



February 2015 Drought Update

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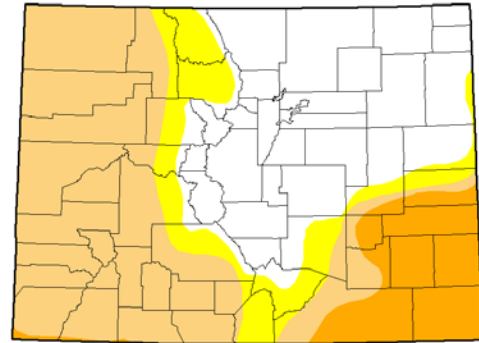
Activation of the State Drought Mitigation and Response Plan, and the activation of the Agricultural Impact Task Force remain in effect to respond to ongoing drought conditions in Southern Colorado.

January was the 15th warmest on record as well as being the driest January statewide since 2003. February precipitation to date statewide is 81% of average. D1 drought conditions have been introduced to the western slope. In the next two weeks, much needed precipitation is forecasted to come to the state that could benefit the western slope and the northwestern part of the state in particular.

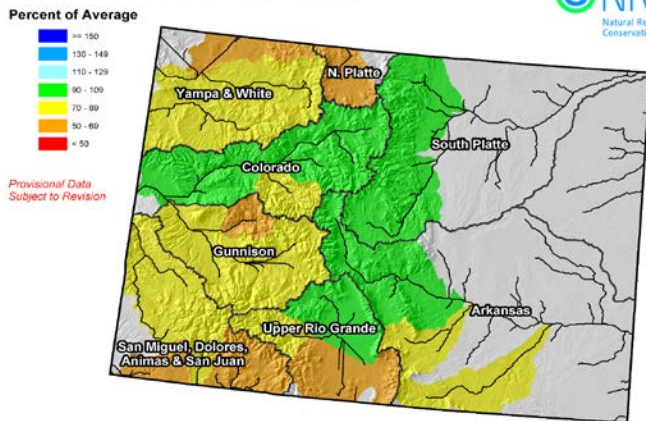
- Year-to-date precipitation at mountain SNOTEL sites, as of February 17, has dropped from 87% of normal on January 20th to 81% statewide. The South Platte basin continues to have the highest snowpack at 105% of normal, while the Upper Rio Grande basin has the lowest at 61% of normal. Six basins need more than 120% of normal precipitation to reach peak snowpack and make up for their big deficits.
- According to NRCS SNOTEL data, January was the driest in the Yampa/White basin in 30 years of collecting snowpack data. The basin experienced 33% of precipitation in January. They have almost seen near average precipitation in February at 86% but they would need to experience 147% of normal snowpack accumulation to reach their normal snowpack peak.
- The Southwest basins and the Rio Grande basins need 207% and 220% respectively of precipitation to reach their normal peak. As of February 17, the Southwest basins have only experienced 18% of average precipitation and the Rio Grande basin has experienced 33% of average precipitation.
- Last month, 103 daily maximum temperature records across Colorado were tied or broken. As of February 15, there have been 199 maximum temperature records tied or broken statewide.
- Reservoir Storage statewide is at 104% of average as of February 1st a slight drop from last month. The lowest reservoir storage in the state continues to be the Upper Rio Grande basin, with 69% of average storage. The South Platte has the highest storage level at 119% of average.
- February 1st streamflow forecasts are near normal for the South Platte, Colorado, and northern portions of the Arkansas and Rio Grande basins. Streamflow forecasts are well below normal for the basins in the southwest, Rio Grande and Yampa basins.
- The Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) for the state is near normal across much of the state. The lowest value in the state reflects low reservoir levels in Platoro reservoir.
- The 8-14 day forecast predicts the state will see below average temperatures and an above average chance for precipitation.

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The US Drought Monitor illustrates current drought conditions across Colorado. The west slope has been degraded from D0 to D1 or a moderate drought classification. 11.5% of the state is experiencing D0 or abnormally dry conditions. 39% is experiencing D1 or moderate drought conditions. 12% of the state is experiencing D2 or severe drought conditions. Currently, 37% of the state remains drought free. Three months ago, 70% of the state was drought free.



Colorado Streamflow Forecast Map

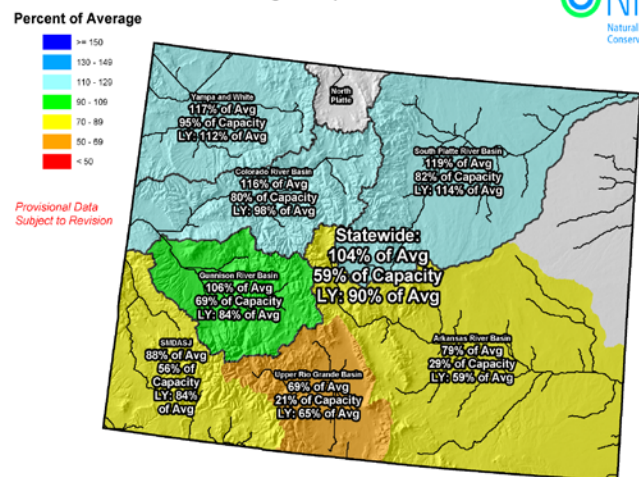


Current as of February 1, 2015

The statewide streamflow forecast map shows a range from 50%-109%. The highest percent of average streamflow forecasts are in the Colorado basin and South Platte. The southern half of the state has the lowest streamflow forecasts as well as the Yampa/White basin. The lowest streamflow forecast is in the Yampa/White basin at 56% of average on the Little Snake River.

Statewide, the reservoir storage is at 104% of average up from 90% of average from last year. The northern portion of the state and the Gunnison basin has above average storage. The lowest reservoir storage in the state is in the Upper Rio Grande basin at 69% of average.

Colorado Reservoir Storage Map



End of January 2015