

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## Aspinall Unit Operations



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation

**In Hydrology - There is no such thing as a “Normal” Year**



**Dust on Snow - Telluride Valley – May 2009**

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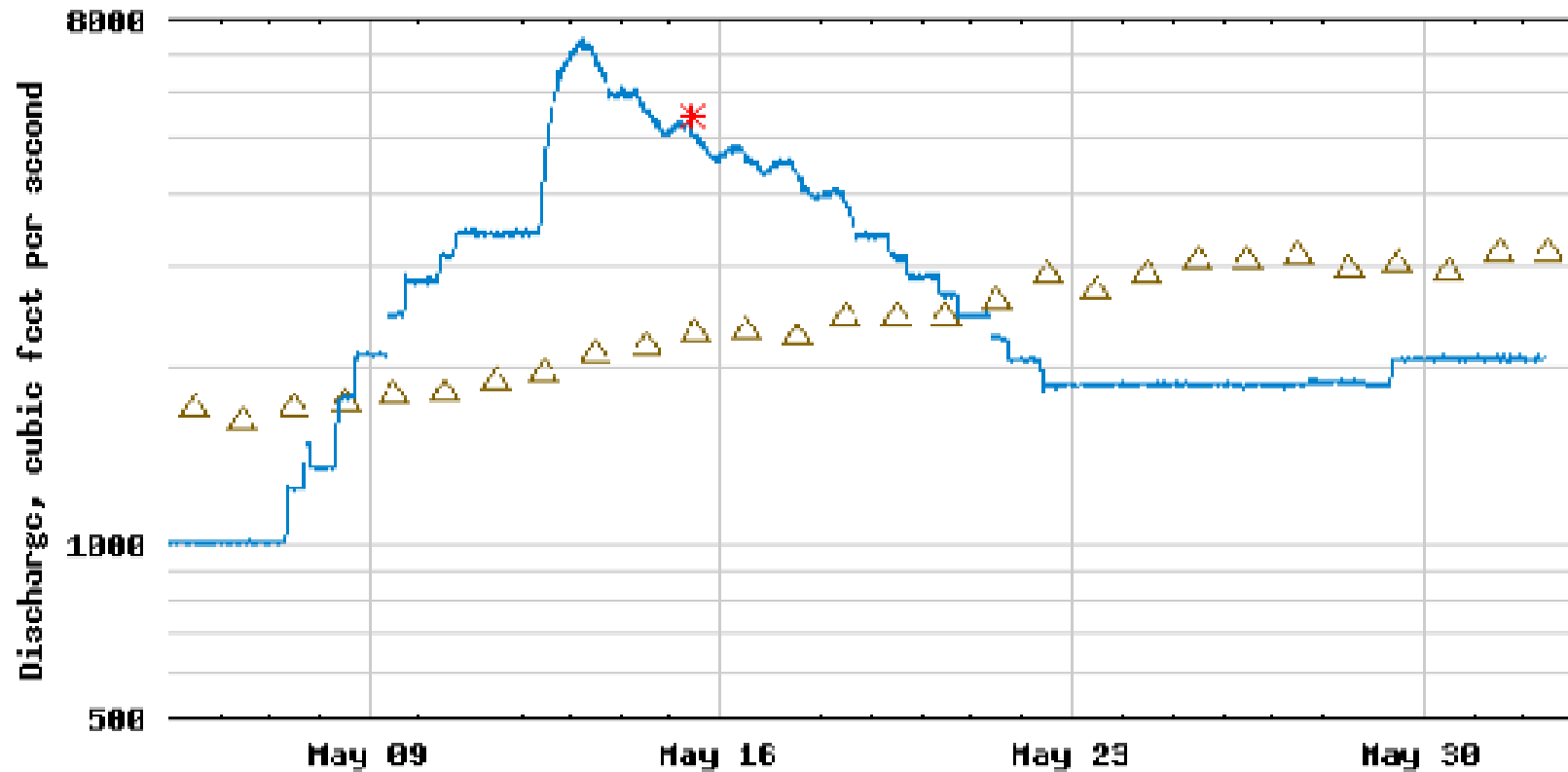
# Gunnison River Operations

- 690,000 ac-ft Projected Inflow to Blue Mesa (April – July Forecast, 96% of Average)
- Gunnison Basin Reservoirs will Fill
- Black Canyon National Park Water Right
  - 300 cfs Minimum
  - 5,864 cfs Peak
  - 650 cfs 85 Day “Shoulder” Flow
- Timed Release with initial peak of Cimarron

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## USGS 09128000 GUNNISON RIVER BELOW GUNNISON TUNNEL, CO



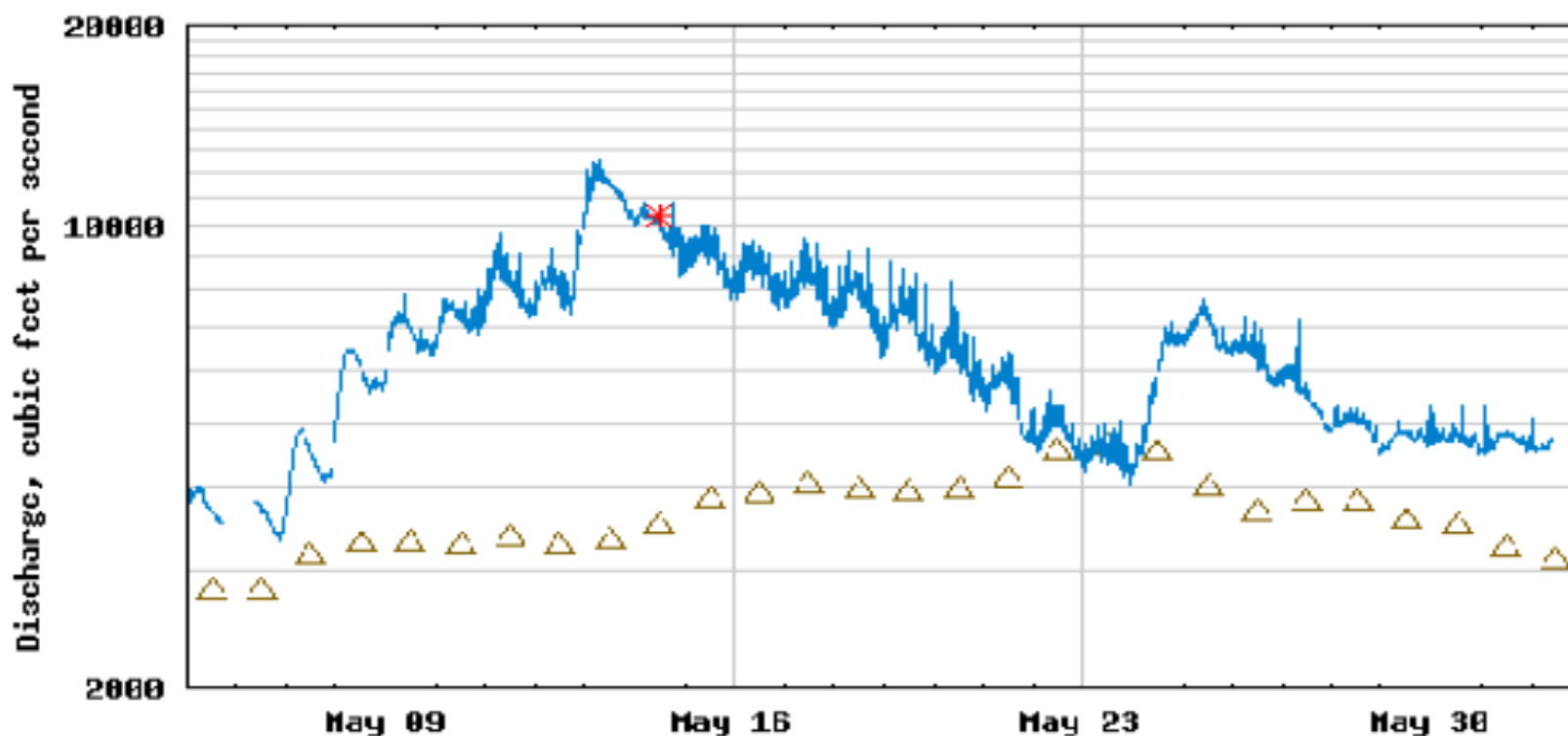
--- Provisional Data Subject to Revision ---

- △ Median daily statistic (98 years)
- \* Measured discharge
- Discharge

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### USGS 09144250 GUNNISON RIVER AT DELTA, CO.



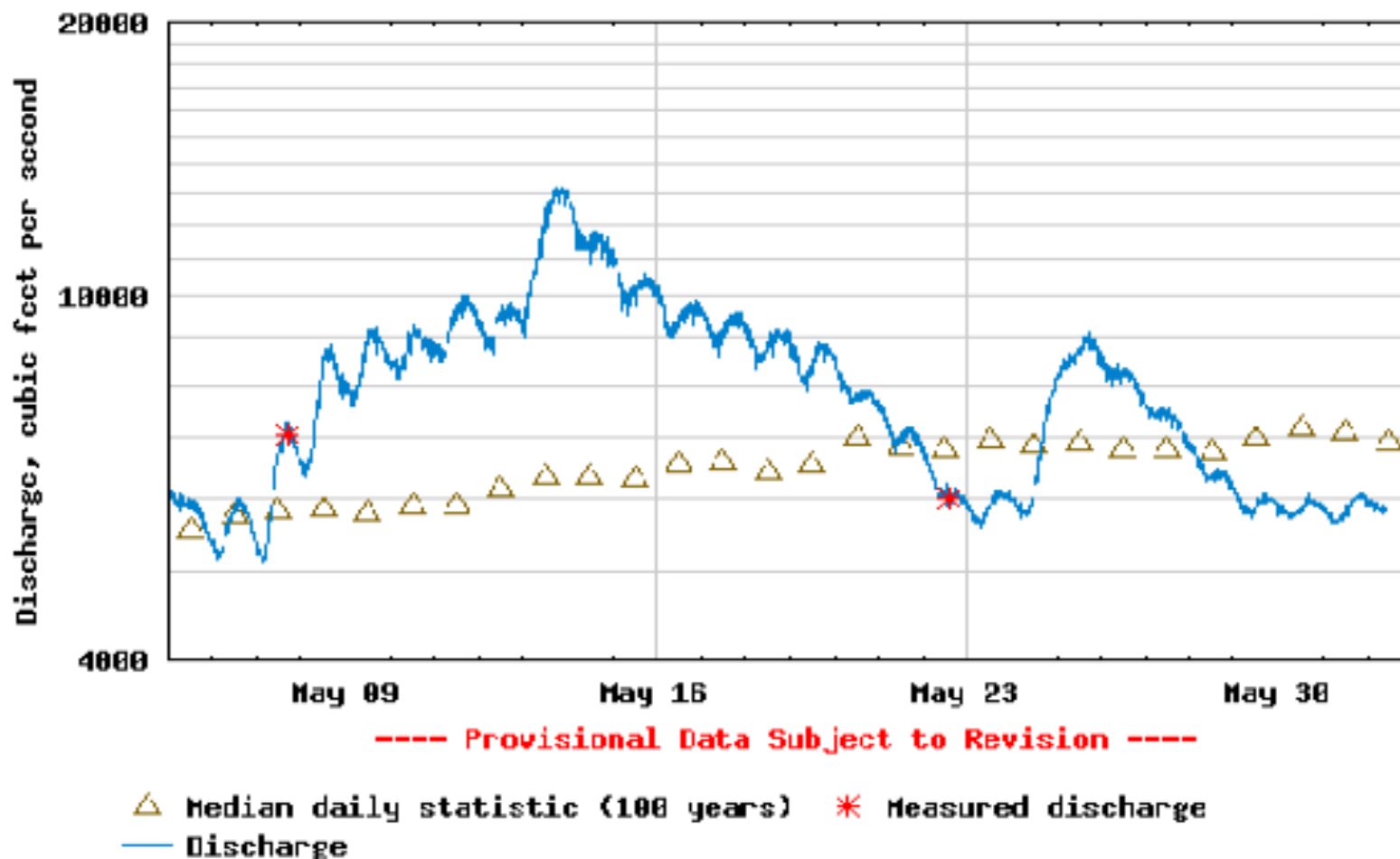
---- Provisional Data Subject to Revision ----

- △ Median daily statistic (32 years)
- \* Measured discharge
- Discharge

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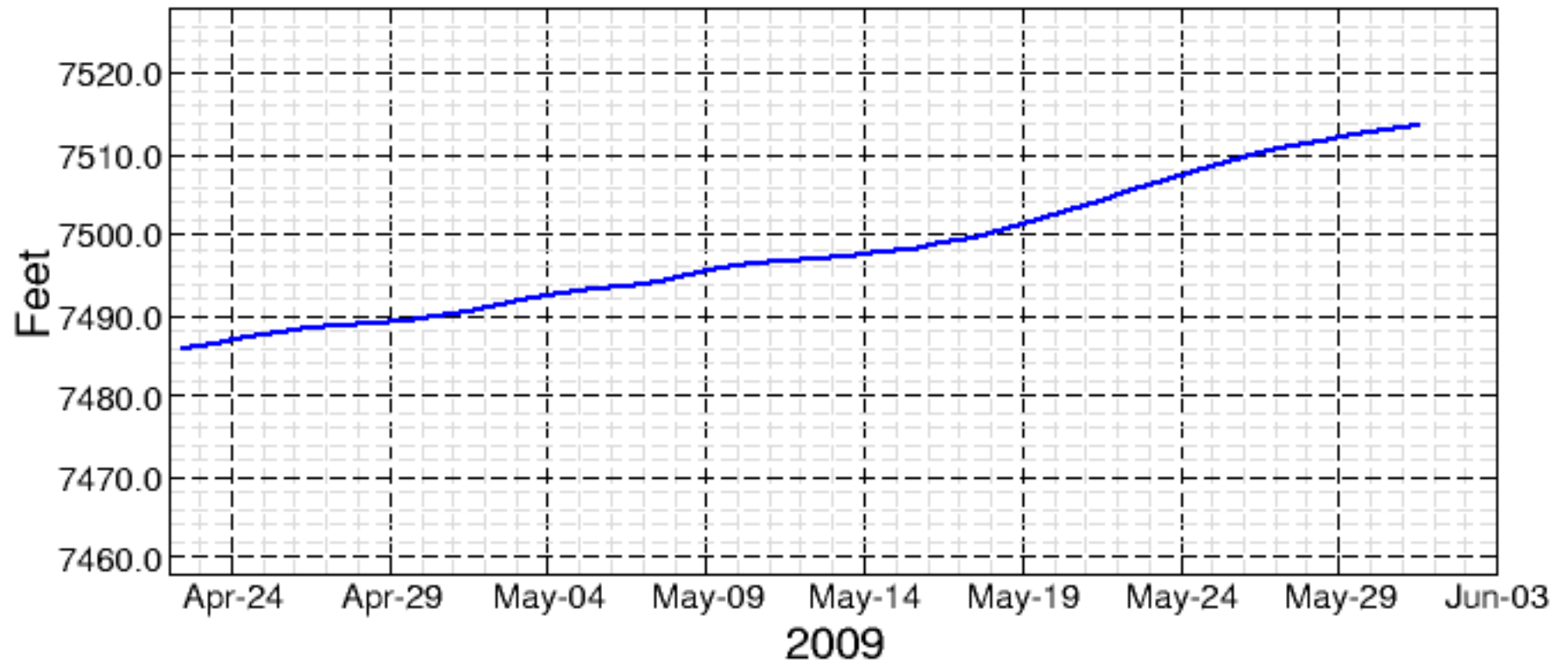


### USGS 09152500 GUNNISON RIVER NEAR GRAND JUNCTION, CO.



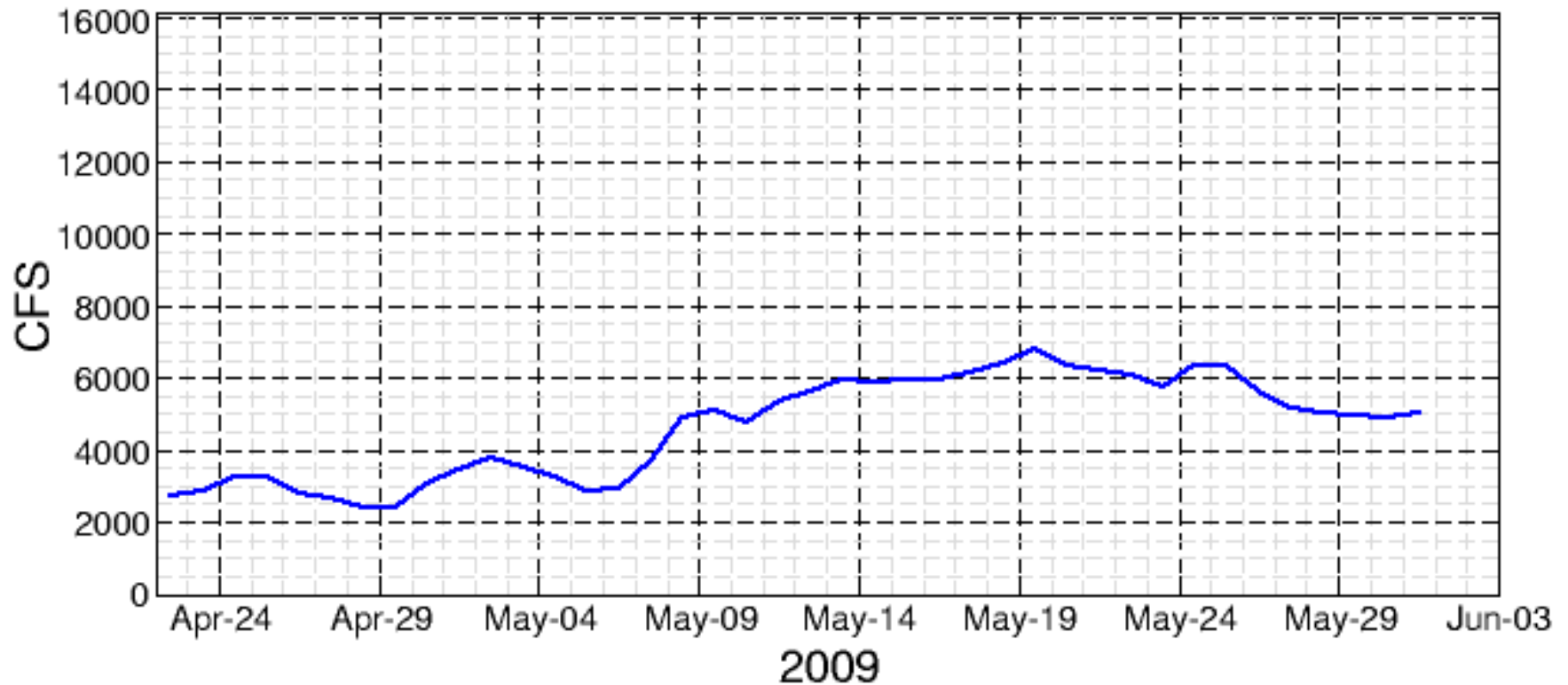
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## Blue Mesa Reservoir Elevation



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## Blue Mesa Reservoir Inflow



**Crystal Releases Currently 2,900 cfs**

**Tunnel Diversion Currently 800 - 900 cfs**

**Crystal Releases to 3,300 cfs by Wednesday June 3**

**Black Canyon Flows 2,400 - 2,500 cfs**

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# Lake Powell

- 7.1 Million Ac-Ft  
(April – July Forecasted Inflow)
- 90% of Average Inflow
- Peak Elev. 3,641 ft. – 2009  
– Elev. 3,633 ft. – 2008
- Coordinated Operations - Lake Powell and Lake Mead  
– Total Glen Canyon 2009 Release – 8.23 mil Ac-Ft

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# Questions



Crystal Spill – May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Total Release 5,400 cfs; Spill 1,200 cfs

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*ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT*  
**ASPINALL UNIT OPERATIONS**



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Authorized Purposes—storing water for  
consumptive use; compact development;  
irrigation; flood control; hydropower



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# ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT OF 1973

As Amended through the

**100th Congress**



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# Alternatives

- Alternative A - Risk of Spill - uses “excess water”
- Alternative B, C, & D Fish Peaks with Duration - attempt to meet target at Whitewater
- No Action

## Preferred Alternative:

Fish Peak with Minimum Duration - Alternative B

- Peak target based on forecast
- Base flows
- Redlands flows

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# Process

- Draft EIS Comment Period ended in April 24
- Public Hearings were held April 7 (Gunnison) & April 8 (Delta)
- Programmatic Biological Opinion being prepared
- Final EIS being prepared
- Record of Decision

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# Review Comments

- General support for preferred alternative and PBO.
- Some suggestions for selection of more aggressive or less aggressive alternative.
- Clarify operations under Black Canyon water right and operations to benefit endangered fish.
- Recognition that there are minor to moderate impacts to some resources: fisheries, hydropower, recreation.
- Various suggestions on how to describe “water yield” from the Unit and future water uses.

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# Endangered Species Act

- Programmatic biological opinion being prepared
- Goal is to provide ESA coverage to ongoing Gunnison Basin water uses & minor future uses
- Additional goal is to complete ESA coverage for Dallas Creek and Dolores Projects
- River flows and water quality are main concerns in opinion
- Selenium management program being proposed

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# Change



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