



COLORADO

Department of Natural Resources

August 2020 Drought Update

As of August 25th, dry conditions cover 100% of the state with 91.6% of Colorado in severe, extreme, or exceptional drought categories. The Water Availability Task Force and drought-plan-activated Agriculture and Drought Task Forces continue to respond to challenging multi-hazard conditions around the state. In lieu of the widely valued 2018 in-person southwestern drought tour, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, Colorado Department of Agriculture, and Colorado State University Water Center are co-leading a [“Virtual Drought Tour.”](#) This multimedia outreach effort aims to capture direct reports from producers and communities significantly impacted by drought. The primary audience for anecdotal reports, stories, questions, and suggestions are the three interagency drought teams (listed above) and state legislators. Ag Task Force representatives across the state may also record local interviews where possible and safe.

For the first time this year, the August 25th [U.S. Drought Monitor](#), logged abnormally dry or drought conditions in 100% of the state. D4 (exceptional) drought conditions returned and continue to hold in Kiowa county. D3 (extreme) conditions now cover 36.47% of the state; D2 (severe drought) covers 54.69%; D1 (moderate drought) covers 7.25%; and D0 (abnormally dry) covers only 1.2% of the state (stats from Sept 1 monitor).

The 90-day [Standardized Precipitation Index](#) (SPI) (June 6 to Sept 6) continues to show deeply below average moisture for the far majority of Colorado with deeper shortfalls more prevalent in the northwest quadrant of the state.

El Niño Southern Oscillation ([ENSO](#)) conditions continue to show borderline La Niña conditions, with the atmospheric response at weak La Niña or neutral. Sea surface temperature outlooks continue with 60% chance of La Niña this fall and 55% change through winter.

NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center’s [three month outlook](#) maps continue to show very high confidence for above average temperatures Sept through Nov., with highest confidence over the four-corners region and a 40% probability of below average precipitation Sept. through Nov. for Colorado.

Compared to last month’s (Aug 1st) map, the VegDri Index shows notable deepening of severe and extreme vegetation drought conditions statewide. VegDri is a satellite derived product that looks at how well plants are photosynthesizing.

Statewide reservoir storage is at 53% capacity which is 85% of average for Sept 1st. Last year at this time, reservoirs were at 73% capacity and 114% of average ([Sept 1 NRCS report](#)).

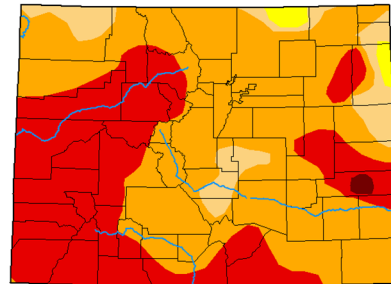
Next Water Availability Task Force Meeting:

SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 9:30a - 11:30a - Webinar
 Co-Chairs: Megan Holcomb, CWCB & Tracy Kosloff, DWR
 Questions? Contact ben.wade@state.co.us
 Additional info at cwc.colorado.gov/drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado

September 1, 2020
 (Released Thursday, Sep. 3, 2020)
 Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)						
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4	
Current	0.00	100.00	98.80	91.55	36.95	0.38	
Last Week 08-25-2020	0.00	100.00	98.26	93.29	36.52	0.38	
3 Months Ago 06-02-2020	23.22	76.78	63.50	47.08	19.46	0.00	
Start of Calendar Year 12-31-2019	31.72	68.28	51.19	20.11	0.00	0.00	
Start of Water Year 10-01-2019	30.14	69.86	27.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	
One Year Ago 09-03-2019	58.99	41.01	3.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	



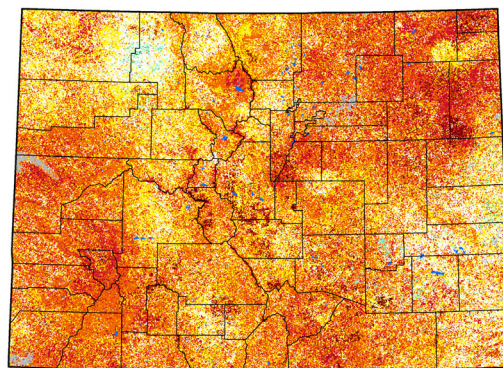
Intensity:
 None (White), D0 Abnormally Dry (Yellow), D1 Moderate Drought (Orange), D2 Severe Drought (Red), D3 Extreme Drought (Dark Red), D4 Exceptional Drought (Black)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/about.aspx>

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Vegetation Drought Response Index Complete: Colorado

August 30, 2020



Vegetation Condition
 Extreme Drought (Dark Red), Severe Drought (Red), Moderate Drought (Orange), Pre-drought stress (Yellow), Near Normal (White), Unusually Moist (Light Green), Very Moist (Green), Extreme Moist (Dark Green), Out of Season (Grey), Water (Blue)

