

(Friday, April 23)

Subject: 2021 Upper Snake River and Reservoir Operations Update

Purpose: The purpose of these updates is to provide information regarding Reclamation's operations and basin conditions as the season progresses. The operations outlined in this update are based on the best data available at the time and are subject to change as new information becomes available. For additional information and resources, please visit our website at: <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/upperSnake/>.

### **Highlights**

**-The reservoir system is currently drafting until temperatures increase over the next few weeks to cause higher runoff amounts, when the reservoir system will likely fill more.**

**-2021 Flow Augmentation delivery will begin the week of Monday May 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

**Upper Snake Federal Reservoir System:** As of April 22, combined storage in the federal reservoir system above Milner Dam (system storage) amounts to 3,542,399 acre-feet (AF), which is 88% of capacity and 120% of normal. Since November 1, system storage has increased by approximately 1.7 million acre-feet (MAF). Comparatively, 2021 system storage is approximately 130,483 AF higher than it was on this date in 2020. Last year system storage drafted in the early spring months as a result of flood risk management (FRM) by the reservoirs above Heise. Currently, system storage and Palisades Reservoir are drafting due to making irrigation deliveries and cold temperatures delaying runoff. As temperatures increase over the next few weeks, higher runoff amounts will likely result in additional physical fill in the reservoir system.

**Milner Dam:** Milner's river release is currently zero. Due to prevailing dry conditions over the last few months, Reclamation expects the delivery of flow augmentation from the Upper Snake to be earlier than previously anticipated and will now begin the week of May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The dry outlook has raised concerns about water temperatures on the Snake River below the Hells Canyon Complex. To moderate increases in the river reach downstream of Milner, releases will be increased incrementally over a 3-day period to reach the expected discharge target range of 2,500 to 3,500 cfs for flow augmentation delivery. The actual dates and release amounts for flow augmentation will vary depending on real time conditions.

\*A more thorough outlook for each reservoir in the Upper Snake basin will be sent out early next week.

Reservoir levels, reservoir discharge, and river flows can be monitored on the USBR Hydromet page here: <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/>

The Upper Snake "teacup" diagram which provides a graphical overview of system conditions can be accessed here: <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/burtea.html>