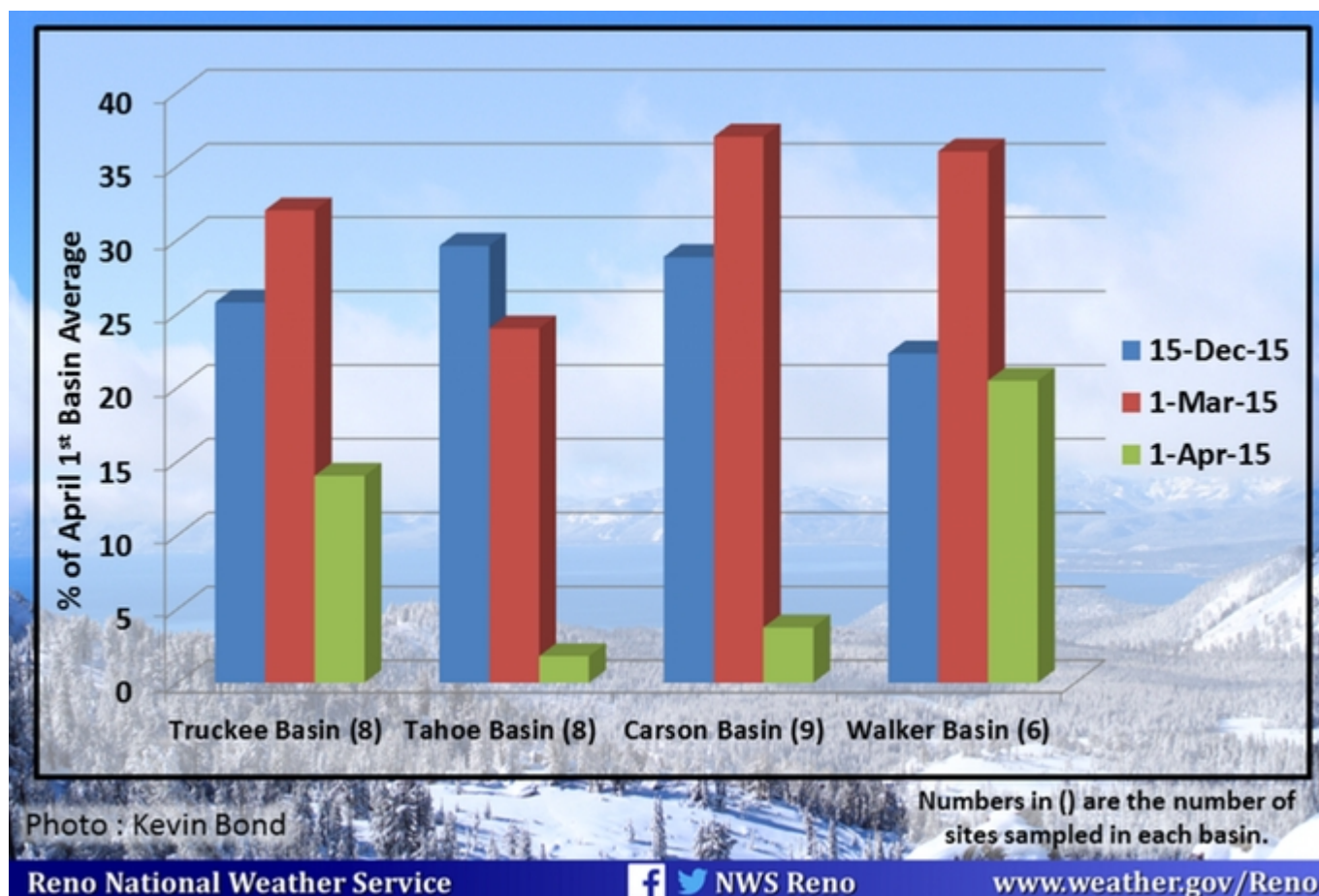


Sierra snowpack trumping last winter



By National Weather Service

After four dry winters, the mountain snowpack is off to a great start in the Eastern Sierra and Western Nevada.

The peak of the snowpack is typically near April 1, and this is the date used to compare overall winter snowpack numbers.

The winter of 2014-15 brought an abysmal snowpack to the region, with most basins only reporting 2 to 20 percent of average as of April 1, 2015. However, last year's peak was also earlier in the winter, closer to March 1, and would be slightly higher than current conditions, as can be seen in the chart above.

So far, the winter of 2015-16 is already nearing the overall snowpack percentages of last winter.

Keep in mind, we are comparing the current snowpack to the April 1 averages, so the data set is not complete for this season. We are just trying to show that we are off to a great start this winter and the snow water equivalent numbers in the Truckee, Tahoe, Carson, and Walker River basins are slightly above average for this time of the year.

As a side note, snow water equivalent is the amount of liquid that would be produced if all the snow were melted instantaneously. The graphs in the first image are showing the same four river basins and comparing the percentage of average in the snowpack today based on March 1 and April 1 averages and what the percentage of average on April 1 of 2015 was. The number of sites sampled in each basin are in parenthesis, all data courtesy of NRCS.