

How BC Hydro forecasts reservoir levels



Weather conditions

Precipitation effects how much water flows into reservoirs during the spring and summer. Temperature influences when and how quickly the winter snowpack melts. In the Columbia basin, about 30% of inflows come from spring and summer rainfall.



Snow & surface water

Snowpack levels and runoff are critical to reservoir water levels. Snowpack serves as a natural water storage system, gradually releasing water in the spring and summer. In the Columbia basin, snow and surface water account for 70% of inflows!

Inflow



Electricity demand

Demand for electricity is an important factor in how much water is released from reservoirs. Water is released into downstream generating dams to produce power. Demand fluctuates based on factors such as seasonal changes, economic activity, and population growth.



Water management agreements

Our operations in the Columbia basin are part of a broader system of water management with the U.S., governed by water management agreements, such as the Columbia River Treaty. Under the terms of the CRT, BC Hydro is required to release water to in the U.S. to facilitate power generation and flood control objectives.

Outflow

CANADA

USA