



COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION

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TO: Technical Management Team (TMT)
FROM: Kyle Dittmer, *Hydrologist-Meteorologist*, CRITFC Hydro Program
DATE: December 13, 2006

SUBJECT: **Summary of Water Year 2006 Weather**

At the request of the TMT, this memo summarizes monthly weather events that impacted basin flows and fish migrations during Water Year 2006 (October 2005 - September 2006). WY 2006 was noted for extreme variability in precipitation and temperature patterns (Figures 1 and 2).

Autumn started normally then trended to very wet by December which lasted for months. Temperatures stayed slightly above normal with basin departures of -0.7 to +1.4 °F.

Winter stayed very wet (except for February) and warm. January set the highest average basin departure for WY 2006 with +7.5 °F. Many record highs were set in March in the 60 to 75 °F range. The Snake basin saw non-stop precipitation from October through April. Many stations set new daily precipitation records throughout all of winter, but mostly in January and March.

Spring was extreme. A wet, slightly cold, April transitioned into a very wet and warm May, then a wet and warm June. May produced new high records in the 90 to 95 °F range across the basin. June 25-27 had new high records in the 95 to 105 °F range. Temperatures stayed slightly above normal with basin departures of -0.9 to +1.8 °F. Many stations set new daily precipitation records throughout all of spring.

Summer turned very dry very quickly. A very dry summer was in-store for migrating salmon. Record-breaking daily high temperatures hit in late July in the 100 to 112 °F range as well as August. Temperatures stayed slightly above normal with basin departures of +0.1 to +4.6 °F. Many record low temperatures were set basin-wide during summer. Most stations saw very little rain, as the jet stream persisted in staying north of the basin.

Cumulative precipitation totals for Water Year 2006 for Columbia at The Dalles ended at 105%. The driest basins of the Columbia (Figure 3) were the Northwest slopes of the Washington Cascades (89%), East slopes of the Washington Cascades and Columbia above Castlegar (93%), and Southeast Washington (94%). The wettest basins were the Upper Deschutes (133%), Owyhee (126%), and Salmon/Boise/Payette (125%).

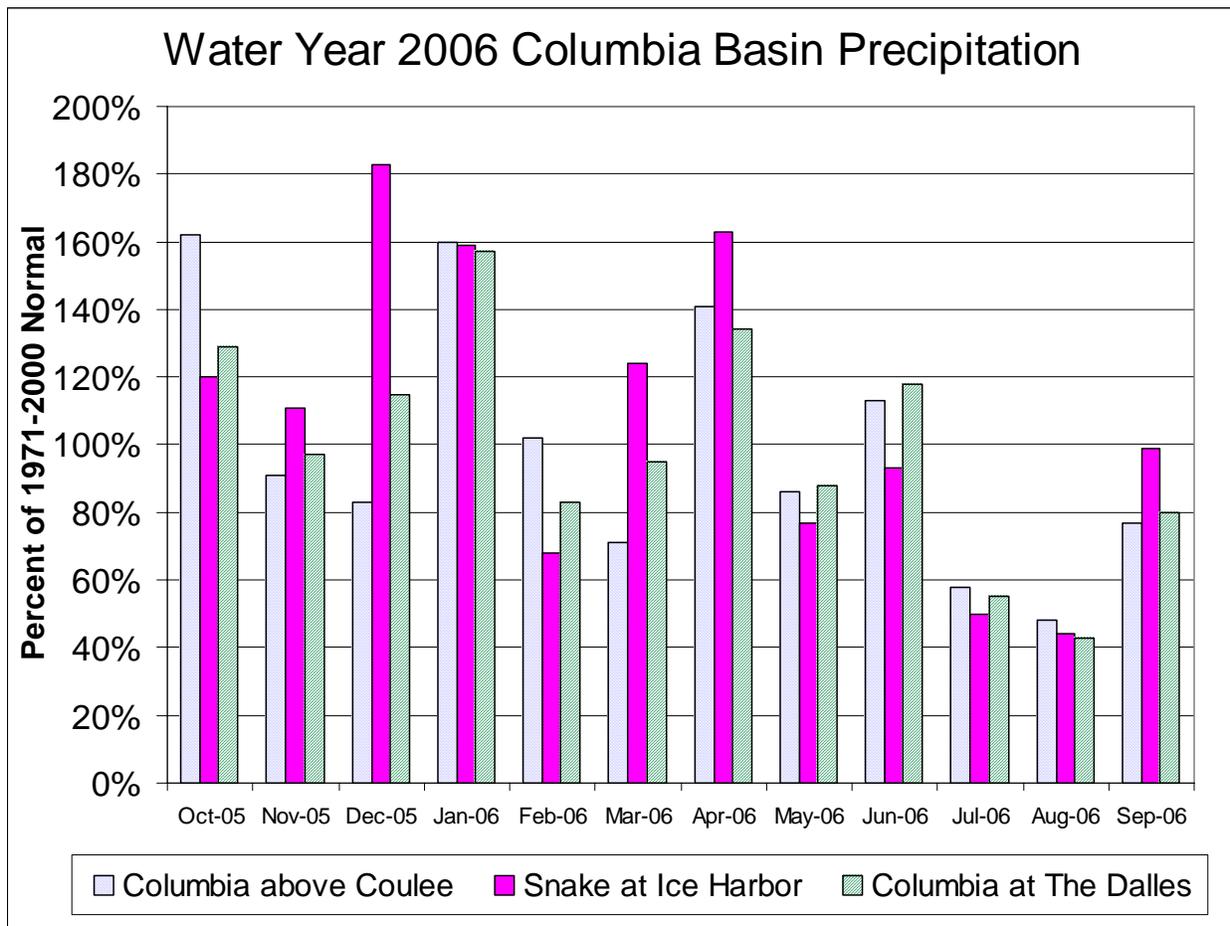


Figure 1. Water Year 2006 Division Precipitation Summary (NOAA-NWS-Portland data).

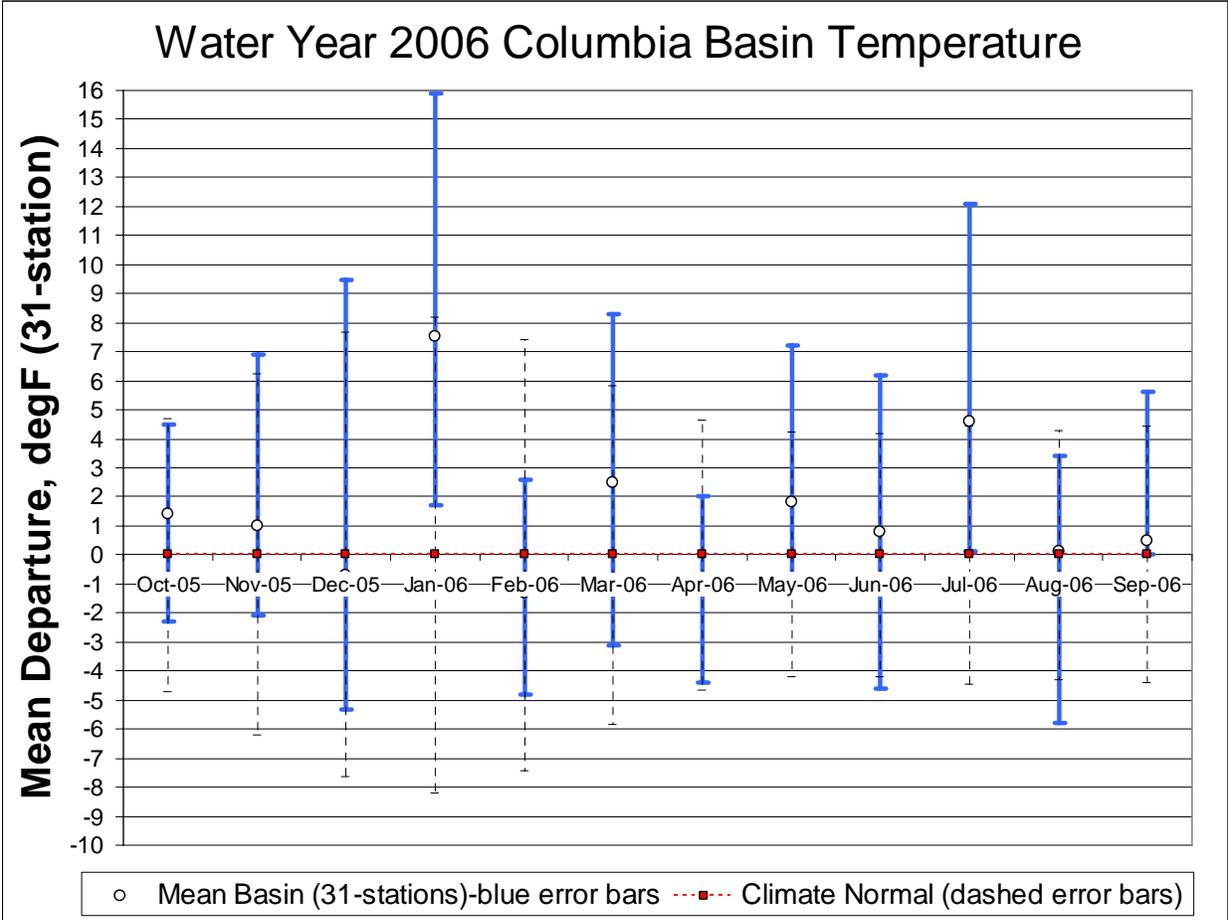


Figure 2. Water Year 2006 Temperature Departure Summary (NOAA-NWS-Portland data).

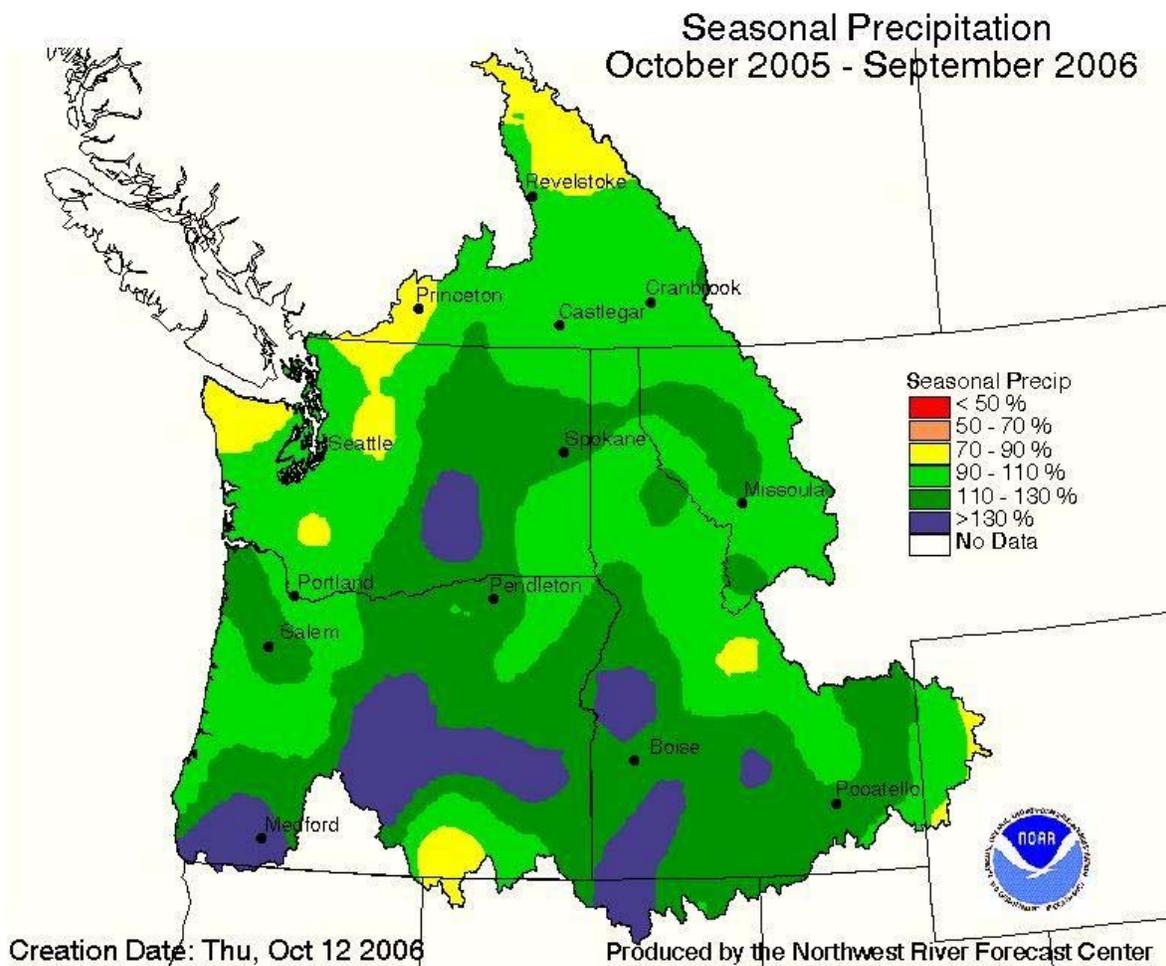


Figure 3. Water Year 2006 Columbia Basin Cumulative Seasonal Precipitation.