

Milk River Project Water Supply and Projected Operations



May 2025



Fresno Reservoir, May 2018

The May monthly operating plan covers actual operations from October 1, 2024, through April 30, 2025, and projected operations for May 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026. The projections are based on forecasted water supply and use.

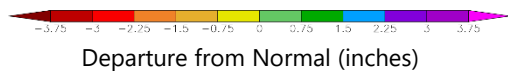
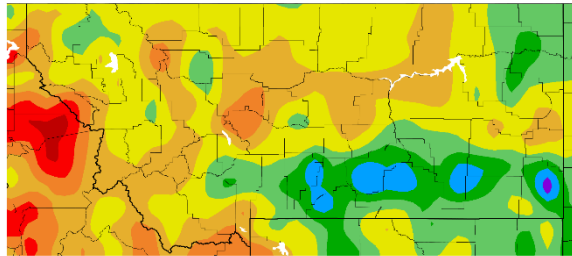
Median Forecasted Operations	Sherburne	Fresno	Nelson
May Inflow Forecast (kaf)	30	4	0
Percent of Average	96	9	-
May Release Forecast (cfs)	376	301	200
May 31 Elevation Forecast (feet)	4783.3	2555.2	2217.1

May-July Forecast	Sherburne
Inflow Forecast	80
Percent of Average	90

Climate Departure from Normal

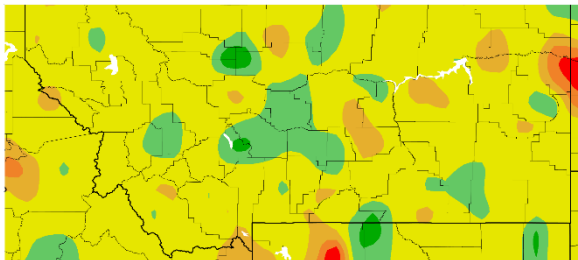
April 1 through April 30

Precipitation



Temperature

Departure from Normal (°F)



HPRCC using provisional data NOAA Regional Climate Centers

CLIMATE SUMMARY

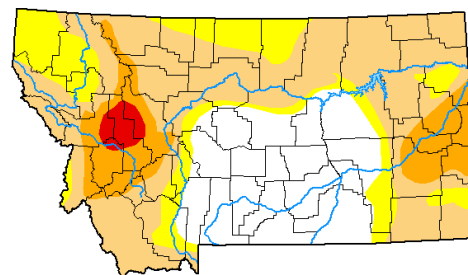
Precipitation was below average, and temperature was near average during April in the in St. Mary and Milk River basins.

There is an equal chance that precipitation will either be below, near, or above average during May in the St. Mary and Milk River basins. There is a 40-50% chance that the temperature will be above average during May in both basins.

The drought intensity in the St. Mary and Milk River basins range from abnormally dry to severe.

Montana Drought Monitor Map

April 29, 2025

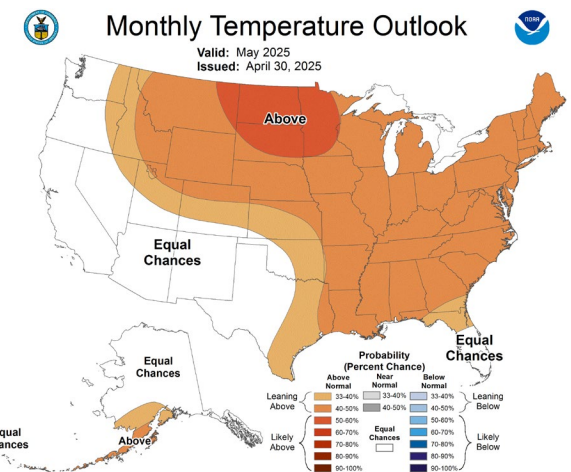
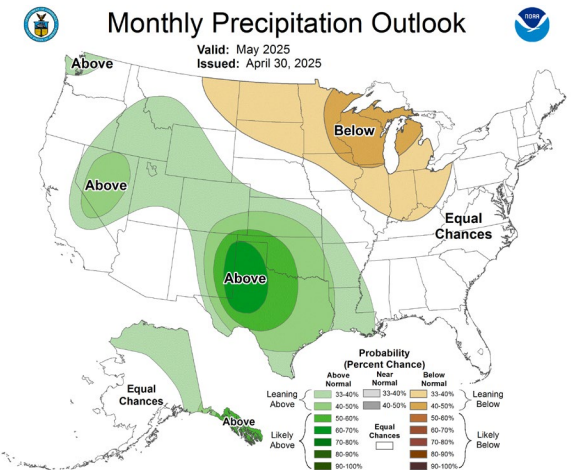


Intensity

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought	D4 Exceptional Drought

USDA NDMC droughtmonitor.unl.edu

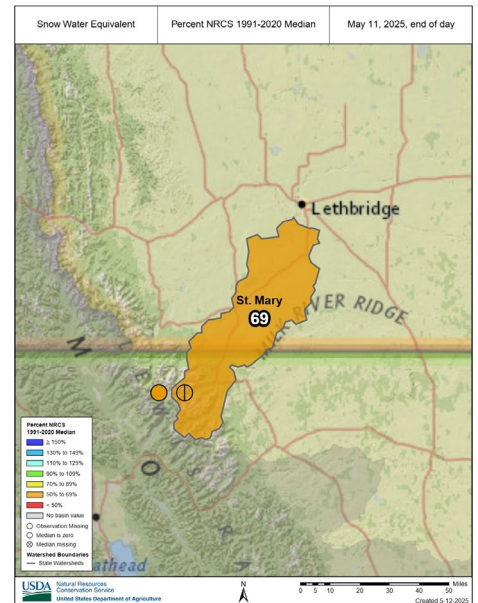
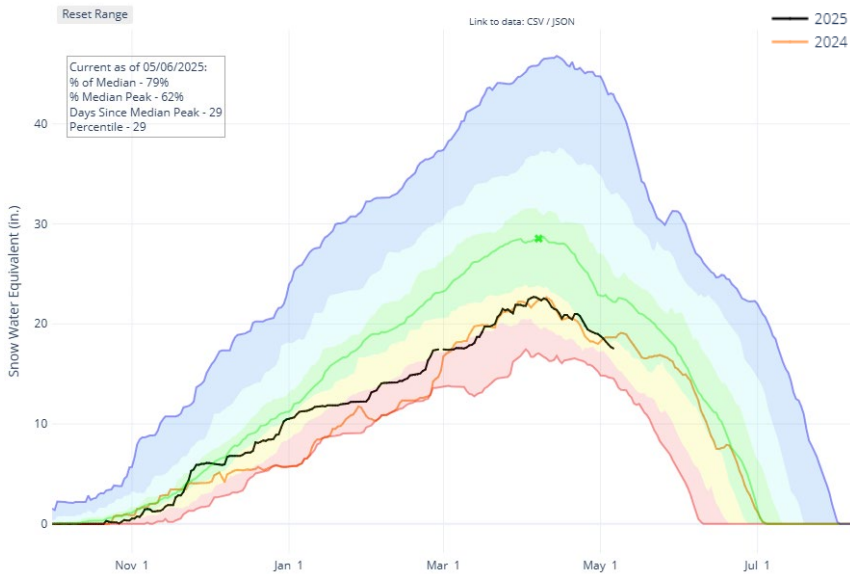
May Climate Outlook



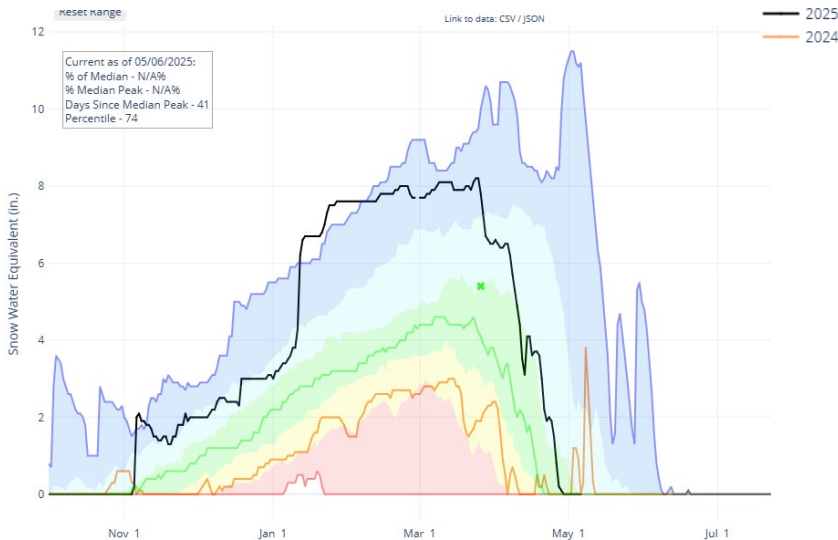
SNOWPACK SUMMARY

The snow water equivalent (SWE) graphs are a composite of SNOTEL sites within the St. Mary and Milk River Basins managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

St. Mary River Basin



Milk River Basin



NRCS Montana Snow Survey Website:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/mt/snow/>

Statistical shading breaks at 10th, 30th, 50th, 70th, and 90th Percentiles
Normal ('91-'20) – Official median calculated from 1991-2020 data
Normal (POR) – Unofficial mean calculated from Period of Record data

OPERATIONS REVIEW

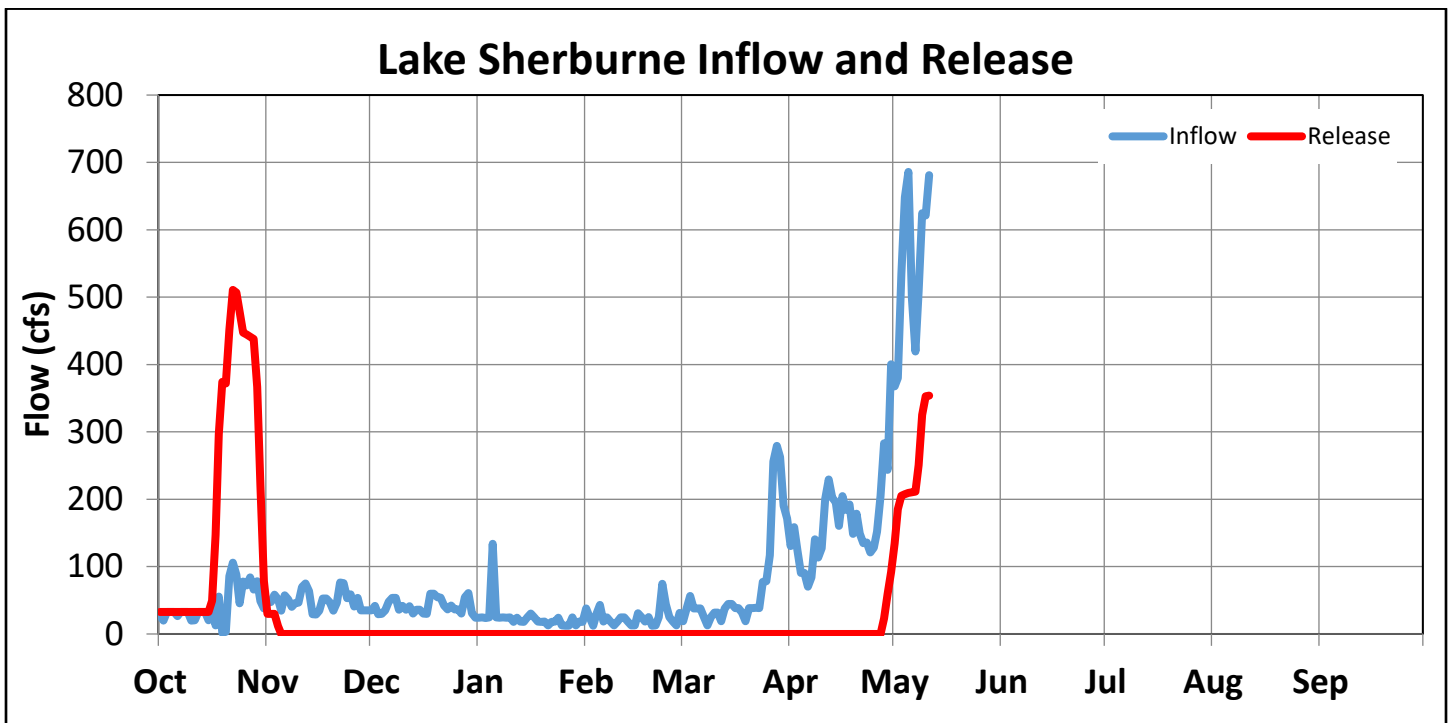
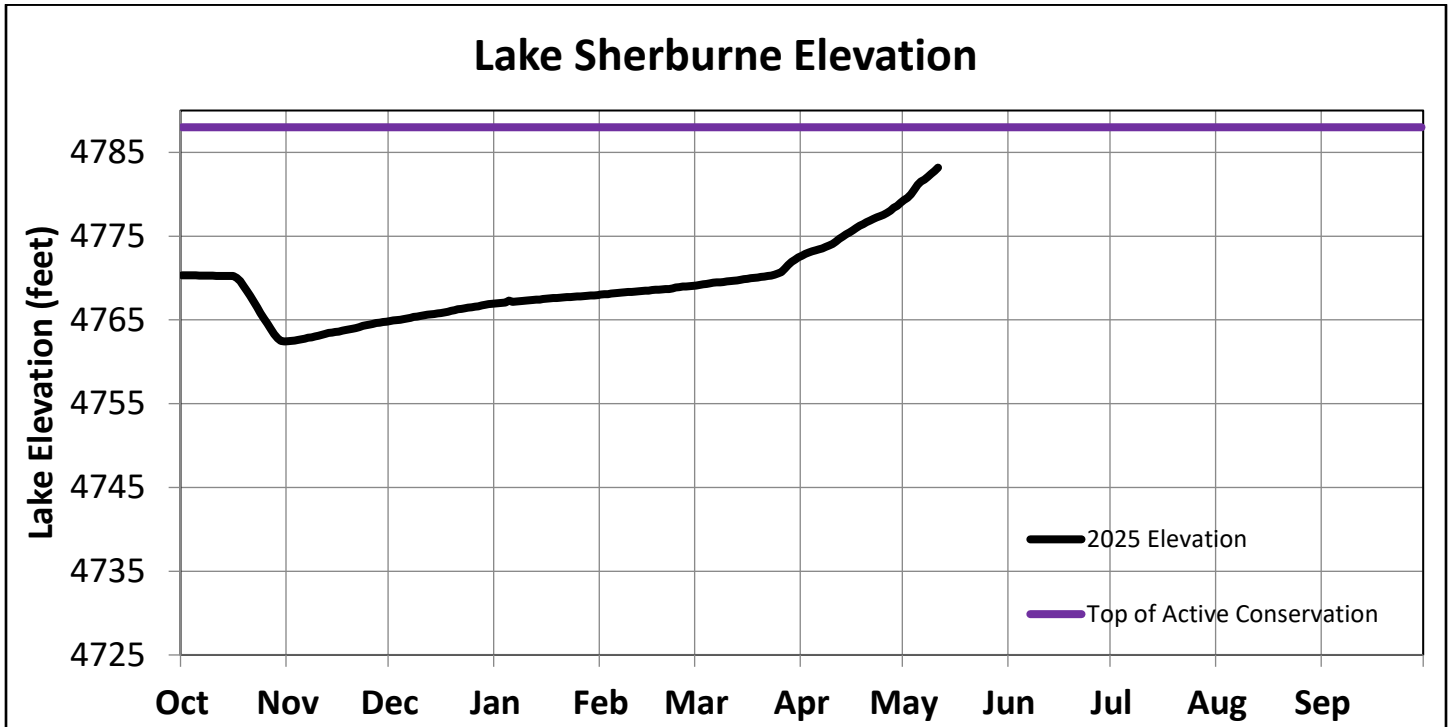
May 1 Elevation and Storage

	Elevation (feet)	Storage (acre-feet)	Percent of Average	Percent Full
Sherburne Reservoir	4779.01	51,489	214	78
Fresno Reservoir	2561.96	42,965	64	47
Nelson Reservoir	2220.70	75,119	117	95

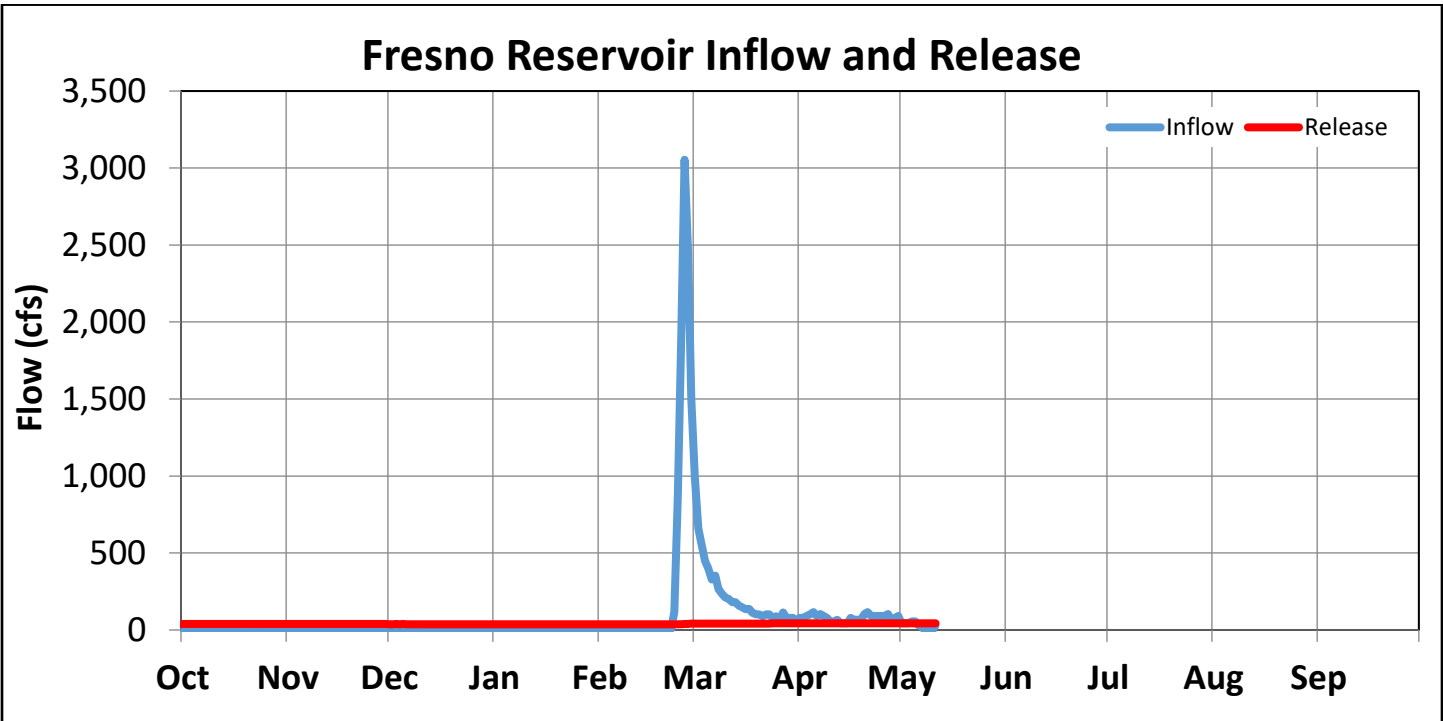
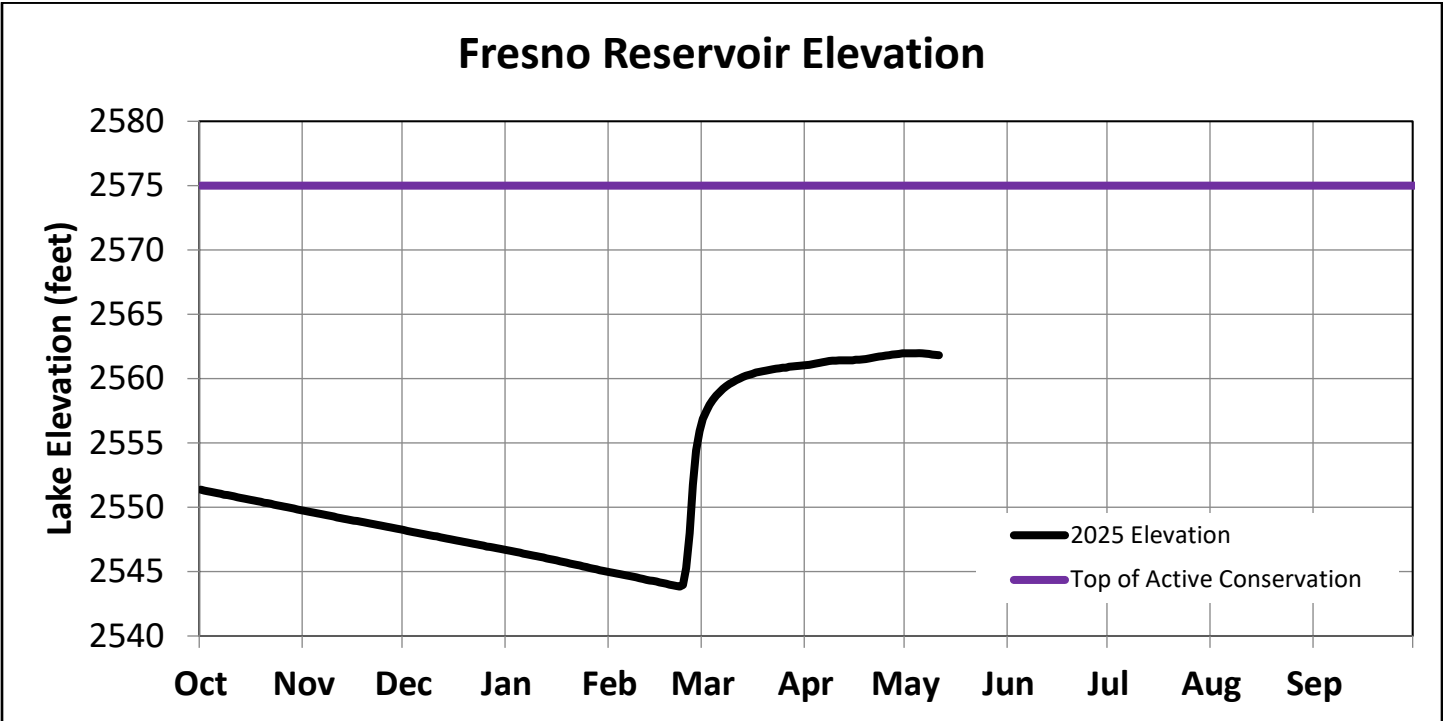
Past Inflows (1,000's of acre-feet)

Month	Sherburne Reservoir		Fresno Reservoir	
	Inflow	% of Average	Inflow	% of Average
Water Year 2025				
October	2.6	40	-0.3	-
November	2.9	37	0.0	-
December	2.5	62	0.1	6
January	1.5	53	0.0	-
February	1.4	56	19.9	456
March	4.4	117	13.6	67
April	9.9	102	4.8	14
Water Year 2024				
October	5.2	78	1.9	29
November	6.5	84	2.0	68
December	8.4	216	1.3	75
January	3.4	124	0.3	23
February	4.9	205	3.7	86
March	3.7	97	10.6	47
April	10.5	107	17.2	51
May	26.6	85	60.1	144
June	29.3	74	20.6	42
July	16.2	89	-5.9	-
August	7.8	94	-0.1	-
September	3.7	69	1.0	5

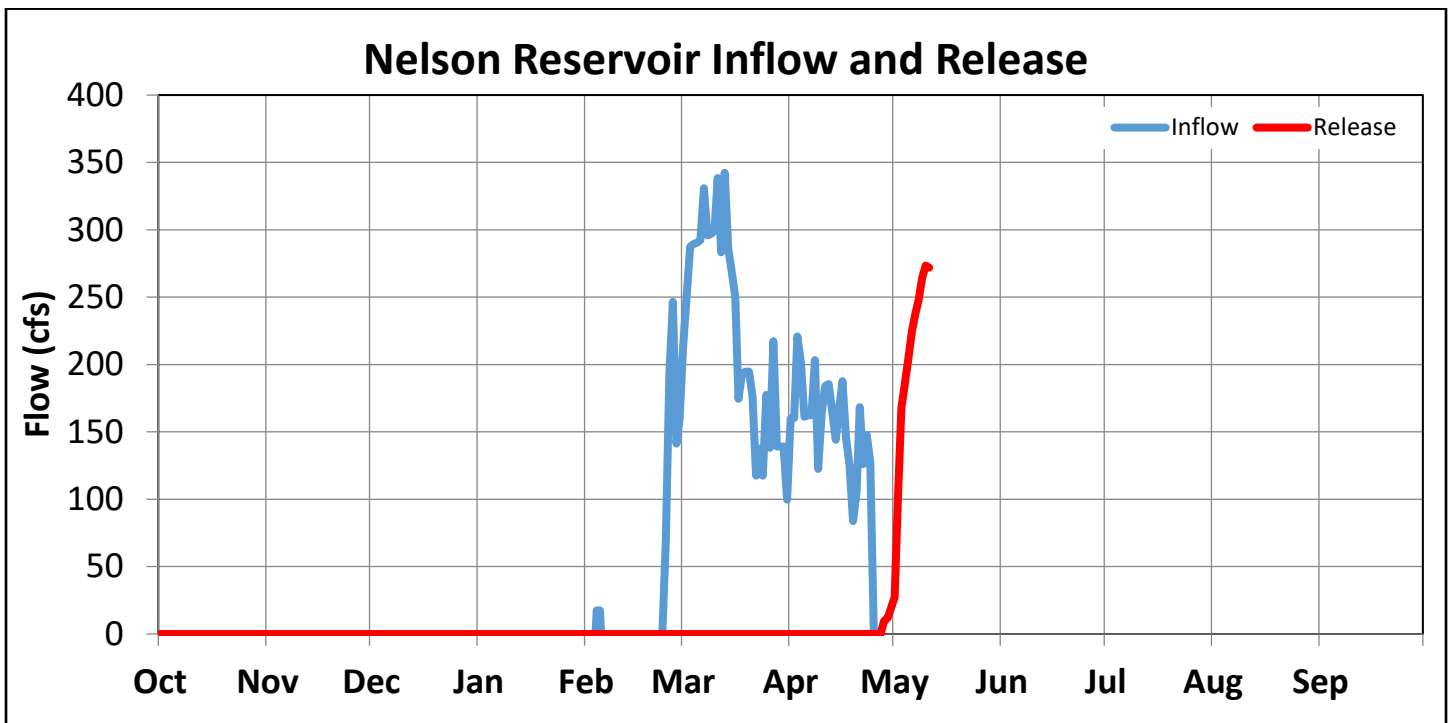
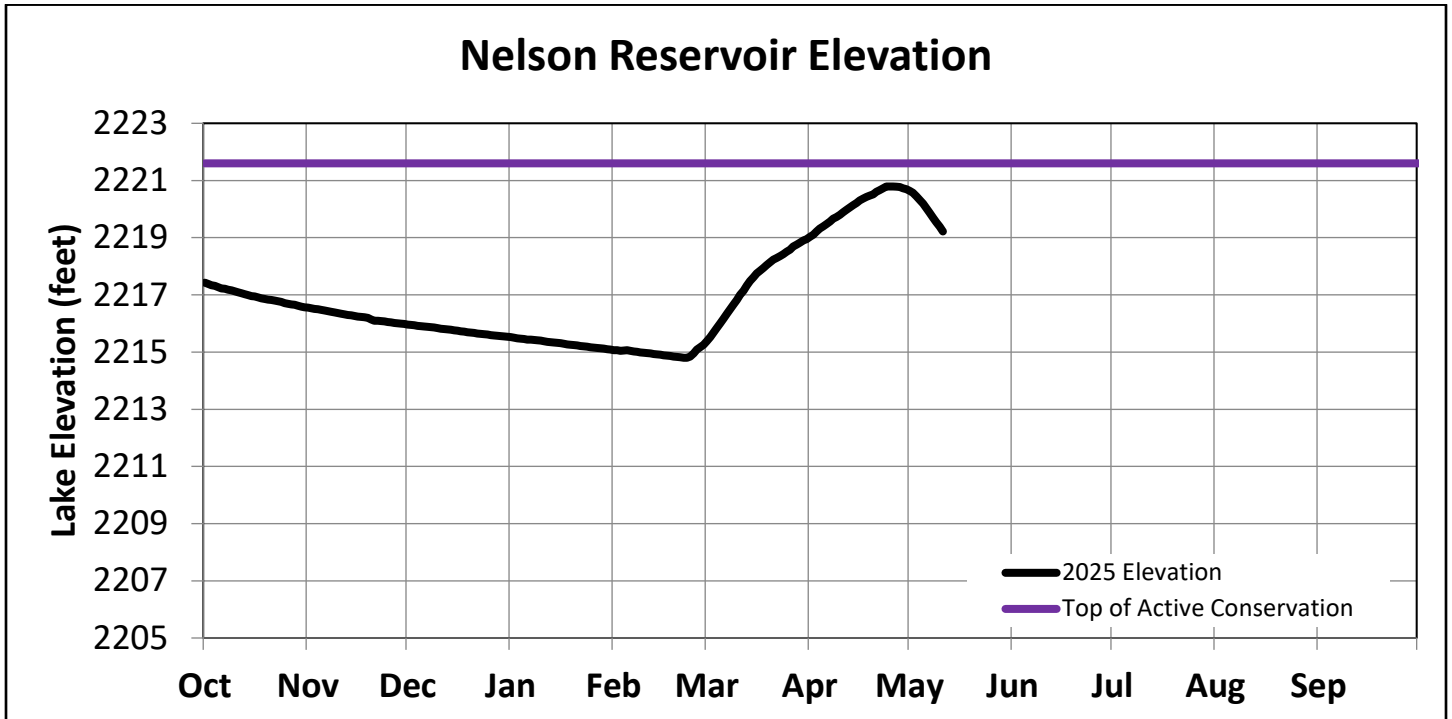
OPERATIONS REVIEW: LAKE SHERBURNE



OPERATIONS REVIEW: FRESNO RESERVOIR



OPERATIONS REVIEW: NELSON RESERVOIR



OPERATIONS OUTLOOK (May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026)

Median Inflow Conditions

Sherburne Reservoir		Initial Content		51,489 acre-feet		Elevation		4779.01 feet					
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Sherburne Inflow (kaf)	29.8	34.4	16.2	7.7	5.9	5.9	4.8	3.5	2.9	2.8	3.2	9.5	126.6
Sherburne Release (kaf)	23.1	26.4	16.2	35.6	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	12.9	132.3
Sherburne Release (cfs)	376	444	263	579	252	0	0	0	0	0	50	217	
Net Content Change (kaf)	6.7	8.0	0.0	-27.9	-9.1	5.9	4.8	3.5	2.9	2.8	0.1	-3.4	-5.7
End of Month Content (kaf)	58.2	66.2	66.2	38.3	29.2	35.1	39.9	43.4	46.3	49.1	49.2	45.8	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	4783.3	4788.0	4788.0	4769.7	4762.0	4767.1	4770.9	4773.5	4775.5	4777.4	4777.5	4775.2	
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
St. Mary River Runoff (kaf)	84.9	114.2	65.6	28.2	17.3	14.6	9.7	7.3	7.2	6.1	8.7	24.5	388.3
Natural Flow at Boundary (kaf)	114.7	148.6	81.8	35.9	23.2	20.5	14.5	10.8	10.1	8.9	11.9	34.0	514.9
St. Mary Canal Diversion (cfs)	0	0	450	600	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	
St. Mary Canal Diversion (kaf)	0.0	0.0	27.7	36.9	14.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.9	91.4
Fresno Reservoir		Initial Content		42,965 acre-feet		Elevation		2561.96 feet					
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Milk River Runoff (kaf)	3.8	2.8	0.2	0.3	1.5	2.9	1.7	1.0	1.9	4.9	14.5	15.1	50.6
From St. Mary Canal (kaf)	0.0	0.0	11.1	33.2	29.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	80.1
Fresno Inflow (kaf)	3.8	2.8	11.3	33.5	31.3	2.9	1.7	1.0	1.9	4.9	14.5	21.1	130.7
Fresno Release (kaf)	18.5	18.5	6.1	6.1	6.0	13.2	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.4	82.9
Fresno Release (cfs)	301	311	99	99	101	215	40	41	41	40	41	40	
Net Content Change (kaf)	-14.7	-15.7	5.2	27.4	25.3	-10.3	-0.7	-1.5	-0.6	2.7	12.0	18.7	47.8
End of Month Content (kaf)	28.3	12.6	17.8	45.2	70.5	60.2	59.5	58.0	57.4	60.1	72.1	90.8	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2555.2	2545.5	2549.2	2562.9	2570.4	2567.6	2567.4	2567.0	2566.8	2567.6	2570.8	2574.8	
Irrigation Allotment (ft/ac)	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40
Irrigation Delivery (kaf)	18.5	18.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.0
FBIIIP Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0
Fresno to Dodson Gain (kaf)	11.1	14.4	6.0	1.8	4.8	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.4	18.2	75.5
Bowdoin Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0
Transfer to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	4.0	2.0	1.7	1.7	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	15.0	54.4
Nelson Reservoir		Initial Content		75,119 acre-feet		Elevation		2220.70 feet					
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Delivery to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	3.6	1.8	1.5	1.5	13.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.5	13.5	48.9
Net Content Change (kaf)	-14.1	-10.1	-12.3	-0.3	-0.3	11.7	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.7	11.7	11.7	-9.1
End of Month Content (kaf)	61.0	50.9	38.6	38.3	38.0	49.7	47.9	46.1	44.3	42.6	54.3	66.0	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2217.1	2214.3	2210.1	2210.0	2209.9	2214.0	2213.4	2212.8	2212.2	2211.7	2215.3	2218.4	
Total Release (kaf)	12.3	11.9	12.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	36.5

OPERATIONS OUTLOOK (May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026)

Minimum Inflow Conditions

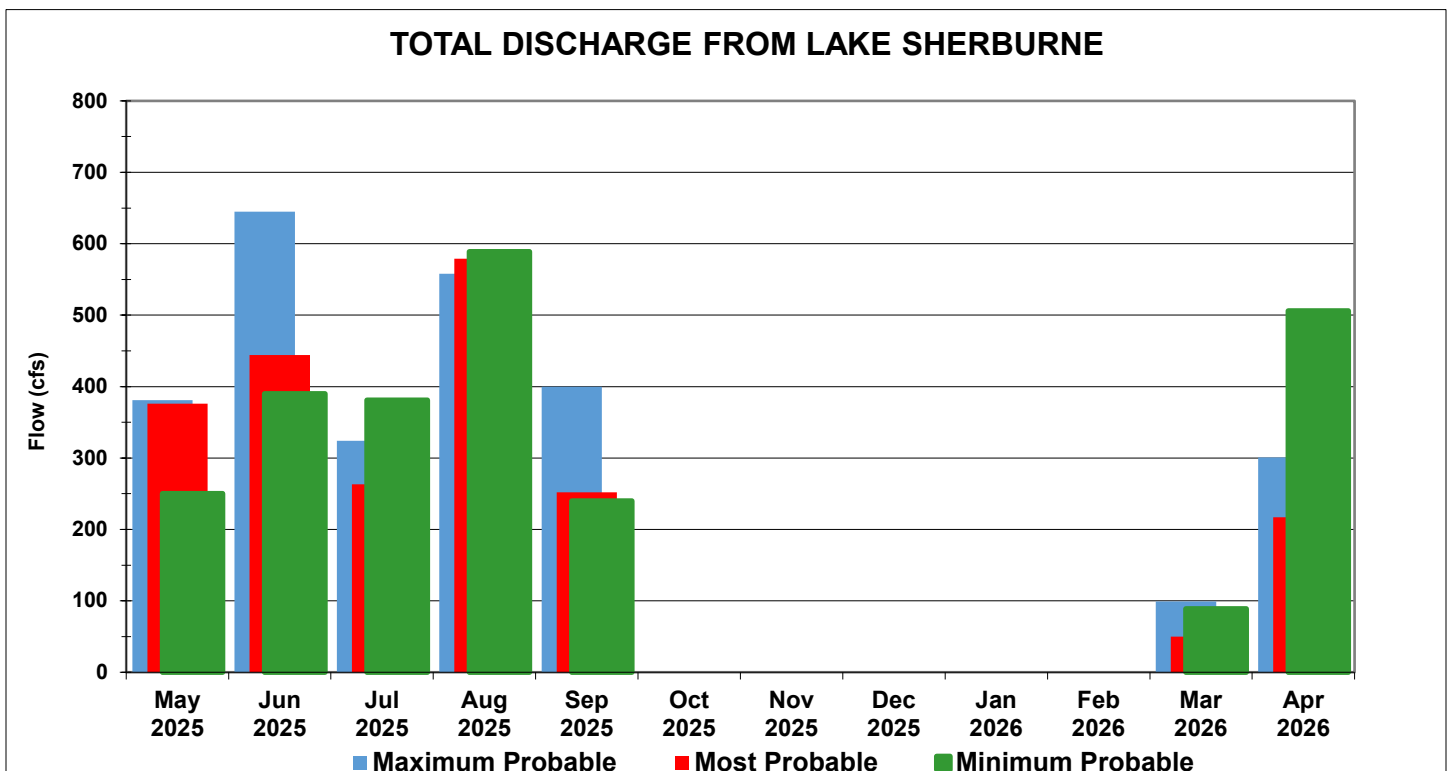
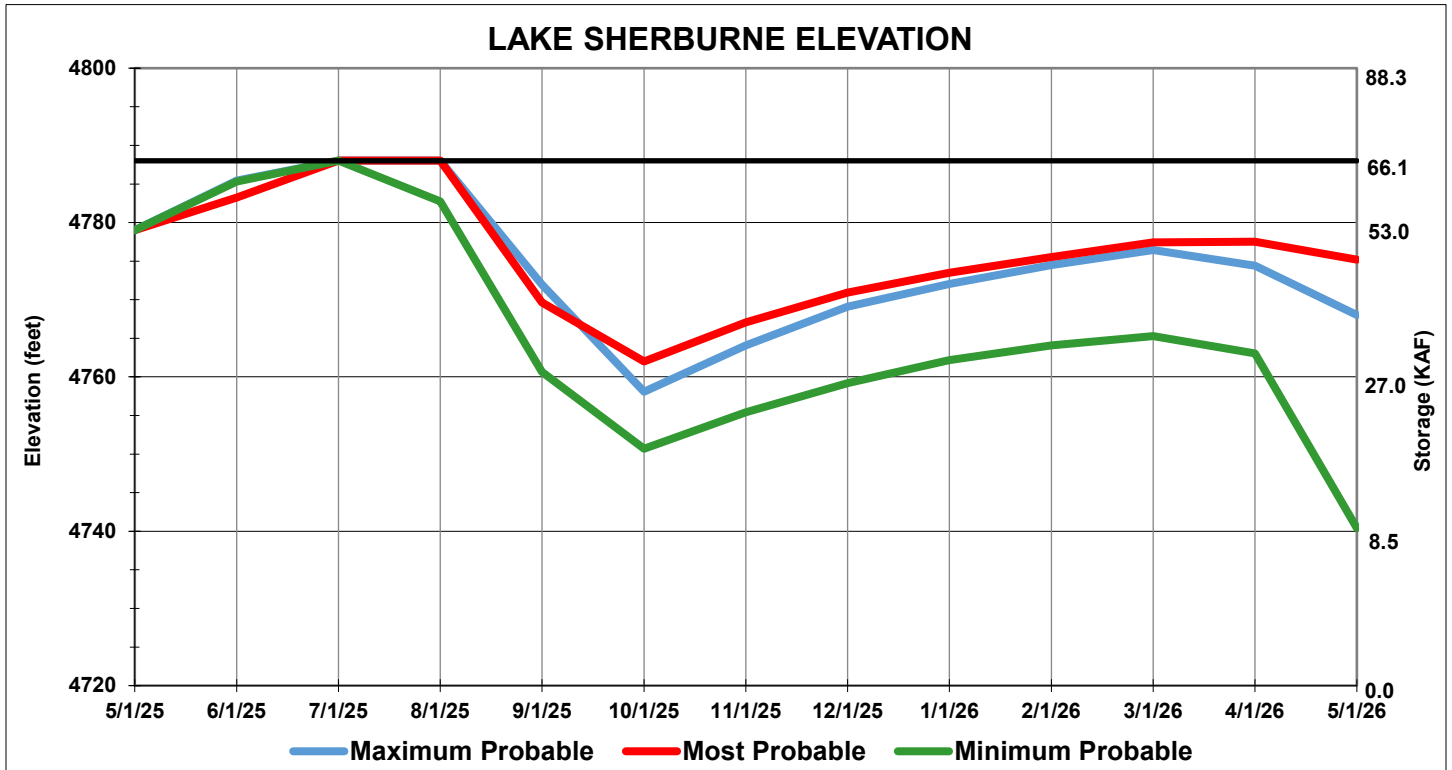
Sherburne Reservoir		Initial Content	51,489	acre-feet									
		Elevation	4779.01	feet									
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Sherburne Inflow (kaf)	25.5	27.8	14.6	6.5	4.1	4.6	4.0	3.3	2.2	1.4	2.9	8.5	105.4
Sherburne Release (kaf)	15.4	23.2	23.4	36.2	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.5	30.1	148.1
Sherburne Release (cfs)	250	390	381	589	240	0	0	0	0	0	89	506	
Net Content Change (kaf)	10.1	4.6	-8.8	-29.7	-10.2	4.6	4.0	3.3	2.2	1.4	-2.6	-21.6	-42.7
End of Month Content (kaf)	61.6	66.2	57.4	27.7	17.5	22.1	26.1	29.4	31.6	33.0	30.4	8.8	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	4785.3	4788.0	4782.8	4760.7	4750.7	4755.4	4759.2	4762.2	4764.1	4765.3	4763.1	4740.4	
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
St. Mary River Runoff (kaf)	69.4	83.9	43.8	22.2	14.7	8.9	5.1	5.0	4.0	4.6	4.1	7.4	273.1
Natural Flow at Boundary (kaf)	94.9	111.7	58.4	28.7	18.8	13.5	9.1	8.3	6.2	6.0	7.0	15.9	378.5
St. Mary Canal Diversion (cfs)	0	0	450	600	250	0	0	0	0	0	99	450	
St. Mary Canal Diversion (kaf)	0.0	0.0	27.7	36.9	14.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.1	26.8	112.4
Fresno Reservoir		Initial Content	42,965	acre-feet									
		Elevation	2561.96	feet									
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Milk River Runoff (kaf)	2.0	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.9	2.2	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.7	4.7	3.5	17.5
From St. Mary Canal (kaf)	0.0	0.0	12.5	33.2	13.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.4	72.5
Fresno Inflow (kaf)	2.0	1.7	12.6	33.3	14.3	2.2	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.7	4.7	16.9	90.0
Fresno Release (kaf)	18.5	18.5	6.1	6.1	6.0	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.4	72.2
Fresno Release (cfs)	301	311	99	99	101	41	40	41	41	40	41	40	
Net Content Change (kaf)	-16.5	-16.8	6.5	27.2	8.3	-0.3	-1.5	-2.1	-2.2	-1.5	2.2	14.5	17.8
End of Month Content (kaf)	26.5	9.7	16.2	43.4	51.7	51.4	49.9	47.8	45.6	44.1	46.3	60.8	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2554.2	2543.2	2548.1	2562.1	2565.1	2565.0	2564.5	2563.9	2563.0	2562.4	2563.3	2567.8	
Irrigation Allotment (ft/ac)	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40
Irrigation Delivery (kaf)	18.5	18.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.0
FBIIP Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0
Fresno to Dodson Gain (kaf)	5.0	6.6	2.7	0.8	2.2	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.7	9.1	36.7
Bowdoin Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Transfer to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	9.0	23.0
Nelson Reservoir		Initial Content	75,119	acre-feet									
		Elevation	2220.70	feet									
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Delivery to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	2.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.2	8.1	20.7
Net Content Change (kaf)	-14.1	-11.0	-0.9	-0.9	-0.9	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.7	5.4	6.3	-25.0
End of Month Content (kaf)	61.0	50.0	49.1	48.2	47.3	45.5	43.7	41.9	40.1	38.4	43.8	50.1	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2217.1	2214.0	2213.8	2213.5	2213.2	2212.6	2212.0	2211.4	2210.7	2210.0	2212.1	2214.1	
Total Release (kaf)	12.3	11.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	24.2

OPERATIONS OUTLOOK (May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026)

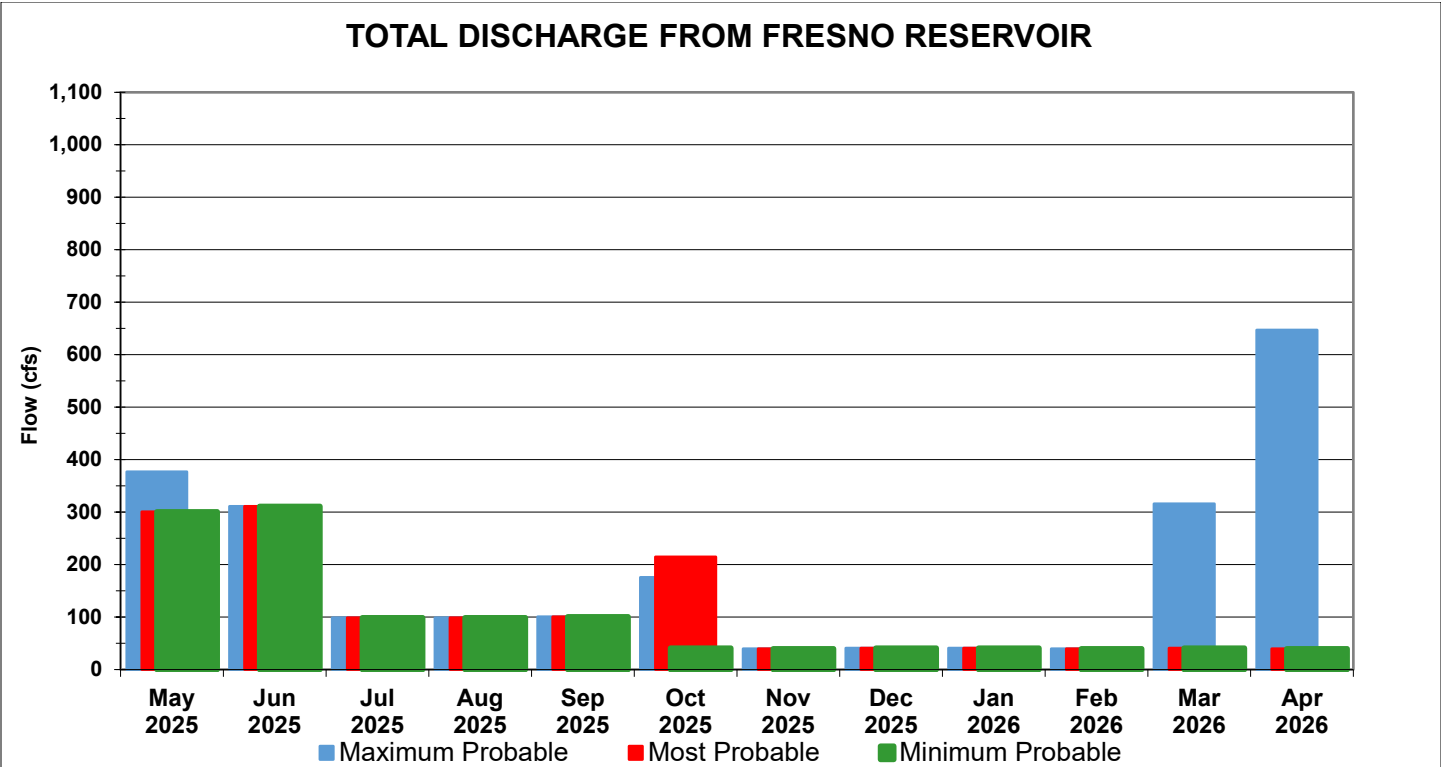
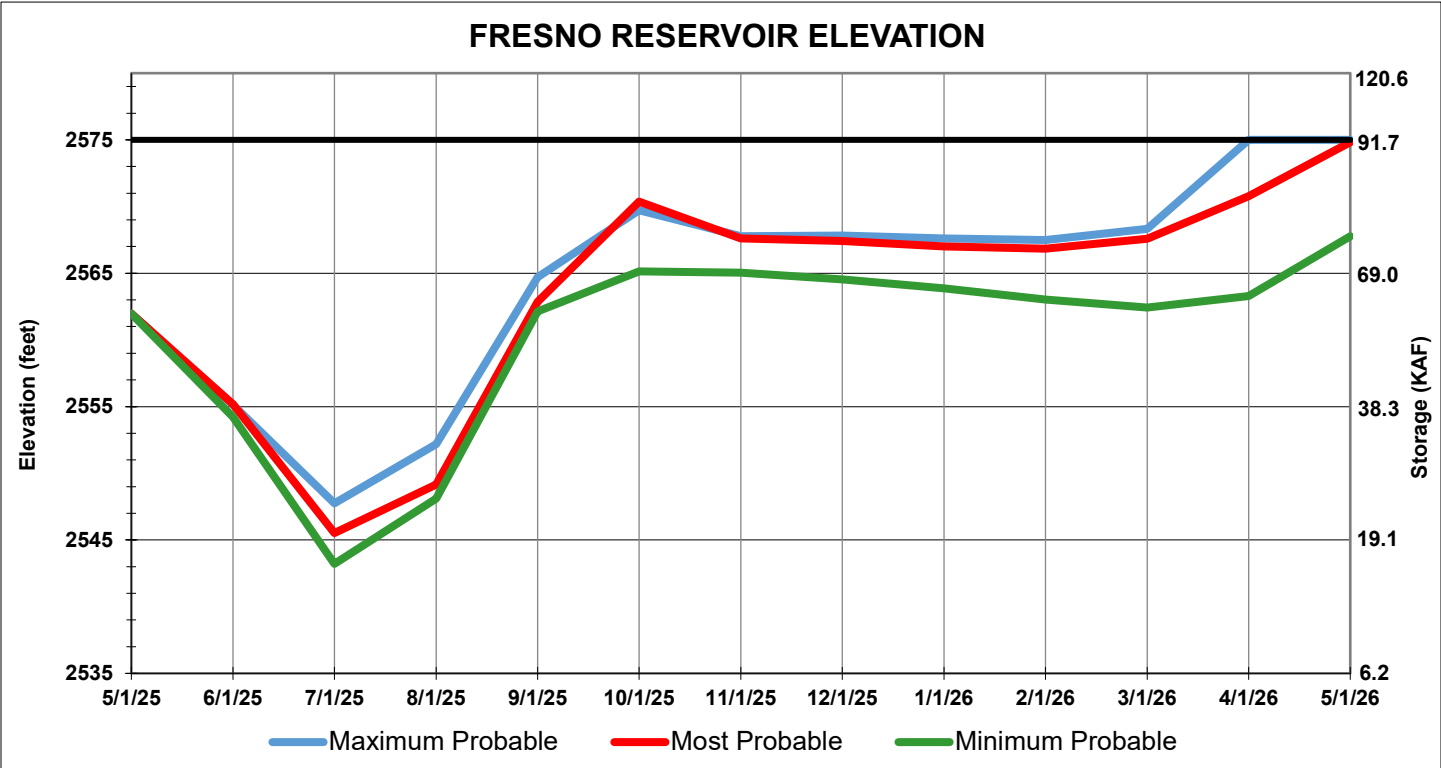
Maximum Inflow Conditions

Sherburne Reservoir		Initial Content Elevation		51,489 acre-feet 4779.01 feet									
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Sherburne Inflow (kaf)	33.7	42.8	19.9	9.4	7.4	6.7	6.0	3.8	3.4	2.8	3.2	9.5	148.6
Sherburne Release (kaf)	23.4	38.4	19.9	34.3	23.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.1	17.9	163.8
Sherburne Release (cfs)	381	645	324	558	400	0	0	0	0	0	99	301	
Net Content Change (kaf)	10.3	4.4	0.0	-24.9	-16.4	6.7	6.0	3.8	3.4	2.8	-2.9	-8.4	-15.2
End of Month Content (kaf)	61.8	66.2	66.2	41.3	24.9	31.6	37.6	41.4	44.8	47.6	44.7	36.3	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	4785.4	4788.0	4788.0	4772.0	4758.1	4764.1	4769.1	4772.0	4774.5	4776.4	4774.4	4768.0	
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
St. Mary River Runoff (kaf)	103.6	147.0	87.9	35.2	22.2	23.2	16.2	10.7	15.8	14.4	21.7	46.1	544.0
Natural Flow at Boundary (kaf)	137.3	189.8	107.8	44.6	29.6	29.9	22.2	14.5	19.2	17.2	24.9	55.6	692.6
St. Mary Canal Diversion (cfs)	0	0	450	600	400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
St. Mary Canal Diversion (kaf)	0.0	0.0	27.7	36.9	23.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	88.4
Fresno Reservoir		Initial Content Elevation		42,965 acre-feet 2561.96 feet									
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Milk River Runoff (kaf)	8.4	6.0	0.7	0.5	2.2	3.6	2.6	1.7	2.1	5.1	48.4	38.5	119.8
From St. Mary Canal (kaf)	0.0	0.0	12.5	33.2	21.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.1
Fresno Inflow (kaf)	8.4	6.0	13.2	33.7	23.6	3.6	2.6	1.7	2.1	5.1	48.4	38.5	186.9
Fresno Release (kaf)	23.2	18.5	6.1	6.1	6.0	10.8	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.2	19.4	38.5	138.2
Fresno Release (cfs)	377	311	99	99	101	176	40	41	41	40	316	647	
Net Content Change (kaf)	-14.8	-12.5	7.1	27.6	17.6	-7.2	0.2	-0.8	-0.4	2.9	29.0	0.0	48.7
End of Month Content (kaf)	28.2	15.7	22.8	50.4	68.0	60.8	61.0	60.2	59.8	62.7	91.7	91.7	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2555.1	2547.8	2552.2	2564.7	2569.7	2567.8	2567.8	2567.6	2567.5	2568.3	2575.0	2575.0	
Irrigation Allotment (ft/ac)	0.25	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.45
Irrigation Delivery (kaf)	23.2	18.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.7
FBIIIP Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0
Fresno to Dodson Gain (kaf)	13.1	17.0	9.6	2.4	5.6	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.6	23.7	98.2
Bowdoin Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0
Transfer to Nelson (kaf)	3.0	6.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	20.0	71.0
Nelson Reservoir		Initial Content Elevation		75,119 acre-feet 2220.70 feet									
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Delivery to Nelson (kaf)	2.7	5.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	13.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.5	18.0	63.9
Net Content Change (kaf)	-11.4	-8.3	-10.5	-4.3	1.8	11.7	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.7	11.7	16.2	-0.2
End of Month Content (kaf)	63.7	55.4	44.9	40.6	42.4	54.1	52.3	50.5	48.7	47.0	58.7	74.9	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2217.9	2215.6	2212.4	2210.9	2211.6	2215.2	2214.7	2214.2	2213.6	2213.1	2216.5	2220.7	
Total Release (kaf)	12.3	11.9	12.3	6.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	42.6

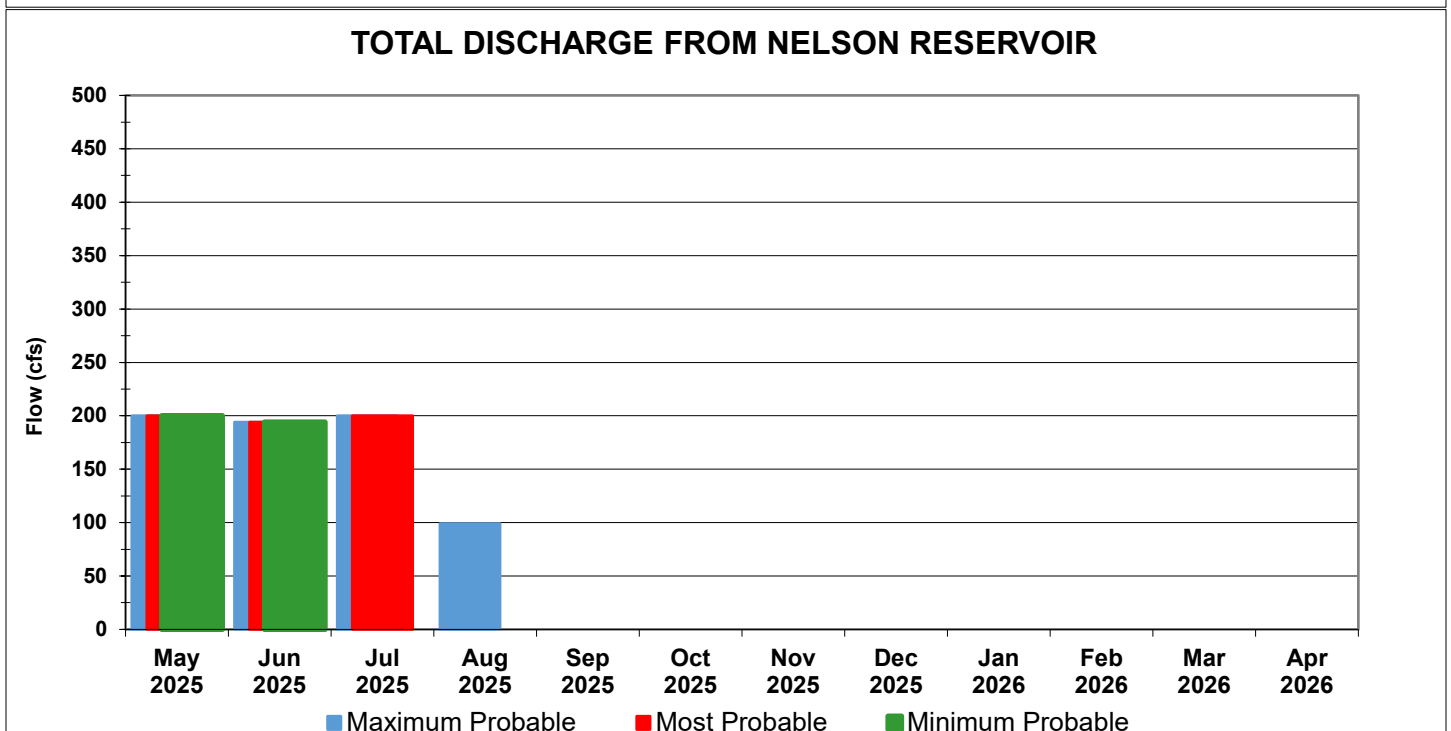
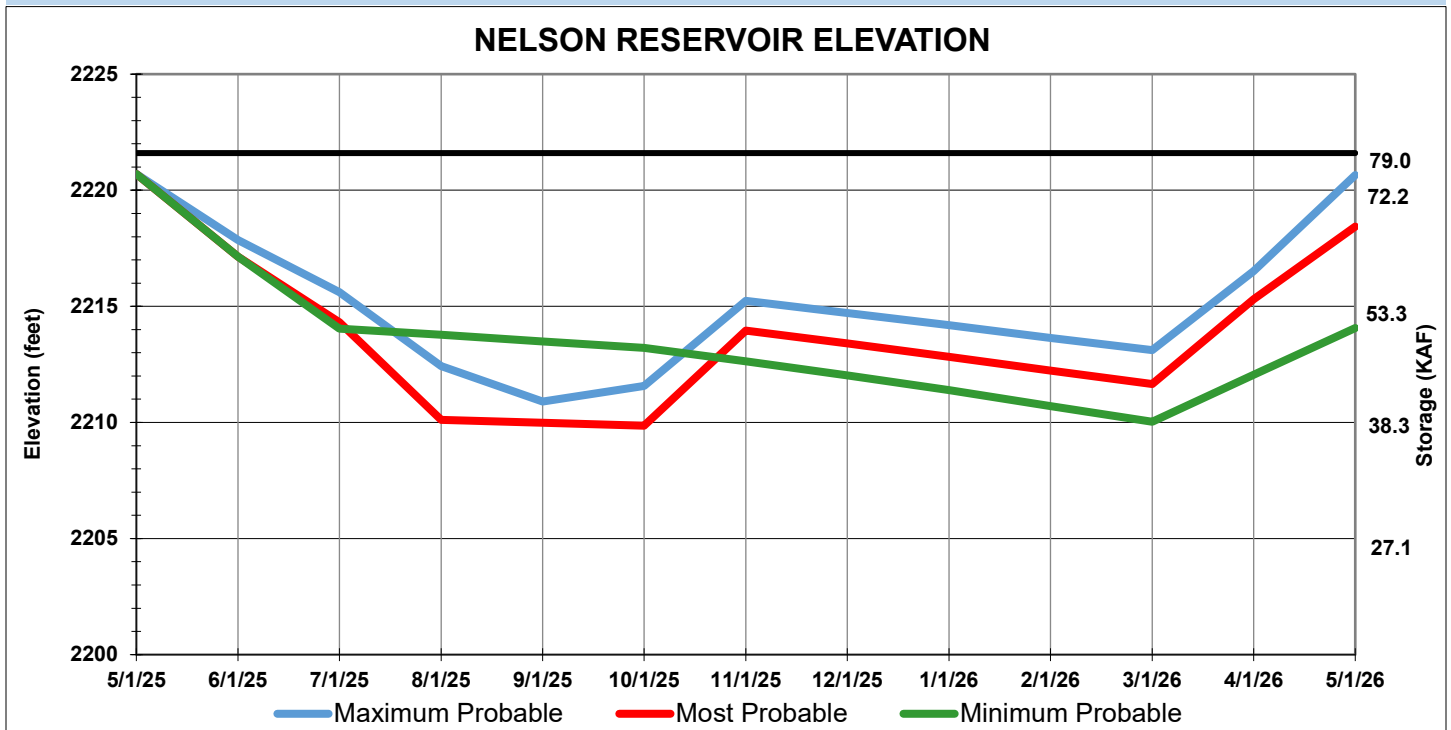
OPERATIONS OUTLOOK: LAKE SHERBURNE



OPERATIONS OUTLOOK: FRESNO RESERVOIR



OPERATIONS OUTLOOK: NELSON RESERVOIR



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Monthly Operating Plans, Current Conditions, Snowpack, and Other Water Management Information
https://www.usbr.gov/gp/lakes_reservoirs/wareperts/main_menu.html