



COLORADO

Department of
Natural Resources

April 2020 Drought Update

In western drought reporting, an average water year is cause for celebration. While average statewide snowpack and reservoir levels provide many water managers with above-average relief, our dry southern peaks and windy eastern plains are of notable drought concern. Statewide snowpack peaked at 104% of normal on April 8th, yet melt-out rates may be dramatic across the southern basins. North Central Colorado benefited from repeated snow events throughout late March and April, with the Boulder station breaking the 1908-09 snowfall record on April 16th. Drought Task Force members convened remotely on April 23rd for an annual review of roles and procedure should the State's Drought Plan be activated. The purpose of the Drought Task Force is to direct early implementation of water conservation programs and other drought response measures intended to minimize the state's vulnerabilities to localized drought impacts.

- The 90-day Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) (from Jan. 1 to Apr. 18) shows below average moisture for the SW and SE and above average for the central and north mountain regions.
- The U.S. Drought Monitor, released April 23, shows gradual worsening conditions across all of southern CO compared to preceding months. D0 (abnormally dry) conditions cover 13% of the state; D1 (moderate) covers 25%; D2 (severe) drought covers 29% of the southern edge (*up from 3% in March*); 33% of the state (north-central) remains drought free.
- ENSO forecasts are still trending toward neutral conditions for spring and summer 2020, with a few model traces pointed toward La Nina.
- NOAA's Climate Prediction Center three month outlook maps show increased probability for warmer than average temperatures May through July for much of the state and favorable, slightly higher than average, precipitation outlooks for the Eastern Plains.
- Reservoir storage remains above average for all major basins except the Rio Grande (83%) and Arkansas (93%). Statewide, reservoirs are at 107% of average and 61% capacity.
- Long-term trends confirm our summers are getting hotter. The current seasonal forecast is a reflection of this.
- Water providers and water users did not report any unusual impacts or concerns at this time.

Next Water Availability Task Force Meeting:

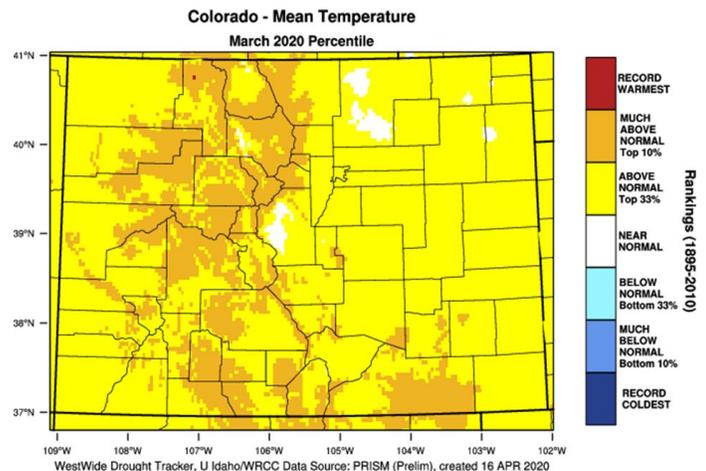
MAY 28, 2020 9:30a - 11:30a

Webinar

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

Questions? Contact ben.wade@state.co.us

Additional info at cwcw.colorado.gov



U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado

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