

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Governor's Memorandum of Potential Drought Emergency

TO: Executive Directors, Departments of State Government
FROM: John Hickenlooper, Governor, State of Colorado *JWH*
RE: Activation of the Colorado Drought Mitigation and Response Plan
DATE: May 18, 2011

Drought conditions have developed along the eastern plains to the degree that counties in the Arkansas and Rio Grande River Basins are likely to receive severe impacts to their environments and to the various sectors of their economy, especially agriculture. If present trends continue, other river basins and sectors of the entire state's economy may soon be affected.

Under these circumstances, and based on a recommendation from the Water Availability Task Force and Directors from the Departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Local Affairs, I have decided to activate the State's Drought Mitigation and Response Plan so that specific impacts may be identified, and expeditious and effective remedial action may be taken.

As of the date of this memorandum, the Colorado Drought Mitigation and Response Plan is in effect; the following actions, as specified in the Plan will be taken:

- 1) Drought Task Force will be activated under chairmanship of directors from the Departments of Natural Resources, Local Affairs, and Agriculture. The first meeting of the Task Force will be held within seven days of receipt of this memorandum.
- 2) The following Impact Task Forces (ITF) will be formally activated: Agriculture. The ITF chairpersons will call their first meeting as soon as possible after the Drought Task Force meeting. All other ITFs should be on notice should conditions deteriorate.
- 3) All addressees will assign: (1) A senior level manager who can commit the resources of the department to act as a drought coordinator and (2) Task Force chairpersons and participants as indicated the Colorado Drought Mitigation and Response Plan.
- 4) Lead agencies will be prepared to take action for drought response and to mitigate drought impacts as appropriate.

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John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

May 17, 2011

Dear Governor Hickenlooper:

On May 11, 2011, the State's Water Availability Task Force (WATF) met at the Colorado Division of Wildlife in Denver to discuss current drought conditions around the State, and the resulting water supply impacts to all sectors of business.

Based on the data and information provided to the WATF by the State Climatologist, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the National Weather Service, and other experts, the WATF recommended the activation of Phase 2 of the State Drought Mitigation and Response Plan, and recommended the activation of the Agricultural Impact Task Force. These recommendations were necessary to respond to serious concerns about drought conditions on the Eastern Plains, primarily south of the I-70 corridor, in southeastern Colorado, and in the Rio Grande Basin.

Therefore, we formally request that you accept the recommendations of the WATF and activate Phase 2 of the State's Drought Mitigation and Response Plan, and the Agricultural Impact Task Force.

As a result of these recommendations, the following actions will be implemented in accordance with the State Drought Plan.

- The Drought Task Force (DTF) Chairs, comprised of the Executive Directors, or their designees, for the Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Local Affairs, and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) will meet with the Agricultural Impact Task Force Chairs to outline Phase 2 activities of the State's Drought Plan.
- The Agricultural Impact Task Force will make an initial damage or impact assessment (physical and economic).
- The Agricultural Impact Task Force will recommend opportunities for incident mitigation to minimize or limit potential impacts.
- Periodic reports will be made by the Agricultural Impact Task Force Chairs to the DTF Chairs.

- The Agricultural Impact Task Force Chairs will designate their respective Department Public Information Officers (PIO) to interface with the media for their relative area of concern and develop media messages.
- Relevant state agencies will undertake response and incident mitigation actions within their normal programs with available resources.
- The DTF will conduct a gap analysis identifying any unmet needs that cannot be handled through normal channels.

Should you or your staff require any additional information or have questions, please contact Veva Deheza, Co-Chair of the Water Availability Task Force, in the CWCB's Office of Water Conservation & Drought Planning at 303-866-3441 ext. 3226 or at veva.deheza@state.co.us.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Mike King
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Natural Resources



John Salazar
Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture



Reeves Brown
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Local Affairs

