



THE STATE OF WYOMING

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NEWS

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Cloud Seeding Suspended in the Wind River Range

Cheyenne, WY – The Wyoming Water Development Office suspended cloud seeding operations in the Wind River Range on Friday, February 10, 2017 due to snowpack conditions at the time. Snow water equivalent (SWE) values at Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) SNOTEL sites in the Wind River Range reached, and now exceed, established operational criteria forcing the immediate suspension of operations in the Range.

Under suspension criteria, the SWE measured at several SNOTEL sites is tracked as a percentage of the median seasonal SWE as of April 1. At the beginning of each seeding season the threshold for suspension is 85% of the median April 1 value for each site, but increases daily to 140% of the April 1 value by April 1. This percentage is well within natural variability and is commonly used by other wintertime cloud seeding programs in the western U.S.

The operational cloud seeding season began on November 30, 2016 and was expected to run through March 31, 2017. Seeding operations will remain under suspension until the average SWE drops below the suspension criteria threshold, and any Severe Winter Weather or Flood Warnings issued by the National Weather Service are terminated. The Wind River Range cloud seeding program is an operational, non-research program focused on snowpack augmentation in the target area as part of a larger strategy for flow augmentation in the Green and Wind/Bighorn River Basins.