



Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

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NEWS RELEASE

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Spring Releases for Endangered Fish a “No Go” This Year

LAKESWOOD, Colo. – A voluntary river flow program to provide enhanced spring peak flows for endangered fish will not take effect this year. Operators of Dillon, Green Mountain, Williams Fork, Wolford and Ruedi reservoirs cannot implement the Coordinated Reservoirs Operations program this spring because river flows in western Colorado will not approach levels high enough to trigger additional reservoir releases to benefit the endangered fishes. Extremely dry conditions throughout 2012 combined with below average conditions in 2013 have resulted in low reservoir storage and below average spring runoff. The current forecast for the water supply for the Colorado River at Cameo near Grand Junction, Colo., is 52 to 65 percent of average.

The Coordinated Reservoir Operations Program was established in 1995 as part of the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. Its purpose is to enhance spring peak flows to a section of the Colorado River upstream of Grand Junction without causing flooding. In years when snowpack is above average, surplus inflows to the five reservoirs can be passed on downstream to benefit two species of endangered fish in the Colorado River: the Colorado pikeminnow and the razorback sucker.

This spring, most of the basin reservoir operators expect to approach, but not achieve, their goals of filling the reservoirs. Streamflows are predicted to remain significantly below the Coordinated Reservoir Operations target threshold of 12,900 cubic-feet-per-second in the Colorado River near Grand Junction.

For more information, contact Kara Lamb, Bureau of Reclamation’s Eastern Colorado Area Office, at (970) 962-4326, klamb@usbr.gov; or Michelle Garrison, Colorado Water Conservation Board, at (303) 866-3441, ext. 3213, michelle.garrison@state.co.us.

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The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program is a cooperative partnership of local, state and federal agencies, water organizations, power customers and environmental groups established in 1988 to recover the endangered fishes while water development proceeds in accordance with federal and state laws and interstate compacts.

For more information: 303-969-7322, or ColoradoRiverRecovery.org.