

Milk River Project Water Supply and Projected Operations



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

February 2025



Downstream of Fresno Reservoir, January 2025

The February monthly operating plan covers actual operations from October 1, 2024, through January 31, 2025, and projected operations for February 1, 2025, through January 31, 2026. The projections are based on forecasted water supply and use.

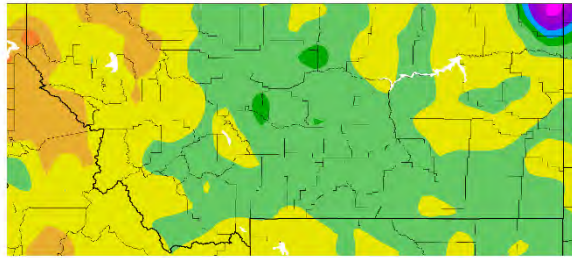
Median Forecasted Operations	Sherburne	Fresno	Nelson
February Inflow Forecast (kaf)	3	2	-2
Percent of Average	112	52	-
February Release Forecast (cfs)	0	40	0
February 28 Elevation Forecast (feet)	4770.2	2545.1	2214.6

April-July Forecast	Sherburne
Inflow Forecast	78
Percent of Average	79

Climate Departure from Normal

January 1 through January 31

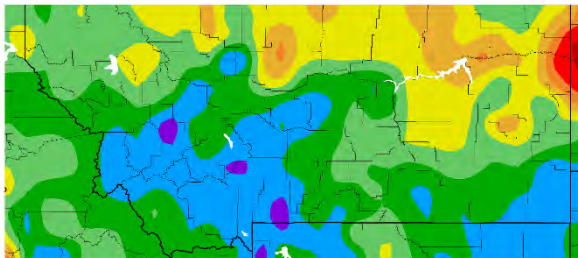
Precipitation



Departure from Normal (inches)

Temperature

Departure from Normal (°F)



HPRCC using provisional data NOAA Regional Climate Centers

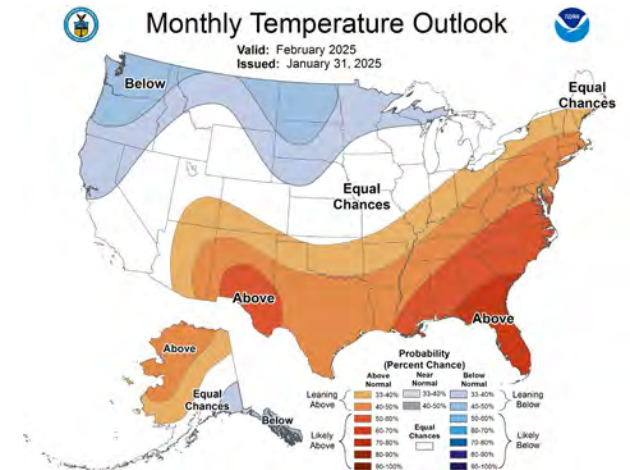
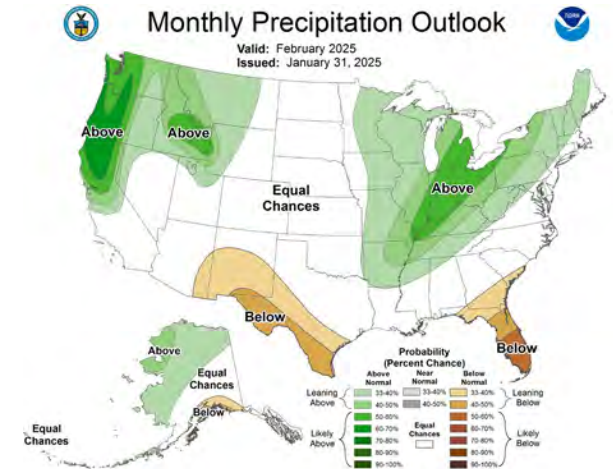
CLIMATE SUMMARY

Precipitation in St. Mary basin was below average during January and near average in the Milk River basin. The temperature was near average in both basins.

There is a 33 to 40 percent chance that precipitation will be above average during February in both basins. There is a 33 to 40 percent chance temperatures will be below average.

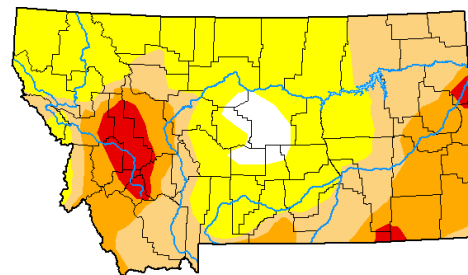
The drought intensity in the St. Mary and Milk River basins range from abnormally dry to moderate.

February Climate Outlook



Montana Drought Monitor Map

January 28, 2025



Intensity

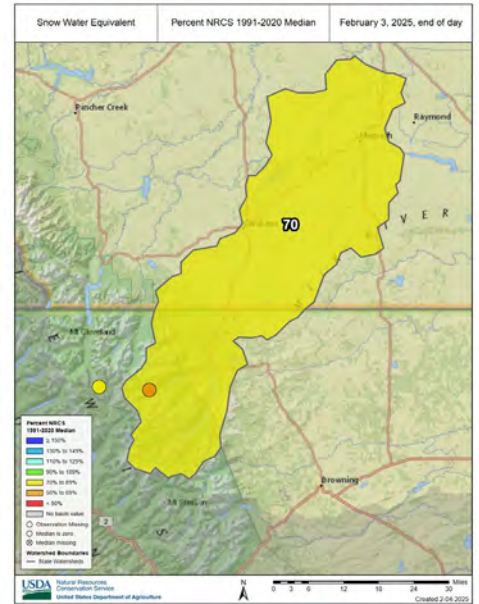
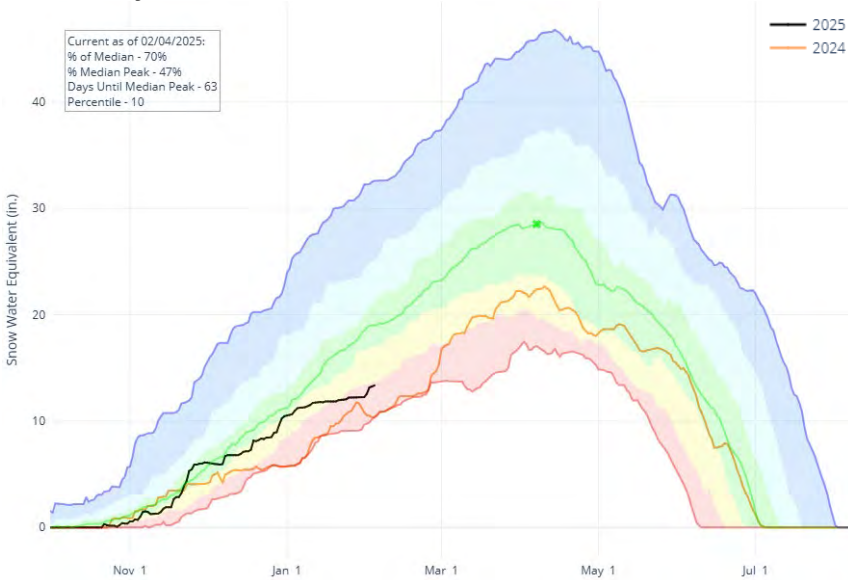
None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought	D4 Exceptional Drought



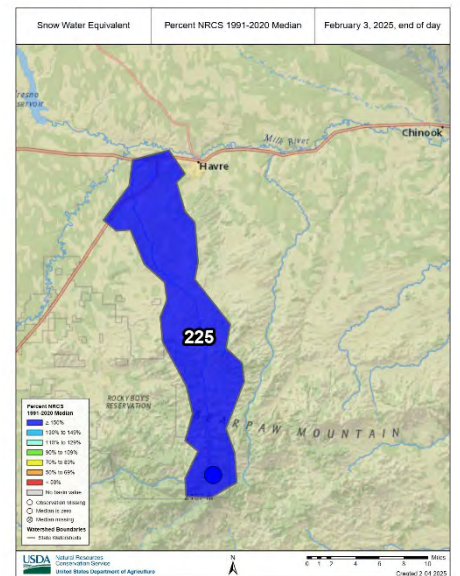
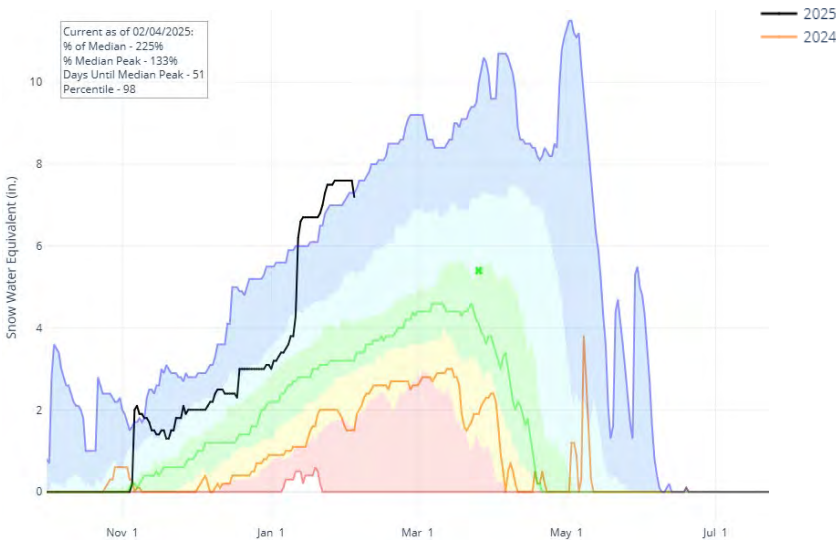
SNOWPACK SUMMARY

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

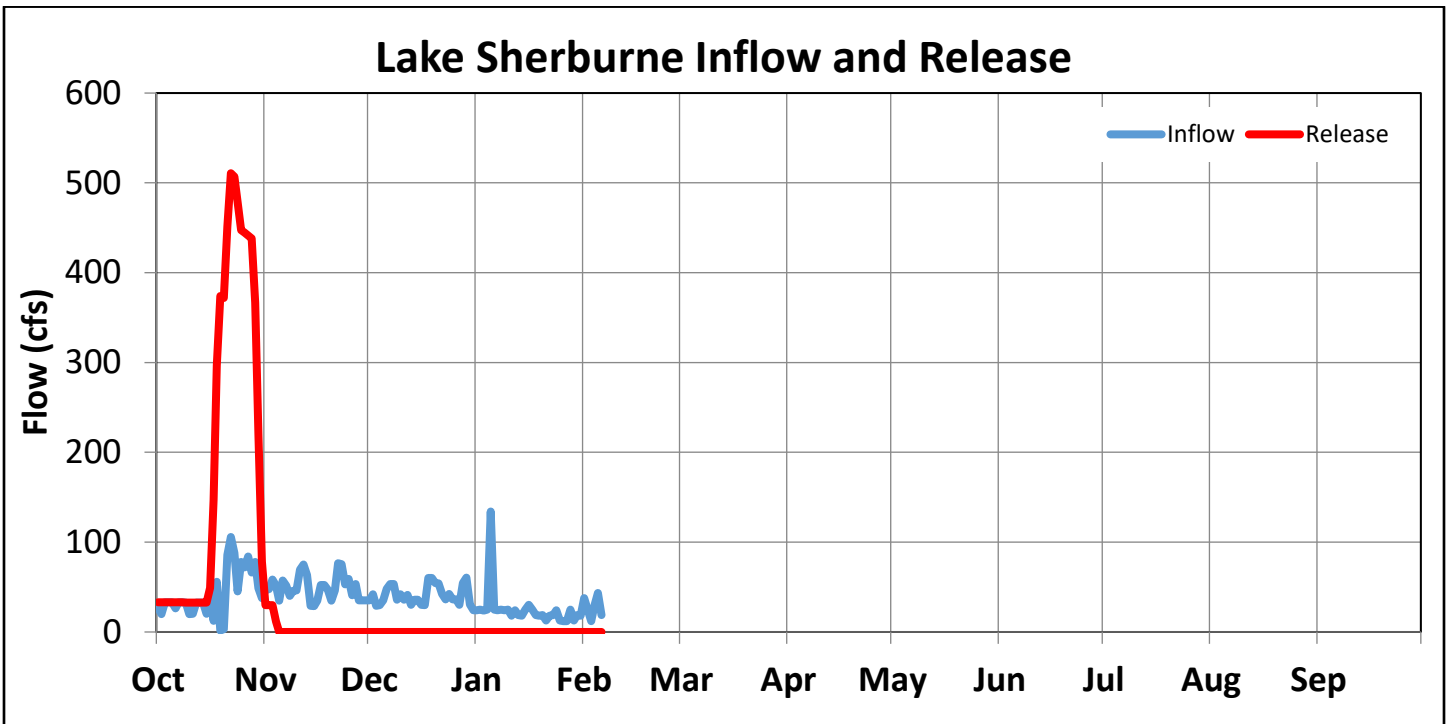
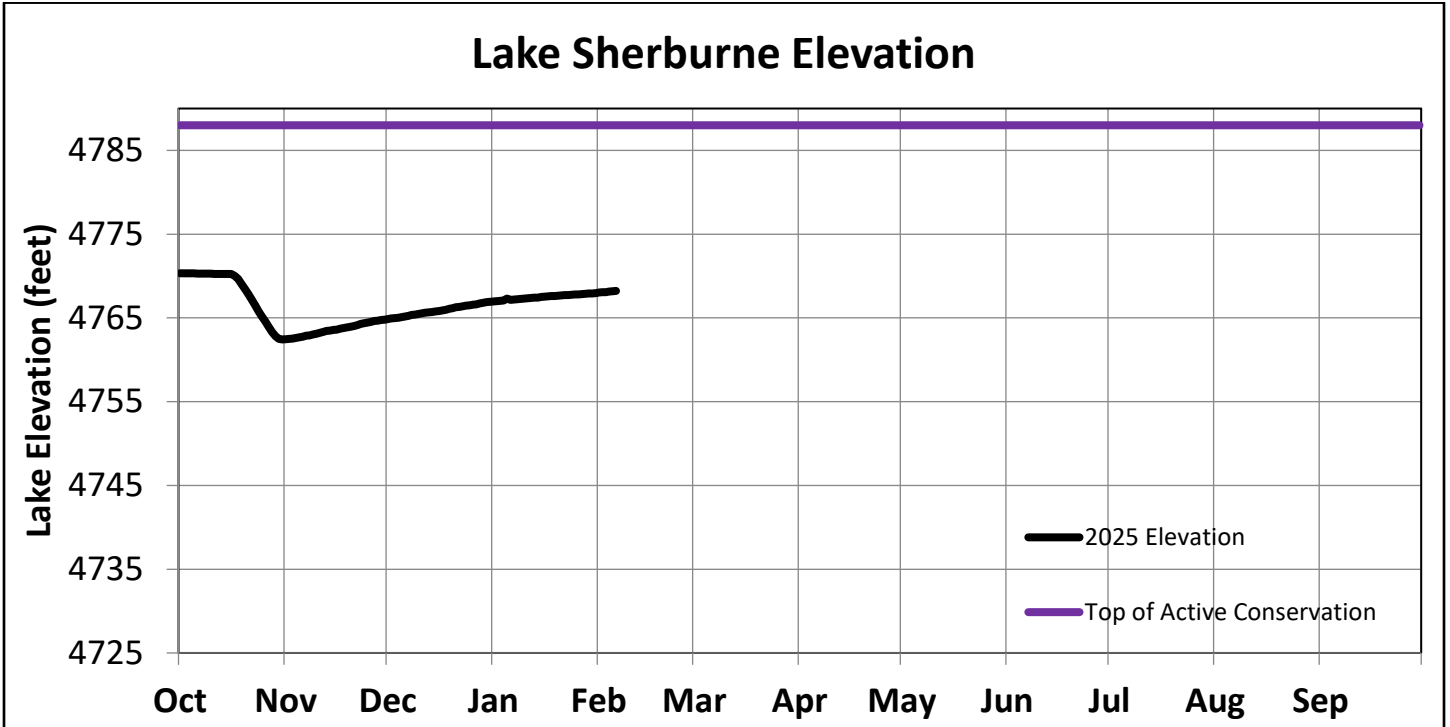
February 1 Elevation and Storage

	Elevation (feet)	Storage (acre-feet)	Percent of Average	Percent Full
Sherburne Reservoir	4767.96	36,198	117	55
Fresno Reservoir	2545.00	11,919	31	13
Nelson Reservoir	2215.09	53,580	103	68

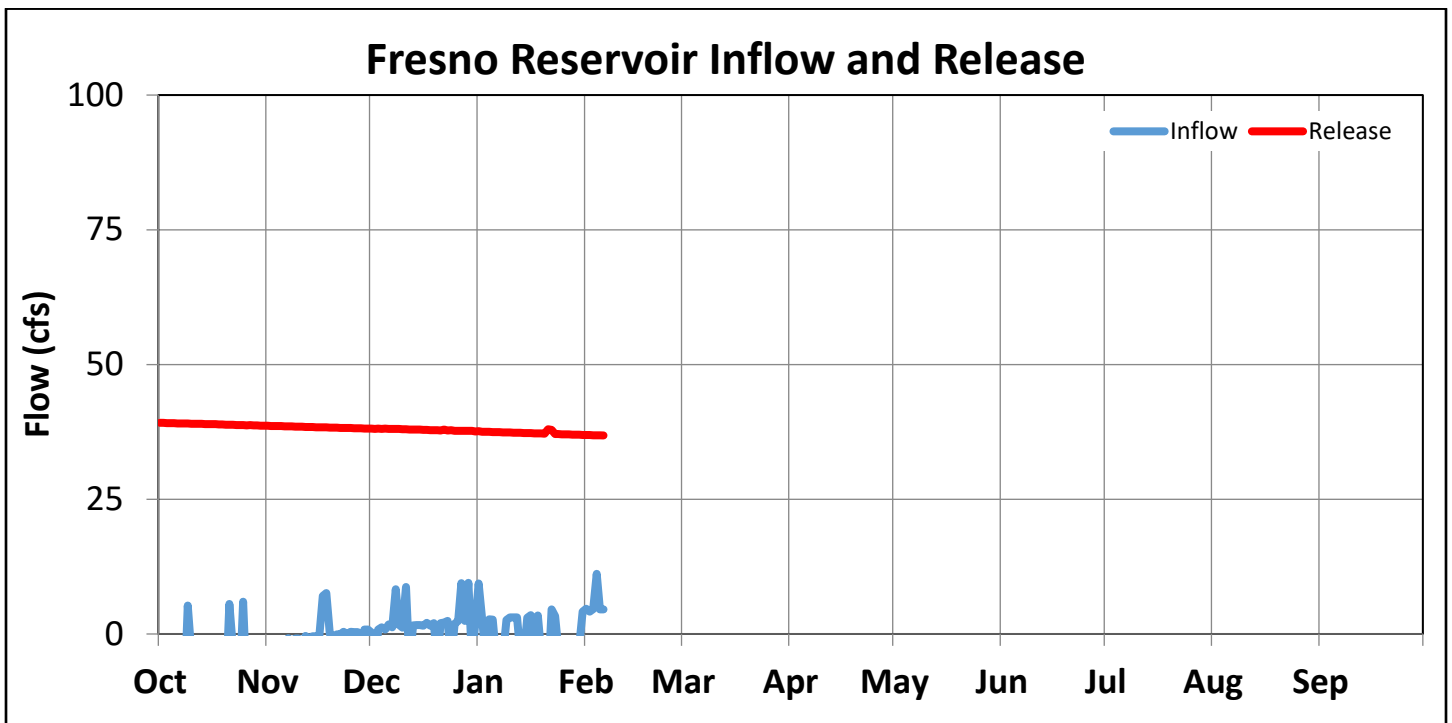
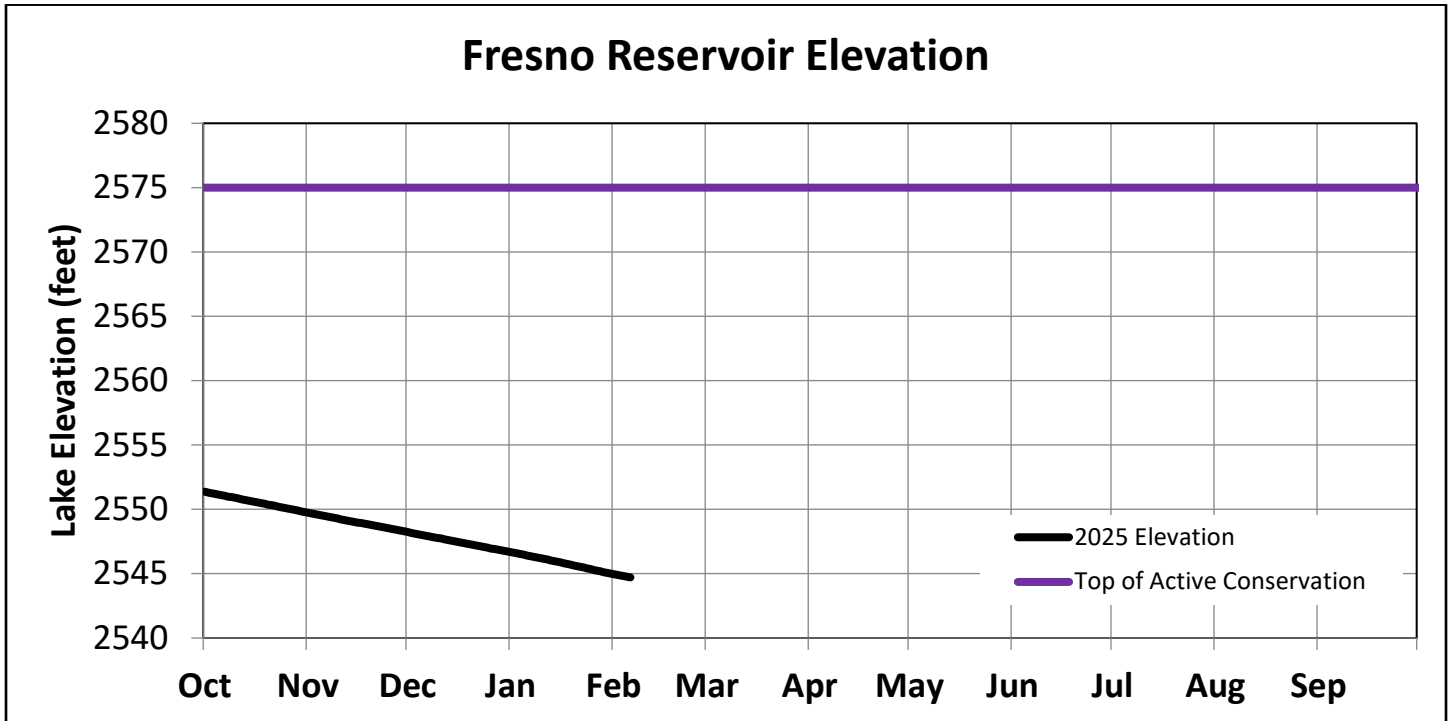
Past Inflows (1,000's of acre-feet)

Month	Sherburne Reservoir		Fresno Reservoir % of	
	Inflow	% of Average	Inflow	Average
<u>Water Year 2025</u>				
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	-
<u>Water Year 2024</u>				
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

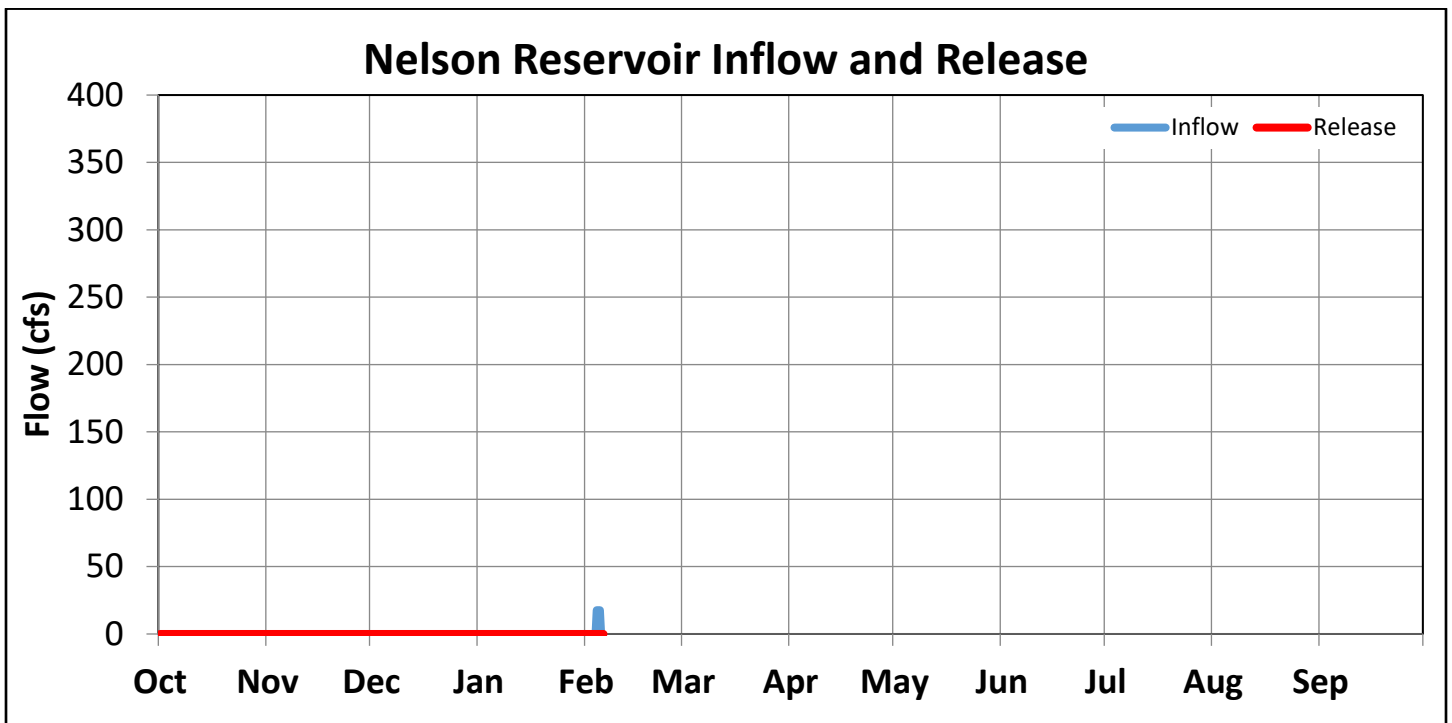
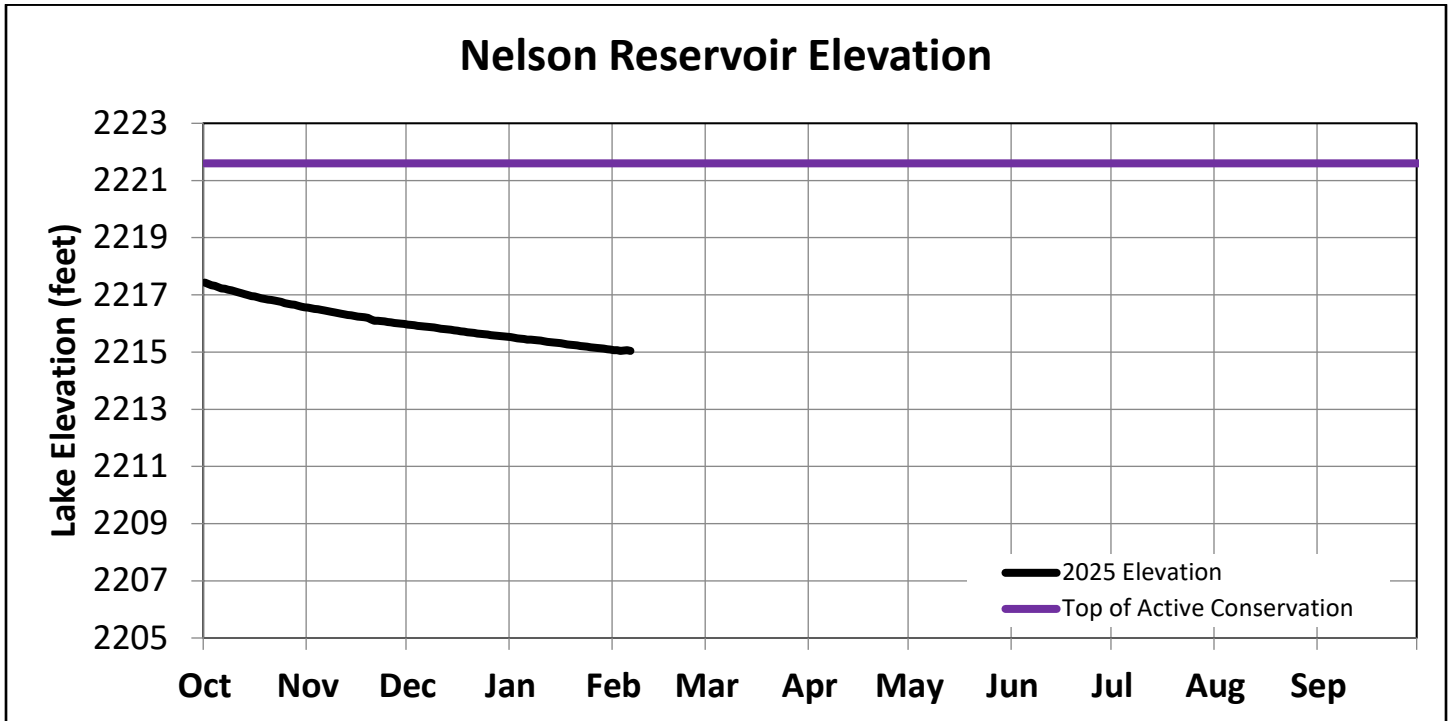
OPERATIONS REVIEW: LAKE SHERBURNE



OPERATIONS REVIEW: FRESNO RESERVOIR



OPERATIONS REVIEW: NELSON RESERVOIR



OPERATIONS OUTLOOK (February 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026)

Median Inflow Conditions													
Sherburne Reservoir	Initial Content		36,198										
	Elevation		4767.96		acre-feet								
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Sherburne Inflow (kaf)	2.8	3.0	8.6	26.0	28.6	14.8	6.6	4.3	4.8	4.1	3.3	2.9	109.8
Sherburne Release (kaf)	0.0	0.0	8.9	15.4	14.7	14.8	6.6	25.9	28.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	114.7
Sherburne Release (cfs)	0	0	150	250	247	241	107	435	462	0	0	0	
Net Content Change (kaf)	2.8	3.0	-0.3	10.6	13.9	0.0	0.0	-21.6	-23.6	4.1	3.3	2.9	-4.9
End of Month Content (kaf)	39.0	42.0	41.7	52.3	66.2	66.2	66.2	44.6	21.0	25.1	28.4	31.3	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	4770.2	4772.5	4772.3	4779.5	4788.0	4788.0	4788.0	4774.4	4754.3	4758.3	4761.3	4763.8	
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
St. Mary River Runoff (kaf)	4.8	6.7	12.3	77.1	98.3	53.2	25.1	16.3	11.6	7.2	6.0	7.2	325.8
Natural Flow at Boundary (kaf)	7.6	9.7	20.9	103.1	126.9	68.0	31.7	20.6	16.4	11.3	9.3	10.1	435.6
St. Mary Canal Diversion (cfs)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	450	450	0	0	0	
St. Mary Canal Diversion (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.8	27.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.5
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Fresno Reservoir	Initial Content		11,919										
	Elevation		2545.00		acre-feet								
Milk River Runoff (kaf)	2.3	10.7	10.7	5.0	3.6	0.3	0.4	1.9	3.3	2.3	1.4	1.8	43.7
From St. Mary Canal (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4	24.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.3
Fresno Inflow (kaf)	2.3	10.7	10.7	5.0	3.6	0.3	0.4	7.3	28.2	2.3	1.4	1.8	74.0
Fresno Release (kaf)	2.2	2.5	2.4	13.9	9.3	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.5	47.6
Fresno Release (cfs)	40	41	40	226	156	41	41	40	41	40	41	41	
Net Content Change (kaf)	0.1	8.2	8.3	-8.9	-5.7	-2.2	-2.1	4.9	25.7	-0.1	-1.1	-0.7	26.4
End of Month Content (kaf)	12.0	20.2	28.5	19.6	13.9	11.7	9.6	14.5	40.2	40.1	39.0	38.3	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2545.1	2550.7	2555.3	2550.3	2546.5	2544.8	2543.1	2546.9	2560.8	2560.8	2560.3	2560.0	
Irrigation Allotment (ft/ac)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25
Irrigation Delivery (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.9	9.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.2
FBIIP Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
Fresno to Dodson Gain (kaf)	0.0	17.4	18.2	12.6	16.4	6.8	2.0	5.4	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.8
Bowdoin Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5
Transfer to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	10.0	16.0	10.0	4.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Nelson Reservoir	Initial Content		53,580										
	Elevation		2215.09		acre-feet								
Delivery to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	9.0	14.4	9.0	3.6	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.5
Net Content Change (kaf)	-1.7	7.2	12.6	4.4	0.0	2.7	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	14.4
End of Month Content (kaf)	51.9	59.1	71.7	76.1	76.1	78.8	77.0	75.2	73.4	71.6	69.8	68.0	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2214.6	2216.6	2219.9	2220.9	2220.9	2221.6	2221.2	2220.7	2220.3	2219.9	2219.4	2219.0	
Total Release (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.8	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.6

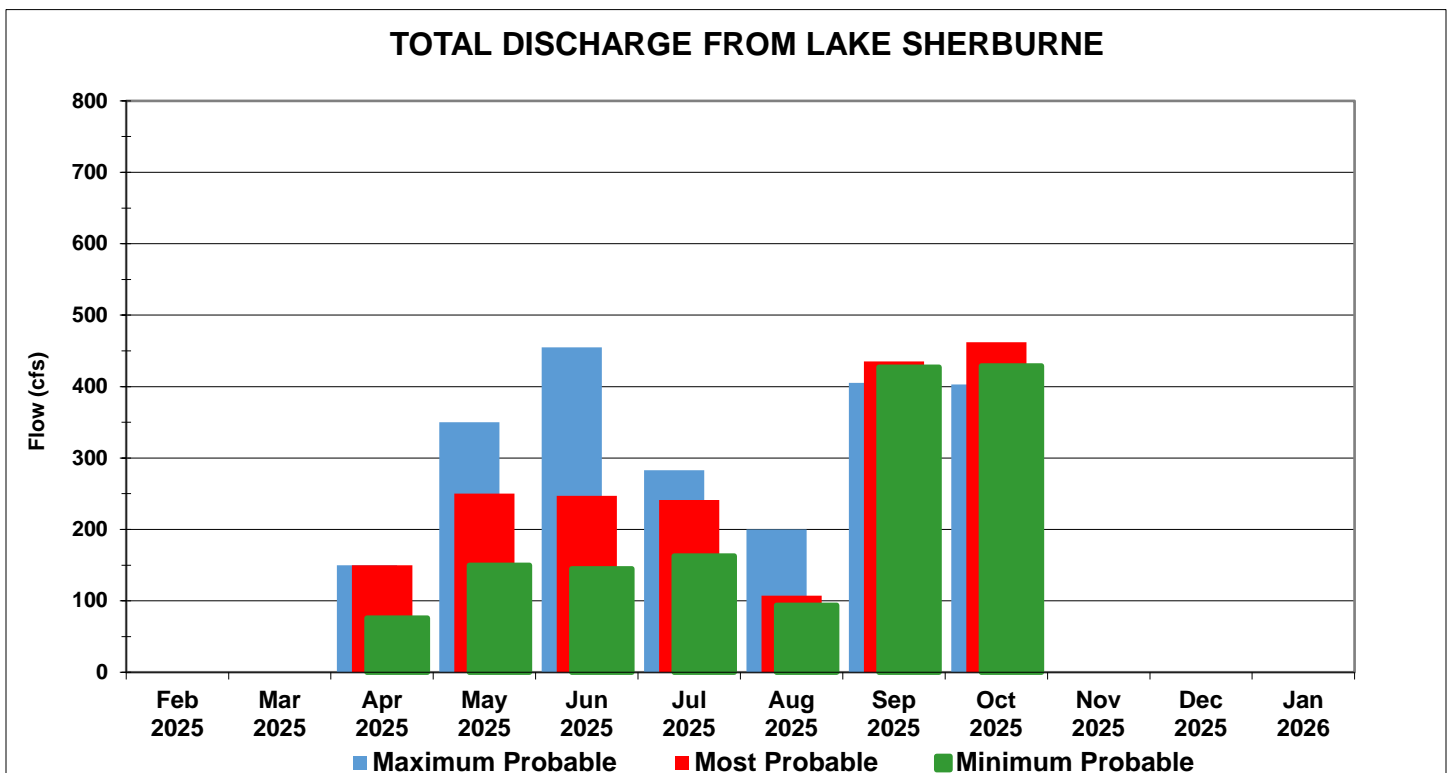
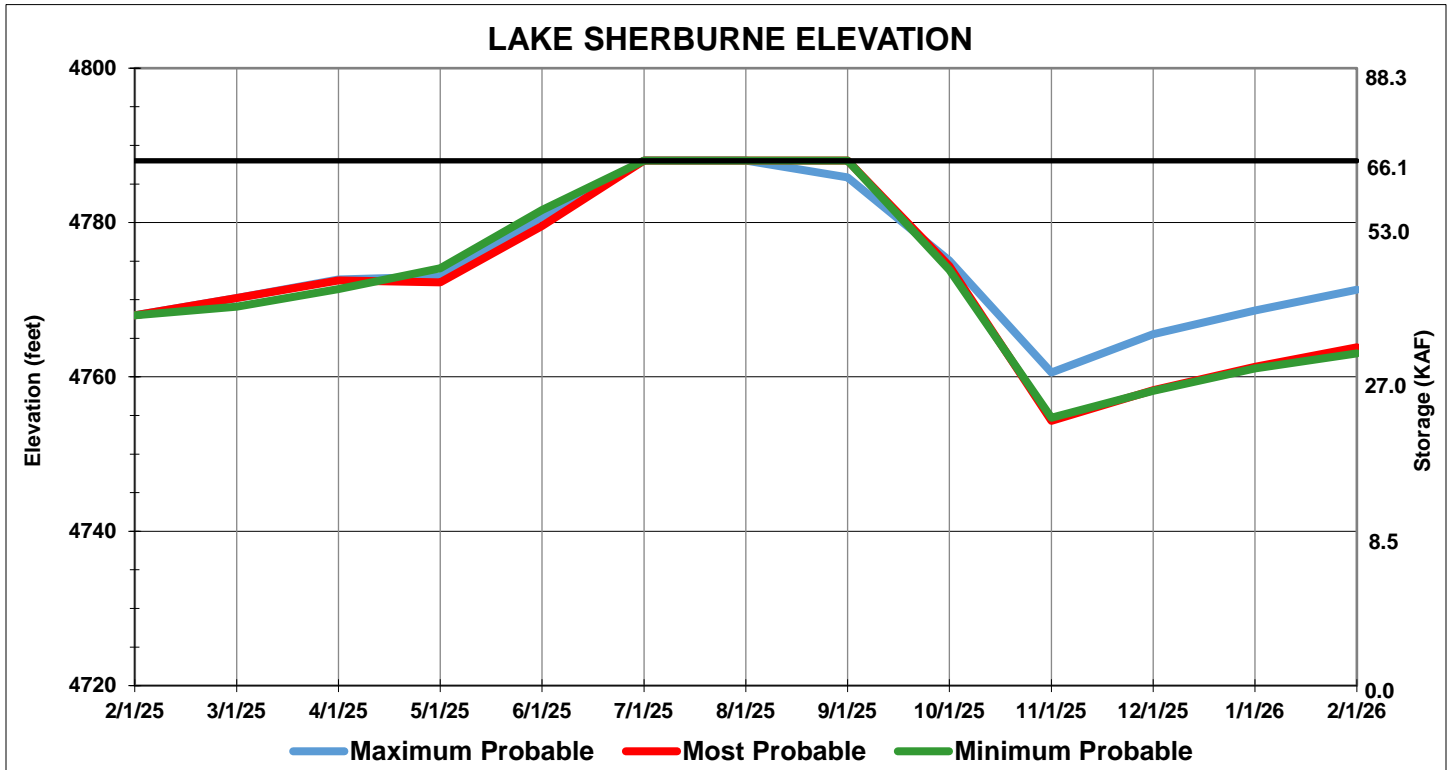
OPERATIONS OUTLOOK (February 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026)

Minimum Inflow Conditions													
Sherburne Reservoir	Initial Content		36,198 acre-feet										
	Elevation		4767.96 feet										
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Sherburne Inflow (kaf)	1.4	2.9	8.2	20.6	19.2	10.0	5.8	3.1	3.9	3.6	3.2	2.2	84.1
Sherburne Release (kaf)	0.0	0.0	4.5	9.2	8.6	10.0	5.8	25.4	26.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	89.9
Sherburne Release (cfs)	0	0	76	150	145	163	94	427	429	0	0	0	
Net Content Change (kaf)	1.4	2.9	3.7	11.4	10.6	0.0	0.0	-22.3	-22.5	3.6	3.2	2.2	-5.8
End of Month Content (kaf)	37.6	40.5	44.2	55.6	66.2	66.2	66.2	43.9	21.4	25.0	28.2	30.4	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	4769.1	4771.4	4774.1	4781.6	4788.0	4788.0	4788.0	4773.9	4754.7	4758.2	4761.1	4763.1	
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
St. Mary River Runoff (kaf)	4.6	4.1	6.2	69.8	84.0	43.0	21.2	14.7	8.0	4.3	4.5	4.0	268.4
Natural Flow at Boundary (kaf)	6.0	7.0	14.4	90.4	103.2	53.0	27.0	17.8	11.9	7.9	7.7	6.2	352.5
St. Mary Canal Diversion (cfs)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	450	450	0	0	0	
St. Mary Canal Diversion (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.8	27.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.5
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Fresno Reservoir	Initial Content		11,919 acre-feet										
	Elevation		2545.00 feet										
Milk River Runoff (kaf)	0.7	4.7	5.0	2.1	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.9	2.3	0.9	0.2	0.3	18.8
From St. Mary Canal (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4	24.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.3
Fresno Inflow (kaf)	0.7	4.7	5.0	2.1	1.7	0.0	0.0	6.3	27.2	0.9	0.2	0.3	49.1
Fresno Release (kaf)	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	4.8	33.1
Fresno Release (cfs)	40	41	40	41	49	49	49	40	41	40	41	78	
Net Content Change (kaf)	-1.5	2.2	2.6	-0.4	-1.2	-3.0	-3.0	3.9	24.7	-1.5	-2.3	-4.5	16.0
End of Month Content (kaf)	10.4	12.6	15.2	14.8	13.6	10.6	7.6	11.5	36.2	34.7	32.4	27.9	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2543.8	2545.5	2547.4	2547.1	2546.3	2544.0	2541.4	2544.7	2559.1	2558.4	2557.3	2555.0	
Irrigation Allotment (ft/ac)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Irrigation Delivery (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
FBIIP 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
Fresno to Dodson Gain (kaf)	0.0	8.7	9.1	6.3	8.2	3.4	1.0	2.7	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.4
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	8.0	9.0	6.0	8.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	34.0
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Nelson Reservoir	Initial Content		53,580 acre-feet										
	Elevation		2215.09 feet										
Delivery to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	7.2	8.1	5.4	7.2	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.6
Net Content Change (kaf)	-1.7	5.4	6.3	3.6	5.4	0.9	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	9.1
End of Month Content (kaf)	51.9	57.3	63.6	67.2	72.6	73.5	71.7	69.9	68.1	66.3	64.5	62.7	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2214.6	2216.1	2217.8	2218.8	2220.1	2220.3	2219.9	2219.4	2219.0	2218.5	2218.1	2217.6	
Total Release (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

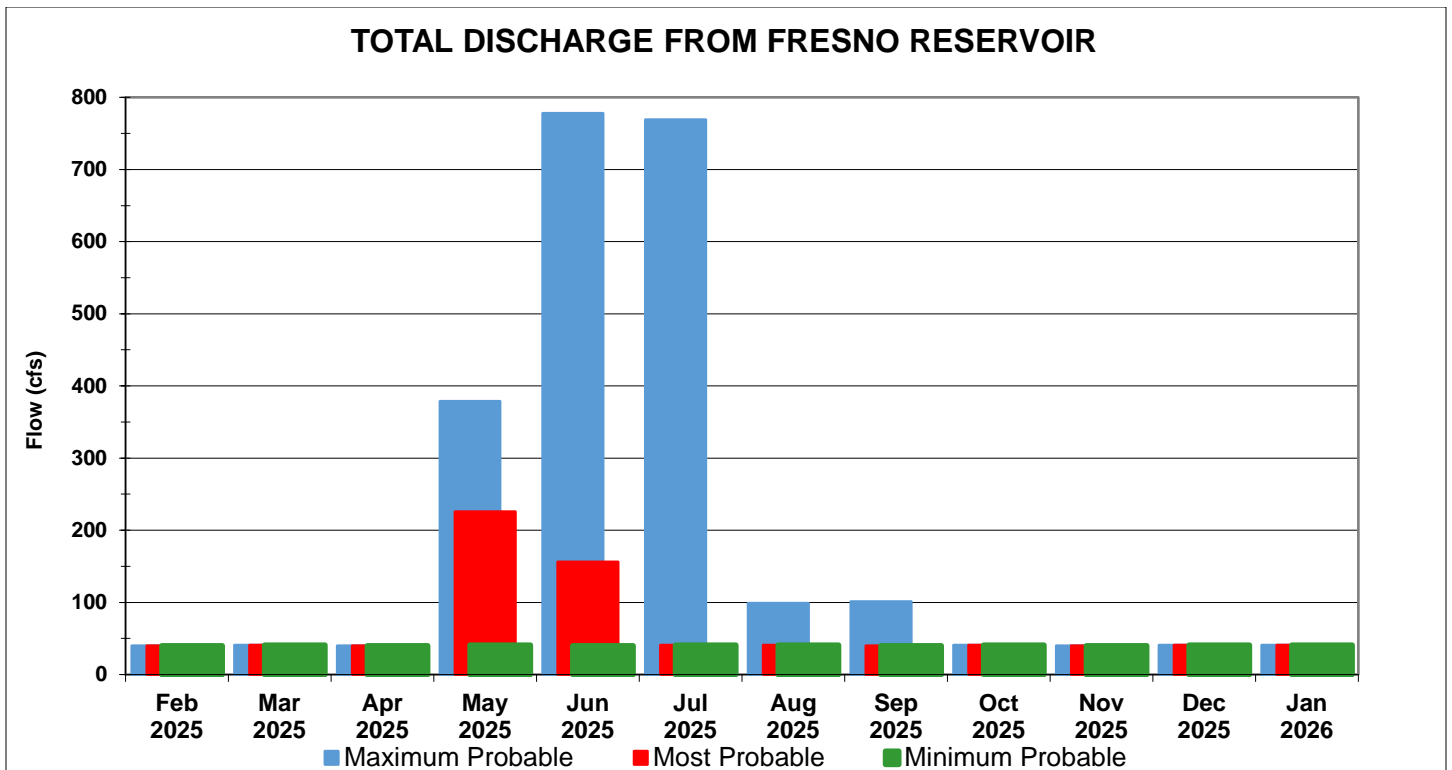
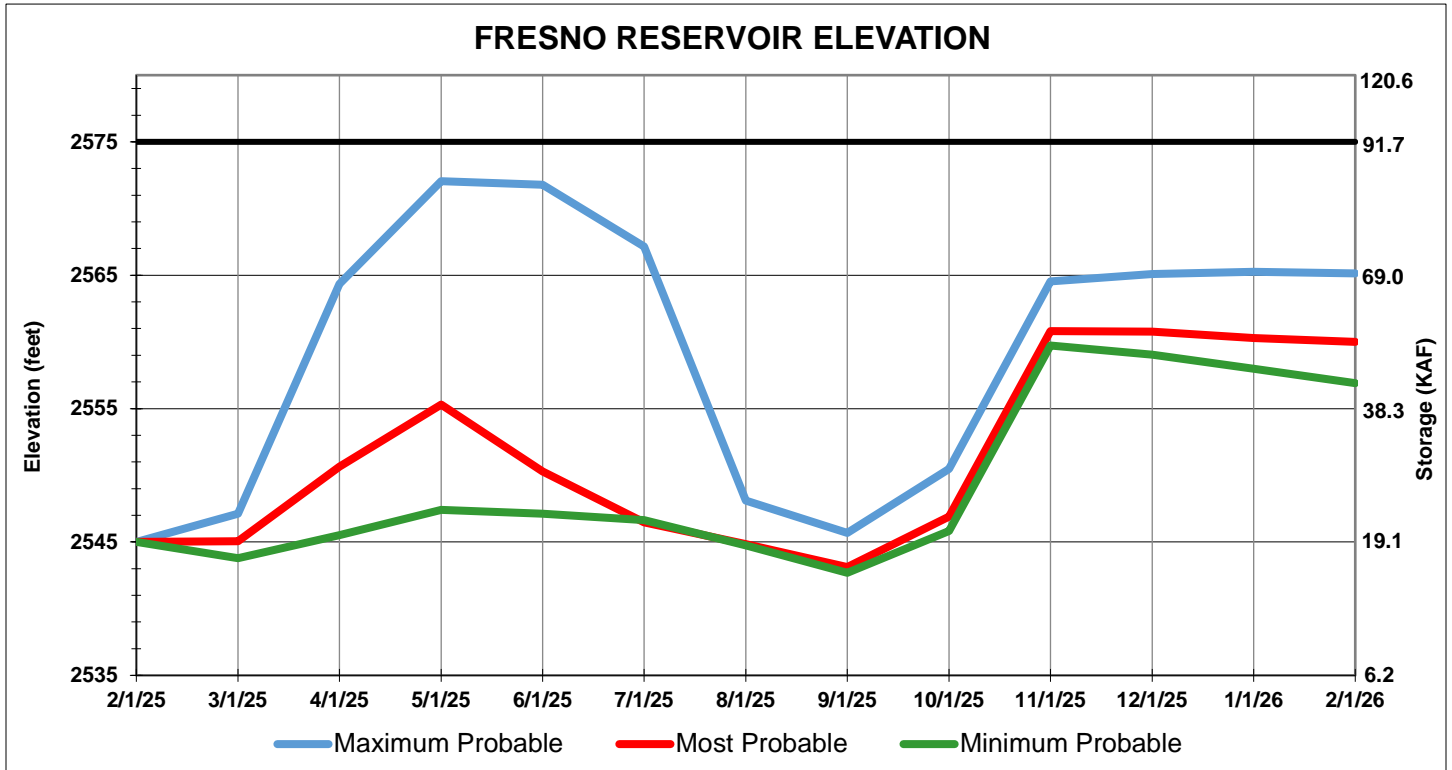
OPERATIONS OUTLOOK (February 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026)

Maximum Inflow Conditions													
Sherburne Reservoir	Initial Content		36,198										
	Elevation		4767.96		acre-feet								
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Sherburne Inflow (kaf)	2.8	3.2	9.4	32.9	39.2	17.4	8.6	7.2	6.8	5.7	3.7	3.4	140.3
Sherburne Release (kaf)	0.0	0.0	8.9	21.5	27.1	17.4	12.3	24.1	24.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	136.1
Sherburne Release (cfs)	0	0	150	350	455	283	200	405	403	0	0	0	
Net Content Change (kaf)	2.8	3.2	0.5	11.4	12.1	0.0	-3.7	-16.9	-18.0	5.7	3.7	3.4	4.2
End of Month Content (kaf)	39.0	42.2	42.7	54.1	66.2	66.2	62.5	45.6	27.6	33.3	37.0	40.4	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	4770.2	4772.6	4773.0	4780.7	4788.0	4788.0	4785.9	4775.1	4760.6	4765.6	4768.6	4771.3	
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
St. Mary River Runoff (kaf)	14.4	12.4	25.7	98.2	139.7	83.6	33.4	20.0	20.0	13.7	9.4	15.8	486.3
Natural Flow at Boundary (kaf)	17.2	15.6	35.1	131.1	178.9	101.0	42.0	27.2	26.8	19.4	13.1	19.2	626.6
St. Mary Canal Diversion (cfs)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	450	450	0	0	0	
St. Mary Canal Diversion (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.8	27.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.5
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Fresno Reservoir	Initial Content		11,919										
	Elevation		2545.00		acre-feet								
Milk River Runoff (kaf)	5.1	37.0	30.7	21.9	28.6	5.0	2.7	7.7	7.6	4.1	3.0	2.1	155.5
From St. Mary Canal (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4	24.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.3
Fresno Inflow (kaf)	5.1	37.0	30.7	21.9	28.6	5.0	2.7	13.1	32.5	4.1	3.0	2.1	185.8
Fresno Release (kaf)	2.2	2.5	2.4	23.3	46.3	47.3	6.1	6.0	2.5	2.4	2.5	26.3	169.8
Fresno Release (cfs)	40	41	40	379	778	769	99	101	41	40	41	428	
Net Content Change (kaf)	2.9	34.5	28.3	-1.4	-17.7	-42.3	-3.4	7.1	30.0	1.7	0.5	-24.2	16.0
End of Month Content (kaf)	14.8	49.3	77.6	76.2	58.5	16.2	12.8	19.9	49.9	51.6	52.1	27.9	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2547.1	2564.3	2572.1	2571.8	2567.2	2548.1	2545.7	2550.5	2564.5	2565.1	2565.3	2555.0	
Irrigation Allotment (ft/ac)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.25
Irrigation Delivery (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.2	46.3	46.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	115.8
FBIIP Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	6.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.0
Fresno to Dodson Gain (kaf)	0.0	22.6	23.7	16.4	21.3	12.0	3.0	7.0	5.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	111.2
Bowdoin Demand (kaf)	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5
Transfer to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	10.0	20.0	15.0	5.0	6.0	3.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	64.0
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Nelson Reservoir	Initial Content		53,580										
	Elevation		2215.09		acre-feet								
Delivery to Nelson (kaf)	0.0	9.0	18.0	13.5	4.5	5.4	2.7	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	57.6
Net Content Change (kaf)	-1.7	7.2	16.2	3.7	-6.5	-5.6	0.9	2.7	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	-1.8	9.7
End of Month Content (kaf)	51.9	59.1	75.3	79.0	72.5	66.9	67.8	70.5	68.7	66.9	65.1	63.3	
End of Month Elevation (feet)	2214.6	2216.6	2220.7	2221.6	2220.1	2218.7	2218.9	2219.6	2219.1	2218.7	2218.2	2217.7	
Total Release (kaf)	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	9.2	9.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.4

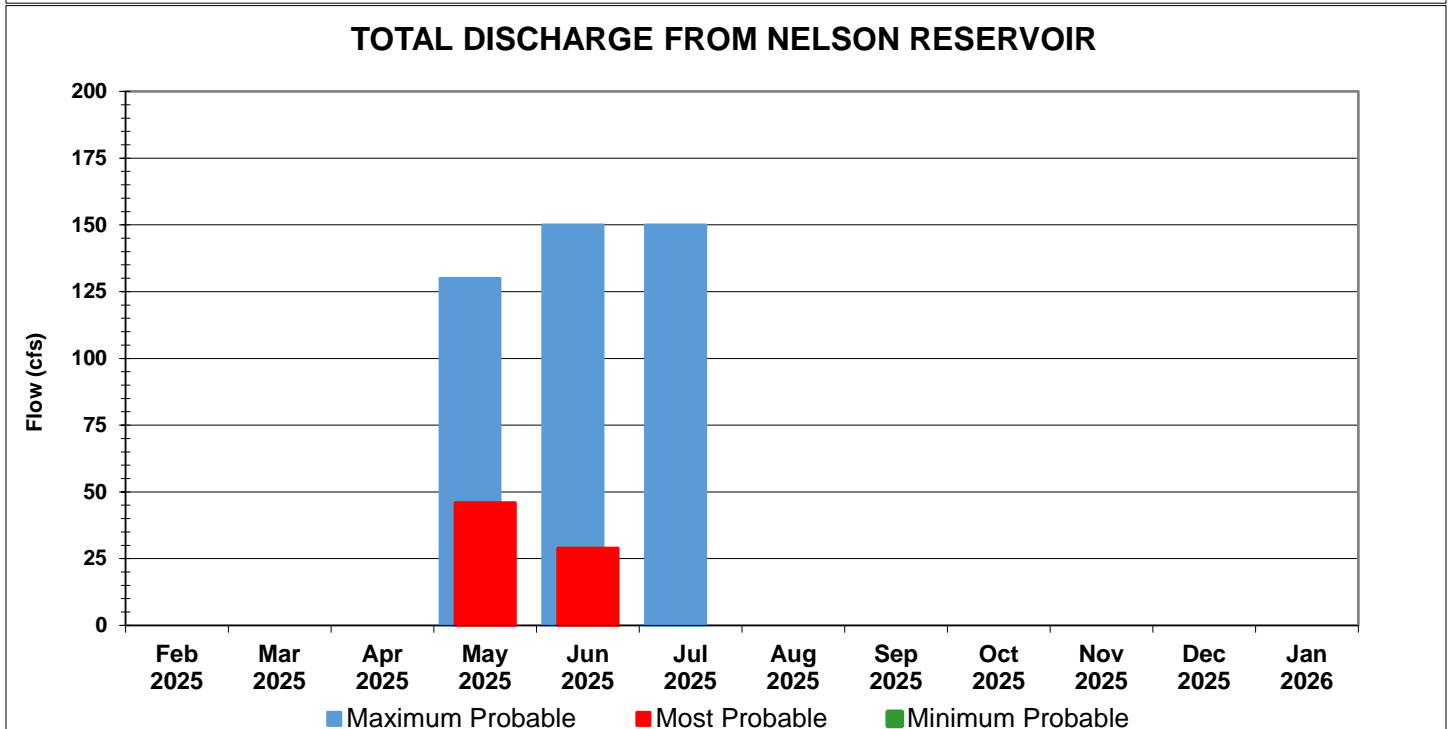
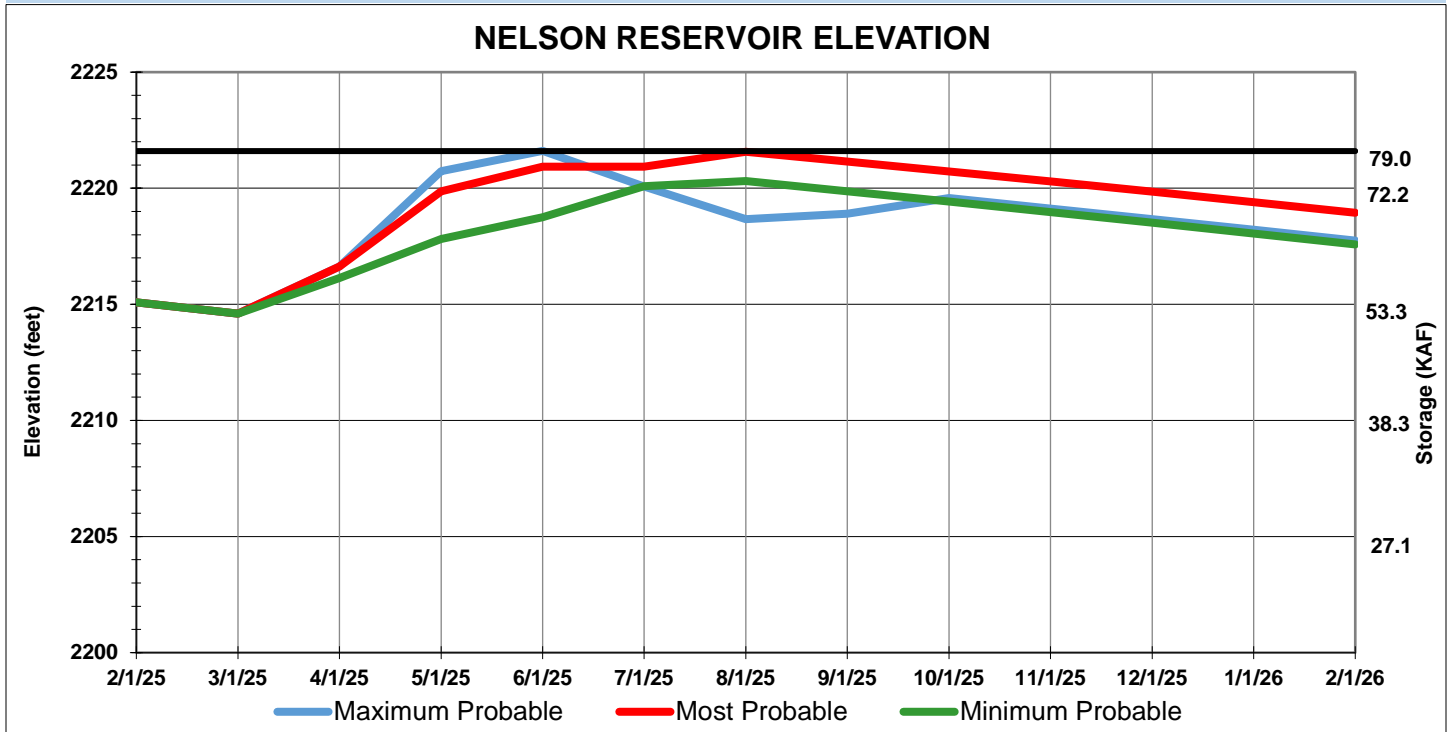
OPERATIONS OUTLOOK: LAKE SHERBURNE



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/wareprts/main_menu.html