



EXPECTATIONS BY WATER LEVEL

The following descriptions are to help understand the effects of different water levels on river conditions. We try our best to give a general guideline of the time frame at which these water levels occur, but please keep in mind that we are working with Mother Nature and we cannot guarantee the water level will correspond to the outline below. Each water level on the San Miguel provides a special adventure, and we want you to arrive with the proper expectations for your trip. The abbreviation CFS (Cubic Feet per Second) is a gauge of the amount and how fast water is flowing down the river. Below are variations in river conditions by CFS Levels, and the approximate time of year that they occur.

Low Water: 200-300 CFS (first couple of weeks of July)

Low water offers a lot of class II rapids and a class III- due to the technical nature of navigating the river. Overhanging limbs and strainers become an issue as they may be hanging in the only existing channel and this is where our skilled guides really show off their navigation talents!

Medium Flow: 300-650 CFS (first week of June into early July)

Lots of continuous class II whitewater with some class III rapids. The nonstop fast flowing nature of the river at these levels makes this a more adventurous voyage than at lower levels. Overhanging vegetation and strainers add to the technical difficulty of getting down the river.

High Water: 700-1000 CFS (mid May to early June)

Swift and constant class II splashes with solid class III rapids and some low IV (-IV) bigger drop rapids are possible at this water level. There are lots of breaking waves making for a good soaking all day long!

Extreme High Water: 1700-2000 CFS (mid May into June with large snow pack)

At this level the river has many boat submerging holes. You will continually be breaking waves at this water level. As flows approach 2,000 CFS, the river becomes pushy and fast! Many rapids will washout while new rapids will be formed. Be prepared for constant paddling with a few short breaks.

Rare High Water: 2,000+ CFS

At this water level, there is a lot of continuous whitewater with very few eddies (calmer sections that allow for breaks in paddling). You'll be paddling through class III and IV rapids. Rafters receive relentless soakings throughout the day. If you're seeking real adventure, 2,000 CFS + would be the time to run the San Miguel. Non-stop action, fast maneuvering and big waves equal loads of thrills for everyone on the boat!