

SNOWMELT FLOOD UPDATE

By: Colorado Water Conservation Board

July 1, 2011

Stream flows on the Big Thompson River in Estes Park above Lake Estes reached a new peak flow of record last night with a flow rate of 1,750 cubic feet per second (cfs). This exceeds the previous peak of record, set in 1965, of 1,520 cfs. Local officials were prepared for high water earlier this season, and sand bags were previously placed in strategic areas to help reduce flood damages in the community.

In similar news, Clear Creek near Georgetown reached a new season peak last night of approximately 800 cfs, which exceeds last year's peak flow rate of 713 cfs and is the second highest flow on record for that particular gaging station. Again, local officials have been well aware of the flood risks in that community and are highly capable of taking actions necessary to control the water and protect property. The photos below show preparation activities in Georgetown during the 2010 high runoff.



The South Platte River at South Platte also hit a new season peak yesterday of approximately 1,200 cubic feet per second. Releases from Chatfield Reservoir have been increased to 557 cfs as of today.

High flows in mountain streams can be very dangerous due to swiftly moving cold water that is more powerful than most people realize. The CWCB cautions boaters and outdoor enthusiasts to be extremely careful, especially during this 4th of July holiday weekend.

CWCB staff believes that flows in most streams and rivers throughout Colorado have reached their season snowmelt peak flows with very few possible exceptions. The Colorado Water Conservation Board issues a Daily Flood Threat Bulletin and twice weekly 15-day Flood Outlook, which can be found at www.cwcb.state.co.us. The CWCB's Flood Decision Support System (DSS) is also available to the public at <http://flooddss.state.co.us/Default.aspx>