



COLORADO

**Colorado Water
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Taryn Finnessey, Water Supply Planning Section
Kevin Houck, Watershed & Flood Protection Section

DATE: March 18, 2015

AGENDA ITEM: Agenda Item #18 Spring Climate Outlook

Background:

As of March 4th, 63% percent of the state is experiencing some level of drought. The majority of that is located in the southern and western portions of the state with 12% on the eastern plains classified as severe. Snowpack is at 93% of normal for the state, with the eastern basins of the South Platte and Arkansas experiencing the highest snowpack levels at 113% and 104% respectively. The Colorado River, North Platte and Rio Grande basins are also near normal for this time of year. The basins of the Southwest, Gunnison, and Yampa/ White are below normal at 77, 86, and 88% of normal, respectively. Statewide reservoir storage remains strong at 105% of average.

As a result of continued dry conditions, the Colorado Drought Mitigation and Response Plan remains in phase-two activation.

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. Staff will also present a long-term forecast for the region and discuss possible impacts from the current weather patterns.

A joint meeting of the Water Availability Task Force and the Flood Task Force will be held on March 17, 2015. Daily flood threat bulletins will be available on the CWCB website during the Colorado flood season from May through September.

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

