

# ***Humor and Drought***

Governor's Conference on Managing Drought  
and Climate Risk

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# HELP CONSERVE WATER

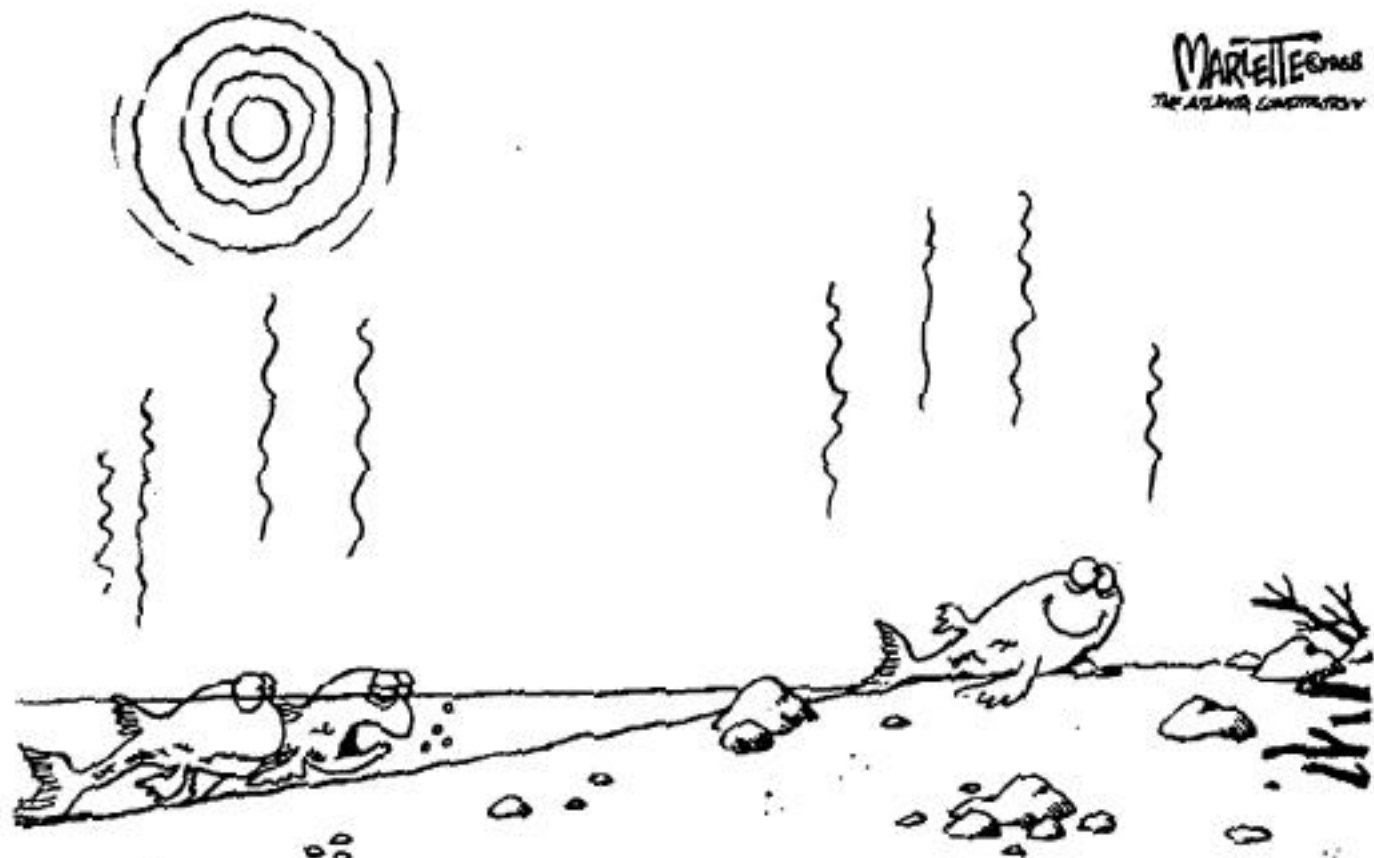
*Reduce your water use by 10%*



**Tip #1**  
**Water after sundown**







"DON'T TELL HIM IT'S THE DROUGHT— HE THINKS HE'S EVOLVING!"







"A WATER-STARVED AND STUNTED  
CORN STALK, WITHERING UNDER A  
MERCILESS SUMMER SUN." HUH?...  
SON-THAT JUST MIGHT BE THE  
SCARIEST HALLOWEEN COSTUME I  
HAVE EVER SEEN!







GOSH! I LOVE ALL THESE  
SIGNS THAT SPRING  
IS HERE: THE BIRDS!  
THE FLOWERS! SHORTS!  
SANDALS!!

AND THE  
SUREST SIGN  
OF ALL...

hello

...People  
WATERING THEIR  
SIDEWALKS.





LOOK-BOTH YOU AND I  
KNOW THAT THE FIRE  
DANGER IS STILL WAY TOO  
HIGH FOR YOU TO ~~BE~~  
GRILLING ME FOR SUPPER...  
SO LET'S JUST CALL THIS  
WHOLE THING OFF AND  
TAKE PRIDE IN OUR  
RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL  
ETHIC, OKAY?



UHello



# Northern Water

Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

# **A Water Manager's Worst Fear: 2002**

## Abstract

The water year 2002 was unlike any other. Not only was it the driest year on record, it was beyond what many water manager's thought possible. It wasn't just dry, it was unbelievable, crazy, excruciating. You pick the adjective - the water year was worse than most Colorado water officials had ever imagined or modeled.

In response to the drought many water conservation professionals teamed with city utility and water district staffs to develop educational programs to reach the largest audiences with consistent and accurate information. The educational campaign involved many cities and towns and water districts within the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District boundaries in northeastern Colorado. While Northern Water spearheaded the effort, whatever success it had was due to the many dedicated (and exasperated) individuals who participated.

2002 provided a quadruple whammy to northeastern Colorado - low snowpacks, low spring runoffs, lack of precipitation and high temperatures. Collectively, they helped produce many all-time worst records. The statewide snowpack stood at 19 percent of average on May 1. The Poudre River total runoff was less than 100,000 acre feet for the first time in recorded history. Tree ring studies indicated Colorado hadn't been hit with a drought this bad since the 1600s.

But with the optimism of a Colorado Rockies fan on opening day, water officials maintained a positive outlook. While the 2003 water year began in even worse shape, the massive mid-March snowstorm turned the water year around. Things improved dramatically.

Through it all many water managers reminded each other that it took a sense of humor to maintain that positive outlook. A look at some of the cartoons related to the drought are included to illustrate the point.

## **BRIAN WERNER**

Brian is currently Public Information Officer for the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District in Berthoud. He also currently serves as the Public Affairs Coordinator for the Northern Integrated Supply Project.

As PIO he oversees public affairs for the District including media relations, youth and public education, facility tours, and informational publications. His duties include writing and editing the District's magazine—WATERNEWS and numerous informational brochures and pamphlets. He has coordinated more than 50 children's water festivals in Colorado and produced a video on the Colorado–Big Thompson Project. Brian helped spearhead a region-wide public education effort during the 2002 drought.

A Colorado native, Brian was born in Colorado Springs. He graduated from the University of Northern Colorado with a degree in history and followed with a M.A. in history from Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

He was chairman of the Poudre River Trust for five years and helped organize the first ever Riverfest and cleanup in 1994. He helped lead successful efforts to pass county-wide open space taxes in 1995 and 1999. He has also written a local sports column, hosted a local radio show and been a soccer, softball and gymnastics dad.