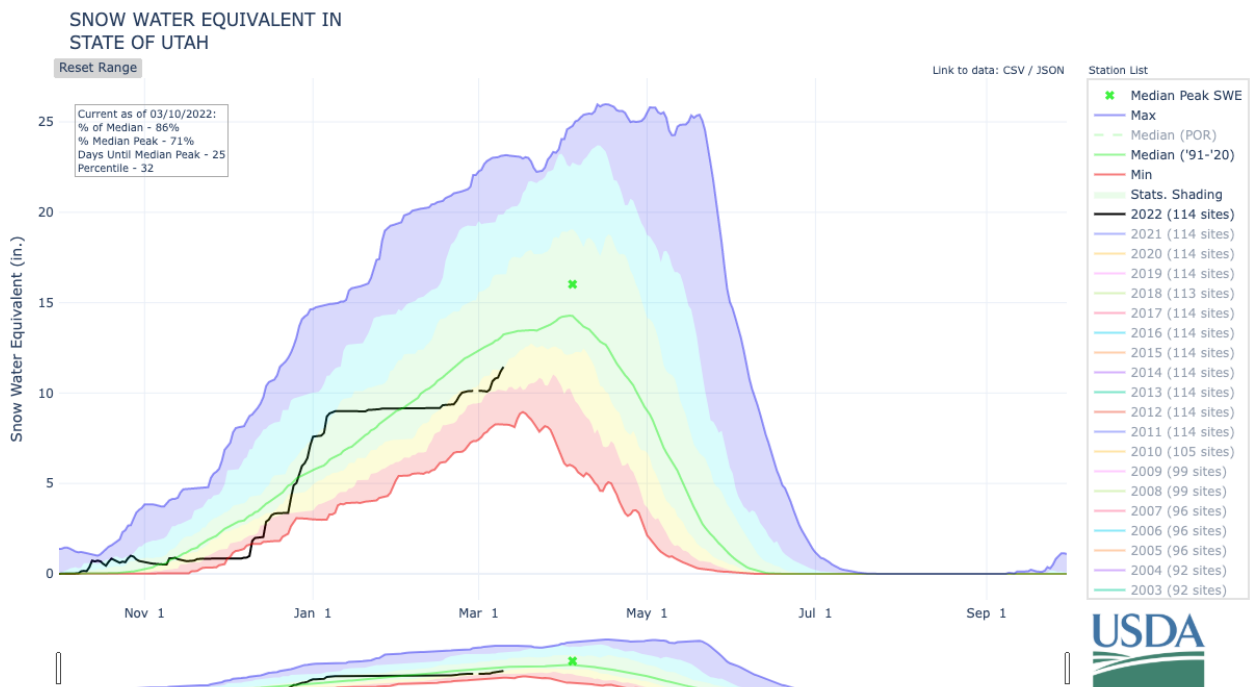


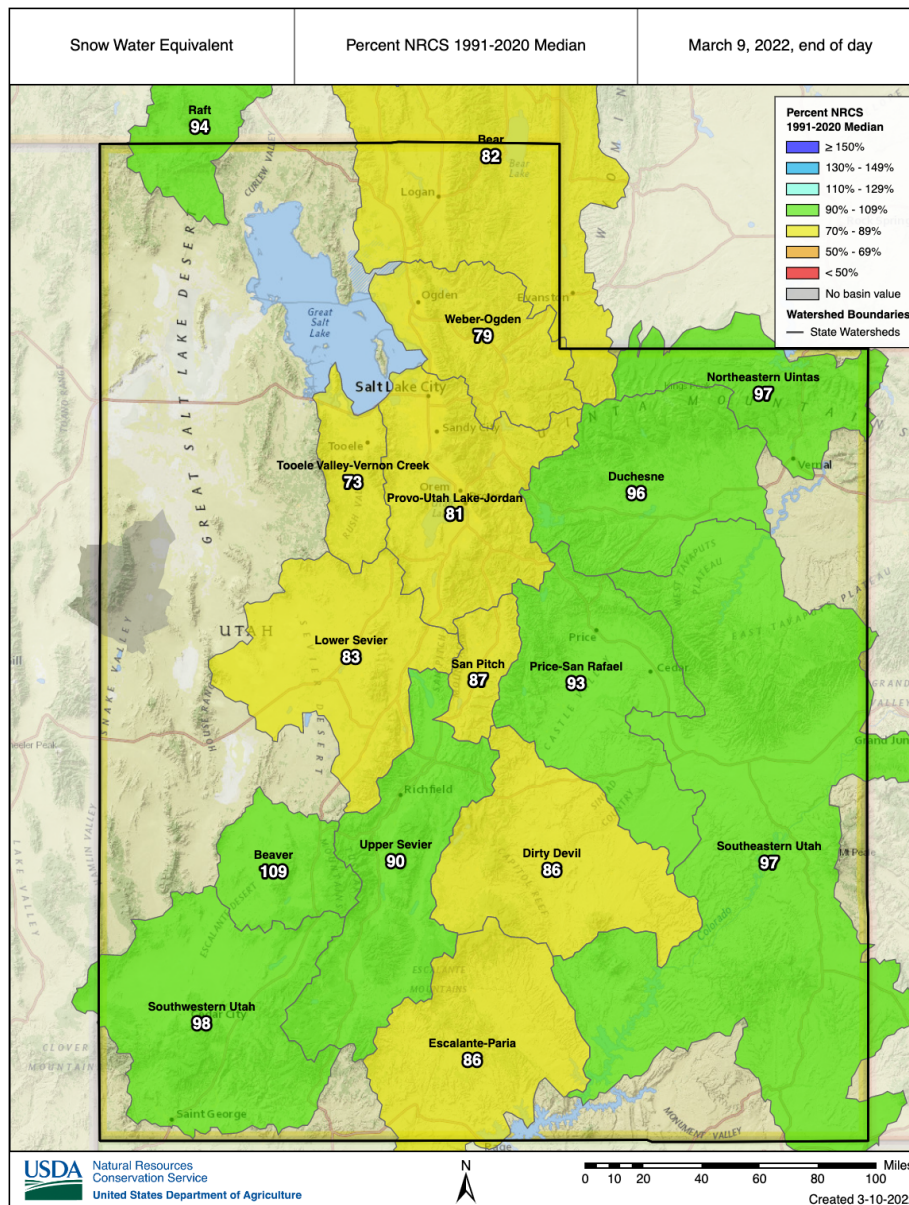
*Graphic compares Utah's current drought situation to 2021.*

## FULL REPORT

### Precipitation and soil moisture

- Statewide snow water equivalent (the amount of water if it melted), is about 11.4 inches. That's 71% of the median peak (16 inches), which occurs around the first of April.
- Snowpack levels are currently at 77% of median or higher with the exception of Tooele Valley-Vernon Creek which is at 70% of median. We have 25 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**

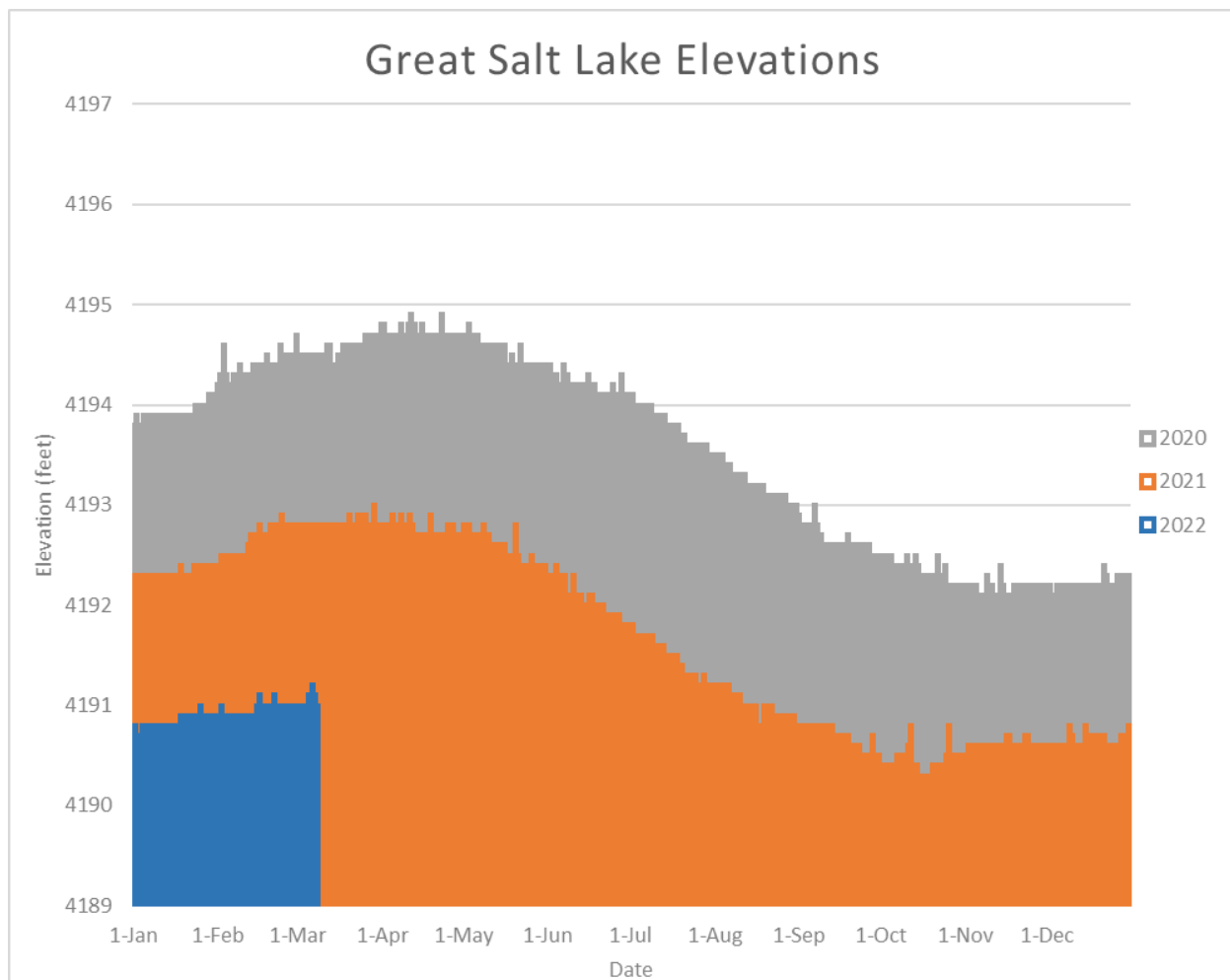
- Temperature has been 2.6 degrees below average for the last 30 days. Below-average temperatures can help the snowpack resist melting, encourage snow to fall, and decrease the demand of the air and land for water.

## **Streamflows**

- Forty-eight of Utah's 77 streams reporting data are flowing below normal. Many streams are affected by ice in colder months and don't report flows.
- Seven streams had their seven day average flow reach record low.
- Daily flow from 28 headwater streams has been flowing below the median for this time of year.

## **Reservoir and Lake Levels**

- Major reservoirs statewide are at 55.5% 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.
- Twenty-eight of Utah's 45 reservoirs are below 55% of available capacity.
- After dropping to 4190.2 feet, a new record low, on Oct. 18, Great Salt Lake's elevation is on the rise at 4191.1. Levels are expected to continue to rise through early spring until the irrigation season begins again. Inflow is needed to overcome the typical seasonal summer drop of about 2.3 feet.

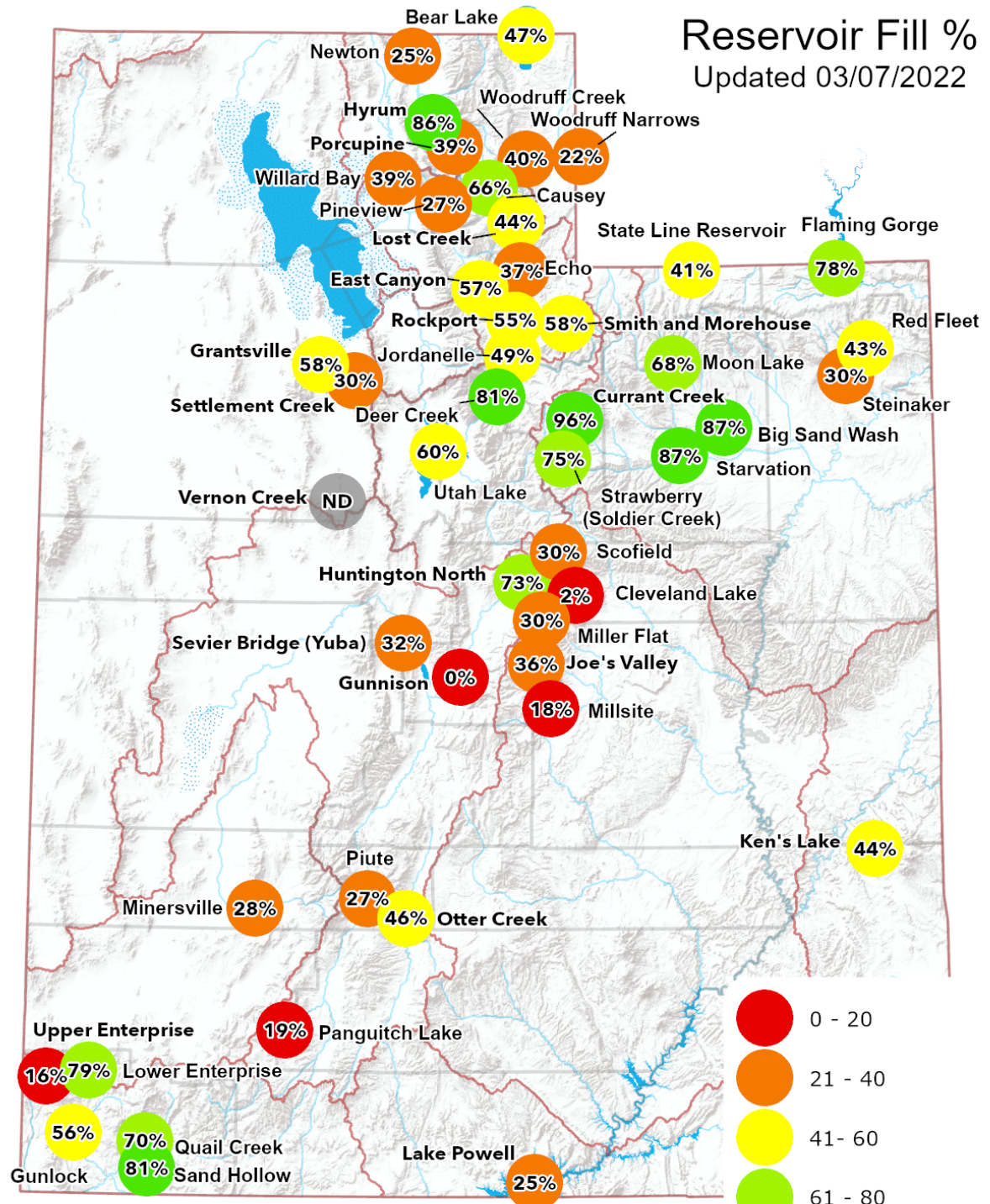


*This graph compares elevations of the Great Salt Lake for the last three years.*



# Reservoir Fill %

Updated 03/07/2022



## 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

