



Kris Stewart

Emergency Manager

PRESS RELEASE – DELTA COUNTY SPRING RUNOFF UPDATE - WEEK OF MAY 15th

May 19, 2023

Delta County, local municipalities and first responders strongly urge residents to exercise extreme caution around streams and rivers for the next few weeks. As school winds down, please remind kids it is not safe to attempt to swim in or float local rivers. Local fire departments and first responders remind residents who wish to recreate on the rivers this spring that the fire departments have limited swift-water rescue capabilities and a response to any water related accident may have an extended response due to limited access to the river.

On Friday, May 12th, the Paonia Reservoir Dam began spilling and the Bureau of Reclamation began releases from the [Aspinall Unit](#) (Blue Mesa, Morrow Point and Crystal Dams in the Black Canyon). Aspinall unit releases are required to increase flows in the lower Gunnison River to meet thresholds required for endangered fish species. Due to spring releases from dams and the large amount of snow remaining on the Grand Mesa and surrounding mountains, high flows on local rivers and streams are expected for the near future.

The Town of Cedaredge announced this week that it closed the trail along Surface Creek through town after Surface Creek peaked and localized flooding eroded parts of the trail. The City of Delta is also experiencing flooding at Confluence Park and most trails are now closed due to flooding from the Gunnison River. The Paonia River Park and Fairgrounds boat ramps are also closed due to high water flows and unsafe conditions and Hubbard Creek Road is closed until further notice due to a landslide. Please respect all closures which are put in place for your safety and follow DeltaCountyCO.gov/Flooding for information on active closures across Delta County.

Delta County Commissioners, Administration and Emergency Management have been working closely with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and other local and state agencies on the Highway 133 closure near Somerset since Bear Creek washed out the highway on the evening of May 2nd.

CDOT Director Lew and the CDOT engineering team have advised a contractor has been selected to install a temporary bridge over Bear Creek to re-open the highway. Once installed, the bridge will be two lane and allow for normal highway travel except for oversize, overweight loads which will not be permitted on the bridge. We anticipate detailed bridge construction timelines will be announced early the week of May 22-26.

Residents and businesses with questions should call the CDOT Customer Service Hotline at 970-243-2368 Monday to Friday between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. Please note, Steven's Gulch Road, Bear Creek Road, County Road 265 and County Road 12 (Kebler Pass) are all still CLOSED and are not detours to the Highway 133 closure and should not be attempted, even if GPS routing suggests these routes.

Delta County Emergency Management and the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management encourage any small business that has experienced economic impacts and financial losses from the Highway 133 closure and extended detour, to fill out the Highway 133 Small Business Impacts - SBA economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Collection Form. The form is available on the Delta County Website at DeltaCountyCO.gov/Flooding. The form will help the State of Colorado determine if there is enough interest in low-interest loans to make Delta and Gunnison Counties eligible for a Small Business Association Disaster Declaration.

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Canyons – Rivers – Mountains

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