

# STATE OF COLORADO

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## Colorado Water Conservation Board Department of Natural Resources

1313 Sherman Street, Room 721  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Phone: (303) 866-3441  
Fax: (303) 866-4474  
www.cwcb.state.co.us



TO: CWCB Board Members

John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor

FROM: Veva Deheza, Water Supply Planning Section  
Kevin Houck, Watershed & Flood Protection Section

Mike King  
DNR Executive Director

Jennifer L. Gimbel  
CWCB Director

DATE: March 5, 2012

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item #20, March 20-21, 2012 Board Meeting**  
**Water Supply Planning /Watershed & Flood Protection- Spring Drought and Flood Outlook**

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**Staff Recommendation:** *This is an informational item only. No Board action is required.*

### Background:

The 2012 Water Year began October 2011 and runs through September 2012. So far, it has brought below average conditions to the State with both the eastern plains and the mountains receiving below normal precipitation and 70% of the state is currently designated in drought conditions ranging from D0 (abnormally dry) to D3 (drought- extreme). *As a result of last year's dry conditions in the eastern plains, the Colorado Drought Mitigation and Response Plan remains in phase-two activation for the southeast and south central portions of the state.* As of March 5<sup>th</sup>, the watersheds with the lowest percentage of average snowpack are the Colorado and Yampa/White with 80% each. The highest watershed is the South Platte with 90%, indicating that all river basins are below average for this time of year. However, following last year's record breaking snow season in the northern Colorado mountains, many reservoirs have carryover storage, but current low snowpack may present challenges should drier conditions persist.

Staff will present the latest information on both drought and flood conditions and outlooks for the coming weeks and months. Information on snowpack, reservoir levels, stream flows, potential response actions, and related topics will be presented. A review of last year's runoff season will be provided. Klaus Wolter of the University of Colorado will present his long-term forecast for the region and discuss possible impacts from the current La Nina event impacting Colorado's weather patterns.

**A joint meeting of the Water Availability Task Force and the Flood Task Force will be held on March 22, 2012.** For the latest monthly Drought Update, with detailed drought information, please see the March Director's Report. Also, daily flood threat bulletins will be available on the CWCB website during the Colorado flood season from May through September.

## **AGENDA**

### **JOINT MEETING OF THE WATER AVAILABILITY & FLOOD TASK FORCES**

Thursday, March 22, 2012, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Colorado Parks & Wildlife Headquarters  
6060 Broadway Denver, CO  
Bighorn Room**

**PURPOSE:** To review precipitation outlooks, streamflow, reservoir conditions, & potential water supply impacts from ongoing drought and any emerging flood conditions.

- 9:30 Welcome, Introductions, Announcements
  - 9:40 Report from the State Climatologist
  - 10:00 Report from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - 10:20 Short Term Weather Outlook (National Weather Service)
  - 10:40 Seasonal Climate Forecast for Colorado (NOAA -ESRL & CIRES)
  - 11:00 Streamflow Conditions Update (DWR)
  - 11:15 Status of the State Drought Plan Phase 2 Activation & Agricultural Impact Task Force Activation
  - 11:20 Reports from WATF Impact Task Forces, Water Providers &
  - 11:30 Flood Roundtable – Federal, State & Local Agencies
  - 11:45 Wrap Up, Announce Future WATF Meeting Schedules & Adjourn
- April 18, 9:30-11:30a, CO Parks & Wildlife Bighorn Room

\* **Directions to Colorado Parks & Wildlife:** Exit I-25 at E. 58<sup>th</sup> Ave and go west on E. 58<sup>th</sup> Ave. Turn right (North) on Broadway. Proceed north and cross over railroad tracks (approx. 1/4 mile). Parks & Wildlife will be on your right. The **Big Horn Room is in the main CPW building.**