



Water Availability Task Force Co-Chairs

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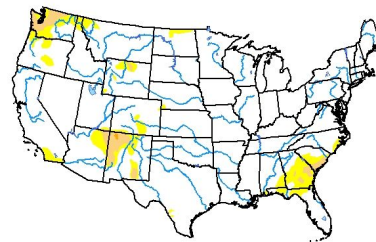
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As a result of consistent fall and winter precipitation, near record breaking snowpack, and near normal reservoir storage levels, the Drought Task Force has made a recommendation to Governor Polis to deactivate the Colorado Drought Mitigation and Response Plan statewide.

While April ended with slightly below average precipitation across the state, May has started off cool and wet and, following a brief warmup, is forecast to end in a similar fashion. May through August is an important period for precipitation accumulation east of the continental divide as much of the annual precipitation falls during this time. Water year to date precipitation remains above average statewide, with some areas still seeing spring snow accumulation. Stream flows have increased reflecting the start of runoff season and reservoir levels are responding.

- As of May 14th, only 11 percent of the State is classified as abnormally dry. This spring has seen the record lowest amount of drought coverage over the continental United States, according to the US Drought Monitor, which has been tracking conditions since 2000.
- El Niño conditions remain, and are likely to continue through summer (70 percent chance) of this year. Historically summer during an El Niño are more likely to be wet than dry, and the NOAA Climate Prediction Center outlooks for the June-July-August period show increased chances of wetter-than-average conditions.
- Current SNOTEL Water Year to-date precipitation in 118 percent of average, with all basins above average.
- SNOTEL snow water equivalent statewide is 155 percent of median with all basins above normal. These figures can fluctuate greatly during the spring season when snowmelt has begun, but storms can still result in accumulation.
- Statewide reservoir storage as of May 1, is 90 percent of average and increasing as the runoff season begins with widespread above average streamflow forecasts. Blue Mesa Reservoir, heavily impacted by the 2018 drought, has increased more than 26 feet in elevation since April 1 and has seen an increase of more than 55,000 acre-feet since May 1.
- Flooding in post wildfire burn scars remains a concern and is being monitored closely. The daily flood threat bulletin can be accessed May 1 through September 30 [HERE](#).

**U.S. Drought Monitor
Continental U.S. (CONUS)**



May 14, 2019
(Released Thursday, May 16, 2019)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

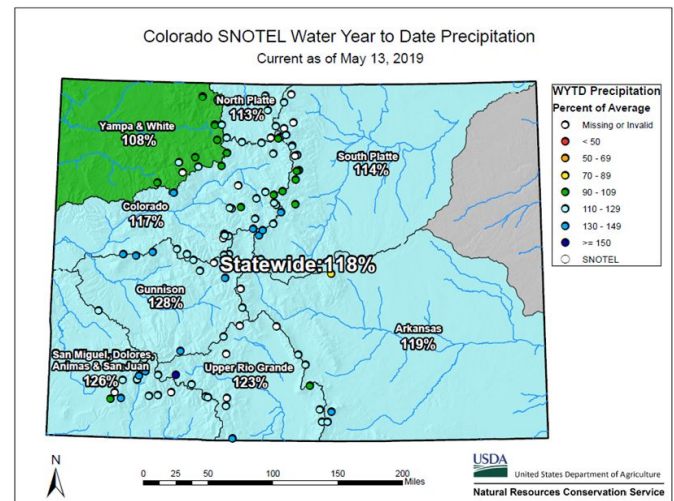
	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	91.16	8.84	2.40	0.04	0.00	0.00
Last Week (05-07-2019)	90.17	9.83	2.53	0.05	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago (02-12-2019)	67.83	32.17	15.61	6.23	1.91	0.06
Start of Calendar Year (01-01-2019)	69.05	30.95	21.90	10.73	3.29	1.14
Start of Water Year (03-23-2019)	51.36	48.64	29.54	17.46	7.49	1.73
One Year Ago (05-15-2018)	54.36	45.64	28.28	16.71	9.50	2.47

Intensity:
 None (White) D0 Abnormally Dry (Yellow) D1 Moderate Drought (Orange) D2 Severe Drought (Red-Orange) D3 Extreme Drought (Red) D4 Exceptional Drought (Dark Red)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:
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droughtmonitor.unl.edu



NOTE: The next Water Availability Task Force Meeting will be held on June 25, 2019 at Colorado Parks and Wildlife; additional information can be found at www.cwcb.state.co.us or by contacting Ben Wade at Ben.Wade@state.co.us