



Klamath National Forest
Butte Valley National Grassland

Forest Service News Release

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Winter storm impacts snow surveys

March 1st snow survey results for Scott River sub-basin

Yreka, Calif., March 6, 2024— The Klamath National Forest has completed the March 1st snow surveys. These measurements are a part of the statewide California Cooperative Snow Survey program, which helps the state forecast the quantity of water available for agriculture, power generation, recreation, and stream flow releases later in the year.

The weather for February was variable. The occasional precipitation observed periods of rain, including snow at higher elevations. However, there were also many nice days, with temperatures on the valley floor mild and spring-like. The storm at the end of February undoubtedly added to the local snowpack. Unfortunately, the storm also created safety and access issues for surveyors; and, in addition to scheduling conflicts and other reasons, three sites – Dynamite Meadow, Middle Boulder 1, Middle Boulder 3 – were unable to be visited. Preparations for surveying were made but were not able to be acted upon. Measurements at the two sites which were visited suggest the snow received prior to the storm at the end of the February was variably distributed around the valley. Historically, snowpack reaches its annual maximum by late-March/early-April.

Snow surveys are conducted monthly during the winter and spring months (February through May). Forest Service employees travel to established sites in the headwaters of the Scott River watershed to take measurements. The newest measuring site at Scott Mountain has been monitored for over 35 years; the oldest site at Middle Boulder has been monitored for over 70 years. Some sites are located close to forest roads with good access, while others require hours of travel by snowshoe and/or snowmobile.

The height of snow and Snow Water Equivalent (“SWE”, measure of water content) are measured by a snow sampling tube with a cutter end that is driven through the snowpack, measuring depth. The snow core is then weighed to determine the water content (SWE). The information is forwarded to the State of California, where the

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data is compiled with other snow depth reports and becomes part of the California Cooperative Snow Surveys program. The data is managed by the California Department of Water Resources; more information is available on their website at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/snow/current/snow/index.html>.

March 1st, 2024, Snow Survey Results Scott River Sub-Basin

Snow Course	Height of Snow			Snow Water Equivalent		
	Measured	Long-term Average for Mar 1	% of Long-term Average	Measured	Long-term Average for Mar 1	% of Long-term Average
Middle Boulder 1 (Established 1946 / Elevation 6600')	Did not survey			Did not survey		
Middle Boulder 3 (Established 1948 / Elevation 6200')	Did not survey			Did not survey		
Dynamite Meadow (Established 1955 / Elevation 5700')	Did not survey			Did not survey		
Swampy John (Established 1951 / Elevation 5500')	44.9"	69.9"	64%	16.6"	24.1"	69%
Scott Mountain (Established 1986 / Elevation 5900')	69.3"	47.6"	146%	24.5"	18.2"	135%
Total Average	N/A			N/A		



Charnna Gilmore (left; Scott River Watershed Council; volunteer) and Kip Van de Water (right; Forest Service) survey snow depth at the Swampy John site, below Etna Summit.

Photo Credit: USDA Forest Service

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The Klamath National Forest & Butte Valley National Grassland cover 1,700,000 acres located in Siskiyou County, California and Jackson County, Oregon. Butte Valley National Grassland is the newest National Grassland and the only one in California. The forest is headquartered in Yreka, CA, and maintains ranger stations in the California communities of Macdoel, Happy Camp, and Fort Jones.

More information is available at www.fs.usda.gov/klamath.

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