
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

ASPINALL UNIT FORECAST FOR OPERATIONS

April 9, 2021

Upper Gunnison Basin Snowpack

Current = 78% of average / 77% of median

April – July unregulated inflow volume to Blue Mesa Reservoir

Current Forecast (Apr 1) = 440,000 AF (65% of average)

Blue Mesa Reservoir current conditions

Content = 395,000 AF

Elevation = 7464.5 ft

Inflow = 1000 cfs

Crystal Release = 1200 cfs

Gunnison Tunnel diversion = 700 cfs

Gunnison River flow = 500 cfs

Downstream Flow Targets

- Downstream flow targets will be finalized based on the May runoff forecast for unregulated inflow to Blue Mesa Reservoir. If the current forecast remains unchanged as of the May forecast then the targets will be those listed below)

Aspinall Unit Operations ROD

Hydrologic Category = Moderately Dry

Peak Flow Target = 4990 cfs

Duration at Peak Flow Target = 1 day

Baseflow Target: Apr/May = 890 cfs

(Point of measurement is the Gunnison River near Grand Junction streamgage, commonly called the Gunnison River at Whitewater)

Black Canyon Water Right

Peak Flow Target = 2055 cfs (24 hour duration)

Shoulder Flow Target = 300 cfs (May 1 – July 25)

(Point of measurement is the Gunnison River below Gunnison Tunnel streamgage at the

upstream boundary of Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park)

Projected Spring Operations Highlights

1 day peak flow ~ 2500 cfs in Gunnison River through the Black Canyon & Gunnison Gorge

Peak flow of ~ 4400 cfs in Gunnison River at Delta

1 day peak flow ~ 5000 cfs in lower Gunnison River (measured at Whitewater gage)

Projected Blue Mesa Reservoir maximum fill = 562,000 AF at 7488 ft elevation

Projected Blue Mesa Reservoir conditions on Dec 31 = 440,000 AF at 7471 ft elevation