



# COLORADO

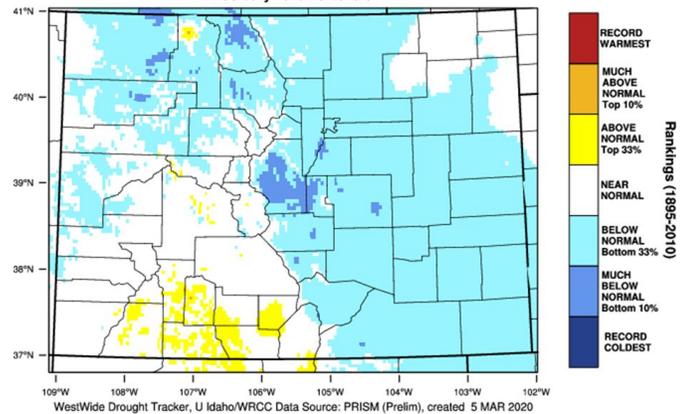
Department of  
Natural Resources

## March 2020 Drought Update

This year's spring and summer drought outlook may be tough to predict, but currently the state's northern mountains and Front Range look strong. There are increasing concerns of dry conditions along the Eastern Plains, in the southwest and San Juans where we are seeing slightly below average snowpacks and reservoir levels. There are reports of extremely dry subsoils on the Eastern Plains. Precipitation averages statewide have slipped from 95 to 90% of average statewide since mid-February. Statewide snowpack has decreased from 110% to 104% since mid-February. Streamflow forecasts are already showing the implications of dry autumn precipitation with forecasts ranging from 54% (Surface Creek near Cedaredge) to 132% (Spinney Reservoir Inflow) of median streamflow values.

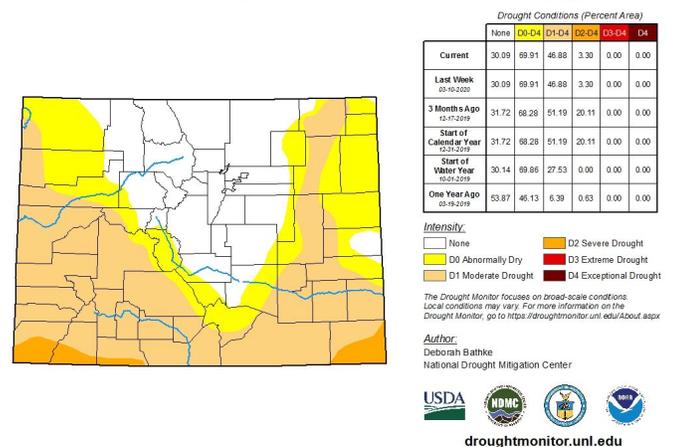
- The 90-day Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) (from Dec 18 to Mar 17) shows below average moisture for the SW and NE and distributed average or slightly above for the central and north mountain regions.
- The U.S. Drought Monitor, released March 19, shows worsening conditions in NE Colorado. D0 (abnormally dry) conditions cover 25% of the state; D1 (moderate) covers 42%; D2 (severe) drought covers 3% of the SE and SW corners; and 30% of the state (north-central) remains drought free.
- ENSO forecasts are still trending toward neutral conditions for spring and summer 2020.
- NOAA's Climate Prediction Center three month outlook maps show increased probability for warmer than average temperatures March through May for much of the state, and equal chances of near, above, or below average precipitation outlooks.
- Reservoir storage remains near to above normal: 84% to 123% of average in all major basins and 107% of average statewide. Last March 2019, statewide reservoirs were at 83% of average.
- SNOTEL Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) sites show statewide snowpack at 104% of record median (as of Mar 19).
- Water providers and water users did not report any unusual impacts or concerns at this time.

Colorado - Mean Temperature  
February 2020 Percentile



U.S. Drought Monitor  
Colorado

March 17, 2020  
(Released Thursday, Mar. 19, 2020)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



### Next Water Availability Task Force Meeting:

APRIL 21, 2020 9:30a - 11:30a

Location TBD

Co-Chairs: Megan Holcomb, CWCB & Tracy Kosloff, DWR

Questions? Contact [ben.wade@state.co.us](mailto:ben.wade@state.co.us)

Additional info at [cwcb.colorado.gov](http://cwcb.colorado.gov)

