



# September 2016 Drought Update

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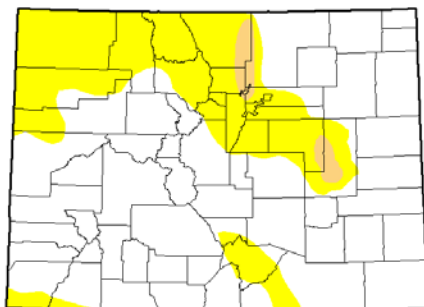
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Following above average temperatures in June and July across the entire state, August was cooler with slightly below average temperatures. Precipitation has varied over the last two months with some basins seeing half of normal moisture while others have had upwards of 150 percent of normal rainfall. The Front Range corridor remains dry and warm and drought conditions have also been expanded into Elbert and Lincoln counties. The forecast for the next two weeks shows mostly dry conditions coupled with moderate temperatures.

- The months of June, July and August were collectively the 13<sup>th</sup> warmest summer period on record. Temperatures in September have been above normal in the southern half of the state and near normal to the north.
- With the exception of the Yampa & White River basins, the state received near to well above average precipitation in August. However, September precipitation is tracking well below average in all basins. Statewide water year-to-date mountain precipitation, as reported from NRCS, is at 96 percent of normal as of September 16th. The 2016 water year ends September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Reservoir storage statewide is 107 percent of normal. The South Platte and Yampa & White basins have the highest storage levels in the state at 112 and 110 percent of average, respectively. The Upper Rio Grande has the lowest storage levels at 91 percent. All other basins are above normal at 104 to 109 percent of average.
- Front Range water providers all reported storage levels ranging from 80 to 126 percent of average, however they did express some concern regarding low stream flows, which this task force will continue to monitor.
- The long term forecast is highly uncertain at this point. El Nino has concluded and ENSO neutral conditions exist. It remains unclear if La Nina conditions will develop. However, should La Nina materialize it does not necessarily mean Colorado will experience drought conditions.

### U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado



September 13, 2016

(Released Thursday, Sep. 15, 2016)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

|                                    | None  | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4   |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Current                            | 71.75 | 28.25 | 1.79  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00 |
| Last Week<br>8/6/2016              | 77.40 | 22.60 | 1.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00 |
| 3 Months Ago<br>6/4/2016           | 96.17 | 3.83  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00 |
| Start of Calendar Year<br>1/1/2016 | 90.02 | 9.98  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00 |
| Start of Water Year<br>8/1/2015    | 71.49 | 28.51 | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00 |
| One Year Ago<br>8/13/2015          | 89.49 | 10.51 | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00 |

#### Intensity:

■ D0 Abnormally Dry     ■ D3 Extreme Drought  
■ D1 Moderate Drought     ■ D4 Exceptional Drought  
■ D2 Severe Drought

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

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<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

26 percent of the state is experiencing D0 or abnormally dry conditions, while D1 has been introduced in the northern Front Range along the I-25 corridor and along the Elbert and Lincoln county line. Going into the snow accumulation season, conditions will continue to be monitored.

**NOTE:** The next Water Availability Task Force Meeting will be held on November 15, 2016 at Colorado Parks and Wildlife Broadway Office; Additional information can be found at [www.cwcb.state.co.us](http://www.cwcb.state.co.us) or by contacting Ben Wade at [Ben.Wade@state.co.us](mailto:Ben.Wade@state.co.us)