

Water Supply Conditions July 16th, 2021

Spring snowmelt has declined and Embudo gage is reporting approximately 300 cubic feet per second (cfs) with a little over 100 cfs crossing the Colorado border. Temperatures have been seasonably hot but rainstorms above and below Otowi gage have allowed for a pause in releases of MRGCD's last volume of its only storage water available (San Juan-Chama project allocation) used to supplement Rio Grande base flows. Damage to MRGCD facilities in the Socorro and Belen divisions from high intensity rain events last week have limited MRGCD's ability to divert and deliver water in both divisions. MRGCD employees are working hard to repair the damaged facilities so capacity can be restored and deliveries to the impacted areas can resume.

The operations plan is to now target passing just Rio Grande inflow to Cochiti Reservoir through the weekend and into next week. Demand has been low due to the temporarily limited capacities of damaged MRGCD facilities, many farmers waiting to get onto their fields for their second cutting and recent rainstorms. Temperatures are expected to remain in the 90's with a 30 to 50% chance of precipitation for the next seven days. As demand increases and facilities are repaired, MRGCD will resume releases of San Juan-Chama (SJC) storage. MRGCD staff expects to resume releases of SJC water from storage early next week and will continue monitoring and evaluating conditions. The last block of SJC water will be managed to supplement baseflows for as long as possible as they gradually recede and demands increase.

Inflows from rainstorms upstream of the San Acacia and Isleta dams have begun to recede and bypasses at both dams are being reduced daily until only federal leased SJC water is bypassed. Diversions have been reduced district-wide due to reduced demand but will ramp up soon as fields dry up and demand increases.

Silvery minnow rescue operations will resume this weekend as the river below the Isleta and San Acacia Dams begin to recede. Drying in the Albuquerque reach will not begin for the foreseeable future given the increased flows from recent rainstorms. Rains have also diminished the wildland fire danger so the Bosque will remain open for low-impact recreational use but current restrictions remain in place so consult your local fire department to get the latest information in your area.

The MRGCD will be completely out of its 2021 SJC water supply sometime in July as we move toward prior and paramount (P&P senior water rights) only operations for the six middle Rio Grande Pueblos but we will not be shutting down operations as return flows and hopefully additional rainwater will be distributed where possible.

If you have any questions regarding these operations, please contact Anne Marken or Mike Hamman at 247-0234 or by email at anne@mrgcd.us or mikeh@mrgcd.us.