

# STATE OF COLORADO

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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  
RE: Activation of the Colorado Drought Mitigation and Response Plan  
DATE: May 2, 2018

Drought conditions have developed throughout southern Colorado to the degree that counties in the southern half of the state and along the western border are likely to receive severe impacts to their environments and to the various sectors of their economy, especially agriculture. The impacted counties include: Montezuma, La Plata, Archuleta, Conejos, Costilla, Las Animas, Baca, Prowers, Bent, Otero, Huerfano, Alamosa, Rio Grande, Mineral, Hinsdale, San Juan, Dolores, San Miguel, Ouray, Montrose, Saguache, Custer, Pueblo, Crowley, Kiowa, Cheyenne, Lincoln, El Paso, Elbert, Gunnison, Mesa, Delta, Garfield, Rio Blanco. All of these counties are experiencing severe, extreme or exceptional drought as classified by the [US Drought Monitor](#), and many have already received some level of drought designation from USDA. If present trends continue, other regions and sectors of the entire state's economy may also 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, Public Safety 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 for Montezuma, La Plata, Archuleta, Conejos, Costilla, Las Animas, Baca, Prowers, Bent, Otero, Huerfano, Alamosa, Rio Grande, Mineral, Hinsdale, San Juan, Dolores, San Miguel, Ouray, Montrose, Saguache, Custer, Pueblo, Crowley, Kiowa, Cheyenne, Lincoln, El Paso, Elbert, Gunnison, Mesa, Delta, Garfield, Rio Blanco counties; 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 in 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.

Should you have specific questions about the role of your agency during this activation please contact Taryn Finnessey, Sr. Climate Change Specialist at [taryn.finnessey@state.co.us](mailto:taryn.finnessey@state.co.us) or 303-868-5302.

