



February 2017 Drought Update

Water Availability Task Force Co- Chairs

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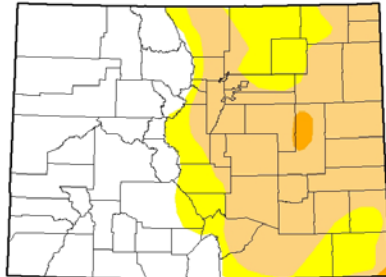
Despite well above average temperatures in February, mountain snowpack continues to accumulate and build on January's record breaking snowfall. Reservoir storage remains above average and at this time water providers have no significant concerns entering into the spring. Agricultural producers, especially those on the eastern plains, are hoping for additional precipitation to alleviate worsening drought conditions.

- Statewide water year- to- date snowpack as of February 14 is at 142 percent of average, and 101% of annual peak accumulation. The Upper Rio Grande currently has the lowest snowpack in the state at 113 percent of normal while the basins of the Southwest have the highest snowpack at 133 percent of normal.
- All basins received well above average precipitation in January ranging from a low of 187 percent in the Yampa & White to a high of 251 percent in the Gunnison. February to-date accumulation has slowed in the south and continued above average in the north; ranging from a low of 42 percent of average in the Rio Grande to a high of 160 percent of average in the South Platte. Statewide January precipitation was 217 percent of average and February to -date is at 108 percent of average.
- Reservoir storage statewide remains high at 106% of normal. The Yampa & White River basins along with the Southwestern basins have the highest storage levels in the state at 121 and 115% of average, respectively. The Upper Rio Grande has the lowest storage levels at 98% percent.
- Following near average temperatures in January, February to date has been well above normal statewide, with some regions experiencing temperatures 16 degrees above average. This has lead to precipitation falling in the form of rain, rather than snow as high as 10K feet, an uncommon occurrence for this time of year.
- The Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI), calculated based on February 1 streamflow forecast and reservoir storage, is moderately wet across most of the state.
- Despite significant mountain precipitation, much of the eastern plains remain in some level of drought classification following a warm and dry fall. 16 percent of the state is currently experiencing abnormally dry conditions (D0) while 36 percent is classified as moderate drought (D1), less than 1 percent of the state, mostly in Lincoln County, is experiencing severe drought. Persistent dryness has resulted in an expansion of D1 conditions in Yuma, Washington and Logan counties.
- Neutral ENSO conditions are now present, and are favored to continue through the middle of the year.
- Short term forecasts show a probability of above average precipitation across most of the state over the next month, with continued warm temperatures over the next two weeks.

NOTE: The next Water Availability Task Force Meeting will be held on March 21, 2017 at Colorado Parks and Wildlife Broadway Office; Additional information can be found at www.cwcb.state.co.us or by contacting Ben Wade at Ben.Wade@state.co.us

February 2017 Drought Update

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado



February 14, 2017
(Released Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	46.88	16.20	35.17	0.75	0.00	0.00
Last Week 3/15/17	47.49	17.16	34.60	0.75	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 11/15/16	1.60	63.19	33.06	2.15	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 1/1/17	31.88	30.91	34.34	2.88	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10/1/16	70.49	27.07	2.45	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 2/14/16	92.65	7.35	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.

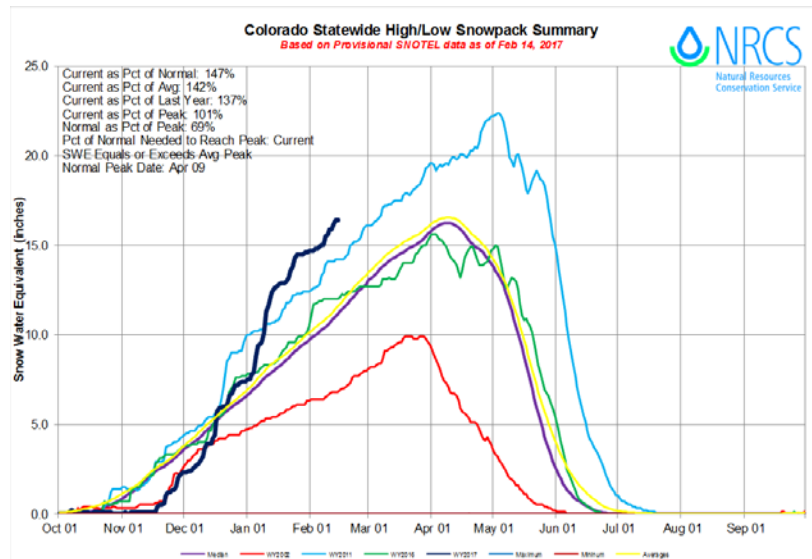
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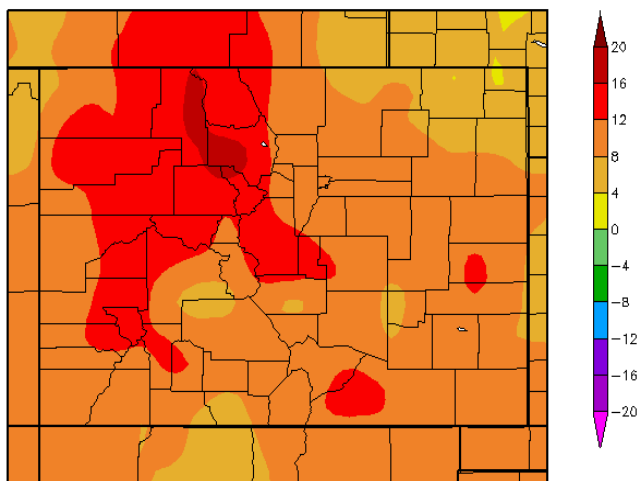
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

The US Drought Monitor illustrates persistent dry conditions along the eastern plains of Colorado. The majority of this (36%) is moderate drought. Spring precipitation is needed to sustain dry land crops on the plains.

Snow accumulation water year-to-date for the State indicates that normal peak accumulation has already been reached, 2 months ahead of normal.



Departure from Normal Temperature (F) 2/1/2017 - 2/13/2017



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