



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, P.E., Chief, Watershed & Flood Protection Section

DATE: March 1, 2016

AGENDA ITEM: Agenda Item #17 Spring Climate Outlook

Background:

As of March 1st, no locations in the state are experiencing drought, although 7% of the state are still classified as "abnormally dry" in the U.S. Drought Monitor. These locations are located in extreme northwest Colorado as well as small areas in Washington and Crowley counties and their immediate surroundings. Snowpack is at 97% of normal for the state, with all basins near normal for this time of year. The South Platte currently has the highest snowpack at 101% of normal, the Upper Colorado, Upper Rio Grande and Arkansas are very near normal at 99, 99 and 98% of normal. The Gunnison, San Miguel/Dolores/ Animas/ San Juan, Yampa/ White and North Plate are just below normal at 97, 96, 93 and 92% of normal. Reservoir storage remains strong at 110% of average.

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 24, 2016. 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.

