

IRRIGATION SEASON UPDATE

Cooler temperatures and significant rainfall in August eased irrigation demand and increased river flows allowing for more stable diversions and flexibility in irrigation deliveries. Back in July, the Rio Grande in Albuquerque dried for the first time in decades.

Thanks to the rain the river has since reconnected and remained connected to Elephant Butte which assists the state of New Mexico in meeting obligations of the Rio Grande Compact. Delivering water to Elephant Butte is required for the MRGCD to store water in El Vado Reservoir and provide supplemental water releases to MRGCD water users in future irrigation seasons. Summer rains have been good to the Middle Rio Grande Valley this season, but we can't always count on the rain.

At this time, MRGCD water users are dependent upon the natural flow of the Rio Grande including rain runoff from tributaries and arroyos. If rainfall tapers off river flows will decrease, diversions will become unstable, and irrigation deliveries will be limited. Available water continues to be delivered on a rotational basis with emphasis on providing flexibility as the water supply allows.

The MRGCD irrigation season will continue through October 31, 2022. However, water availability depends on natural river flows. Recent rainfall has boosted river flows, but it is uncertain whether rain will continue through September and October. The MRGCD does not have water to release from storage to supplement natural river flows and provide a reliable supply for irrigation. If dry weather conditions return, the water supply will become limited again.

Given the current conditions, the MRGCD cannot guarantee the number or frequency of water deliveries. MRGCD water users should take this into consideration when making farming decisions.

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2022 IRRIGATION SEASON UPDATE



Updated
August 26, 2022



TEMPERATURE & PRECIPITATION UPDATE

30-day temperature and precipitation forecasts developed by the National Weather Service indicate that the Middle Rio Grande is likely to experience above average temperatures and has equal chances for above or below normal precipitation.

RIO GRANDE COMPACT UPDATE

At the end of 2021, New Mexico's Rio Grande Compact (an interstate and international water sharing agreement between New Mexico, Colorado, Texas and Mexico) debt to Texas was approximately 127,000 acre-feet, and the overall debt has increased during 2022. Official Rio Grande Compact accounting is done at the end of the calendar year, and it is too early to tell where New Mexico's Rio Grande Compact Debt will be at the end of 2022. MRGCD is coordinating with water management agencies to ensure that water is conveyed to Elephant Butte as efficiently as possible to minimize New Mexico's Rio Grande Compact debt.

PRIOR AND PARAMOUNT UPDATE

20,000 acre-feet of Prior and Paramount (P&P) water has been stored in Abiquiu reservoir for the Six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos. Any water over and above P&P demand will be available to other lands within the MRGCD, but this may be an extremely limited amount of water. If the Bureau of Indian Affairs determines that the amount of native water entering the Middle Rio Grande is not sufficient to meet the needs of the P&P lands, then releases from P&P water storage may be made to meet the demand. At this time, P&P water has not been released from storage.

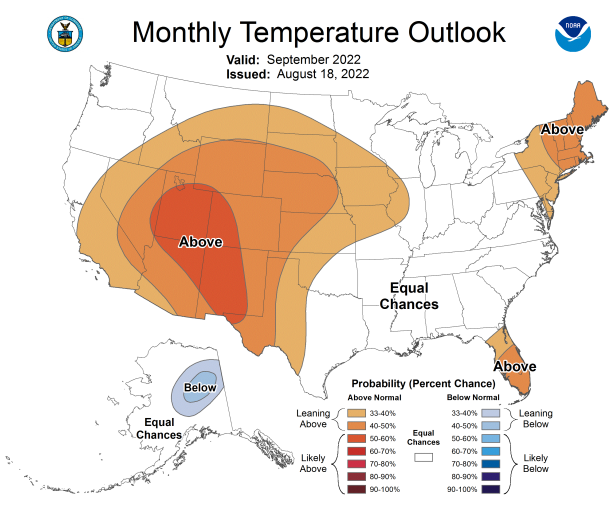


Figure 1. 30 Day Temperature Outlook

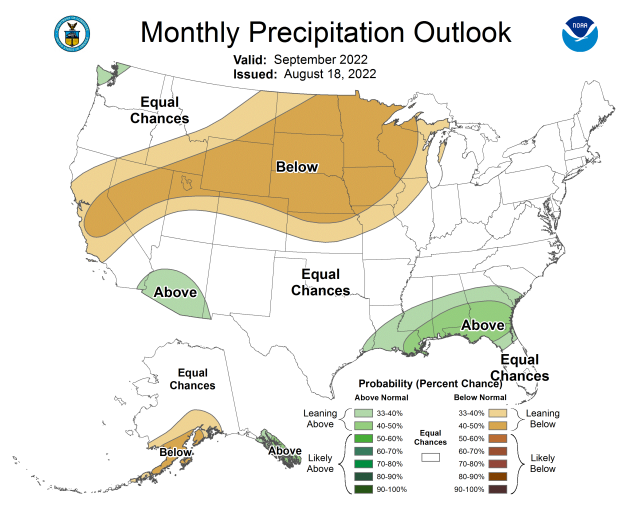


Figure 2. 30 Day Precipitation Outlook

Scan the QR code (right) to access the 30-Day forecast produced by the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center.

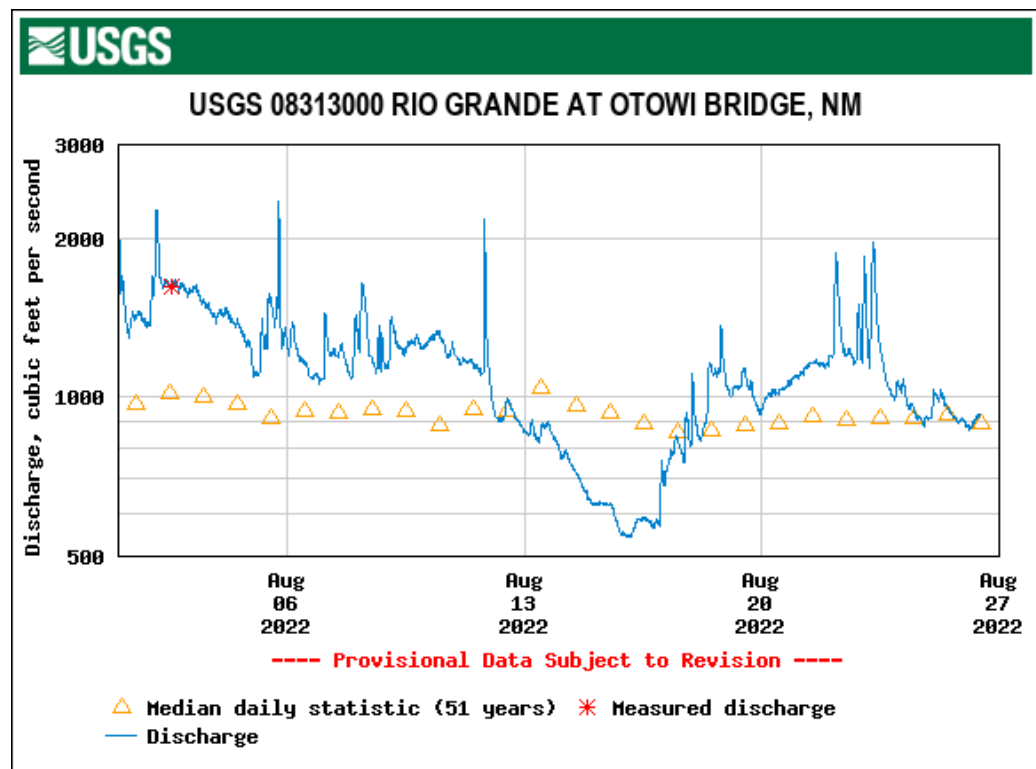


Figure 3. u Otowi k '8 k '8 natural flow of the Rio Grande and Rio Chama plus any supplemental water released from storage (for various water users including MRGCD) he discharge 930 (cfs). For the majority of August rain runoff boosted natural river flow. Scan the link to the right for access to Otowi gage data.

