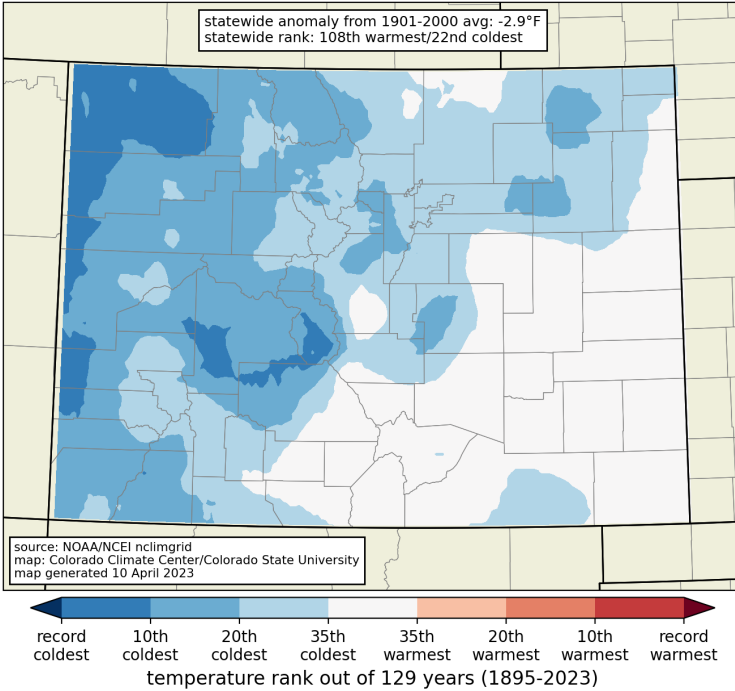




March 2023 Colorado Monthly Climate Summary

temperature

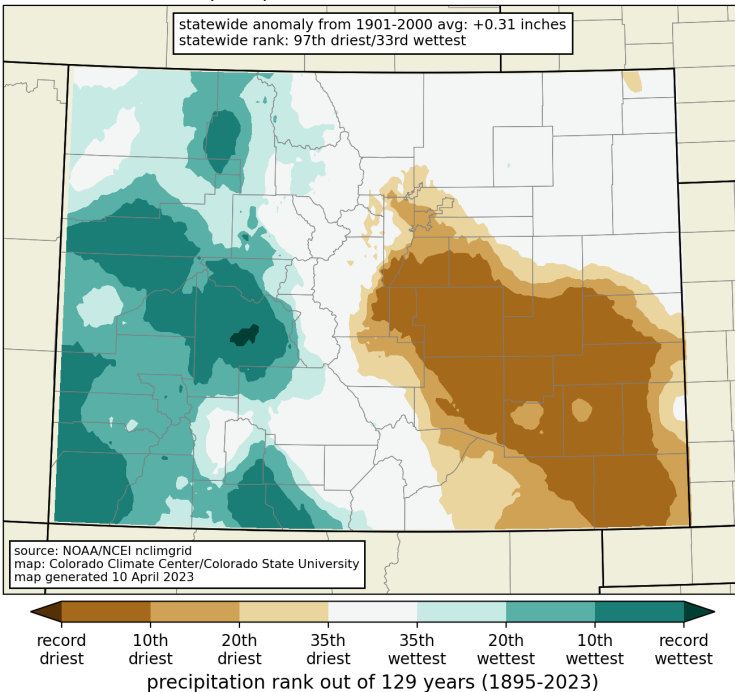
average temperature rank: March 2023



It was a cold March in Colorado, no matter how you look at it. Statewide it was the 22nd coldest on record, and in parts of western Colorado it was a top-10 cold March. March was also the 5th straight month with temperatures below the 1991-2020 average.

precipitation

precipitation rank: March 2023

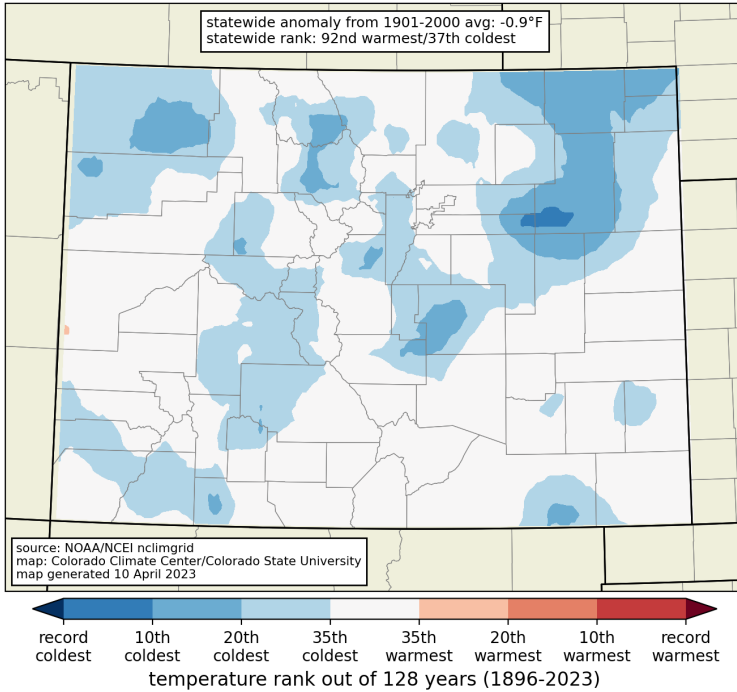


Precipitation in March was very divided across the state. Much of western Colorado saw huge snowfall in March, while at the same time there was very little precipitation in southeastern Colorado. For western Colorado it was the 6th wettest March, but for southeastern Colorado it was the 16th driest on record.



temperature

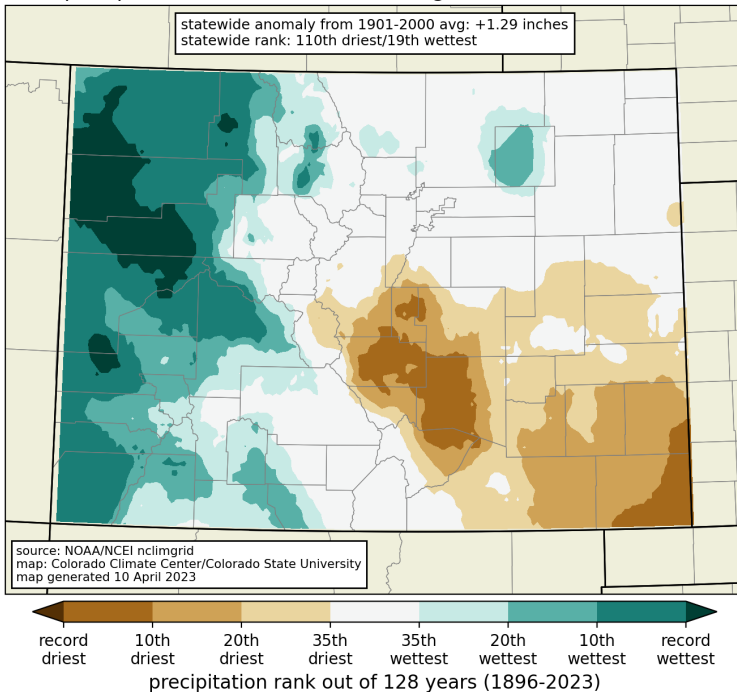
average temperature rank: 6 months ending March 2023 (Oct-Mar)



We're now halfway through the water year, so let's check in on those numbers as well. In terms of temperature, the first half of the water year has been colder than average, especially in northeast and northwest Colorado. Statewide, it's been the coldest first half of the water year since 2010.

precipitation

precipitation rank: 6 months ending March 2023 (Oct-Mar)



In northwestern Colorado, many areas have had their wettest first half of the water year on record! The situation looks quite different in southeastern Colorado, however, with some areas seeing a top-10 dry October through March period. Overall, it ranks as the 19th wettest first half of the water year, and wettest since 2019.



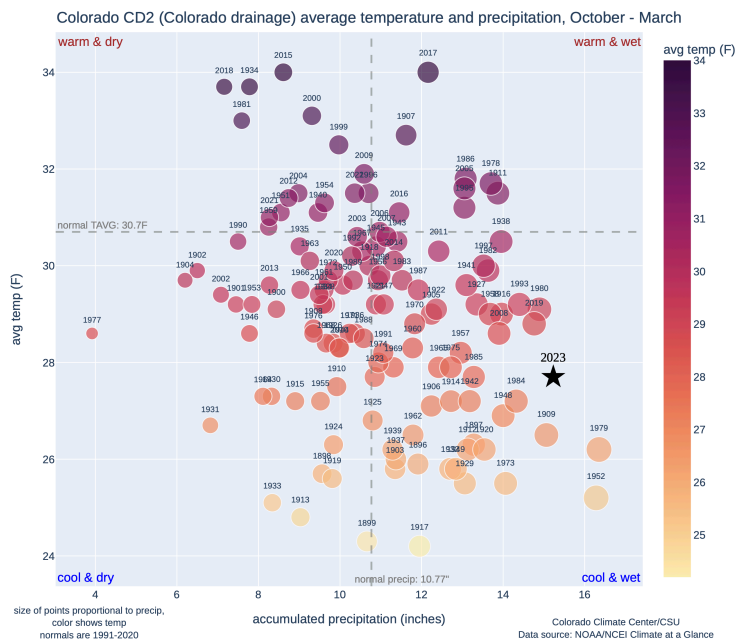
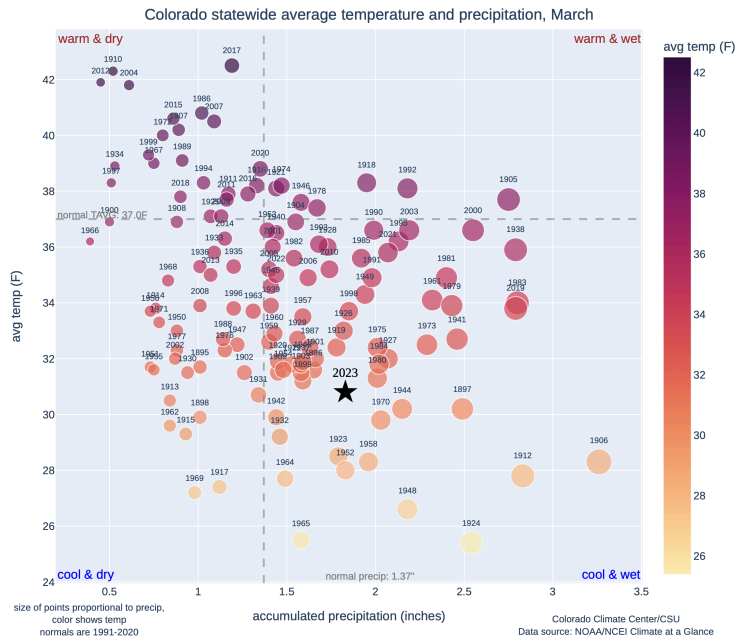
quadrant charts

Each dot plots the precipitation on the x-axis and the temperature on the y-axis. Dots are colored based on temperature and size is based on precipitation. The current year is denoted with a star. Long-term averages are denoted by the dashed lines.

Overall, March fell into the cool and wet quadrant. Statewide, it was the coldest March since 1970, ending 2.9° F below the 20th century average and a whopping 6.2° F below the 1991-2020 average for March! That also demonstrates how much warming there's been in March in recent decades: a modest cold anomaly in the 20th century is now an extreme cold anomaly.

This chart focuses on the first half of water year 2023 in western Colorado. It's the 3rd wettest start to the water year in this region, behind only 1979 and 1952, and the coldest first half of the water year since 1985.

[view all quadrant charts](#)

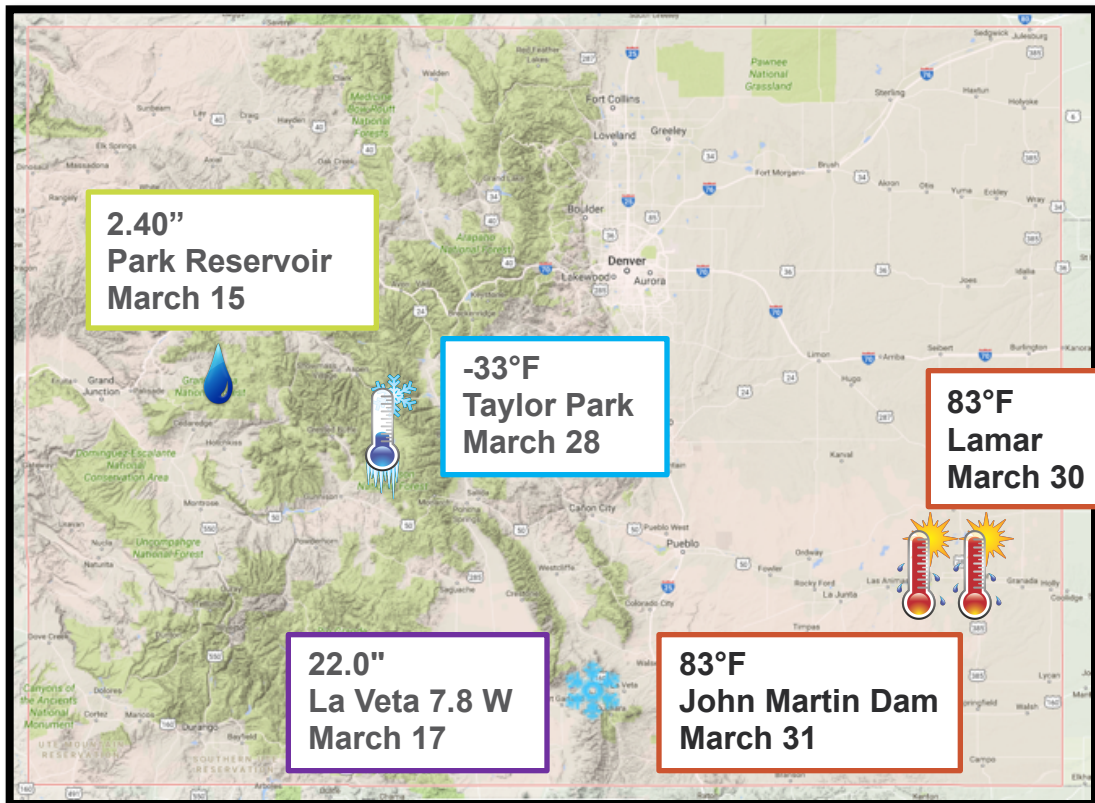


records tied and broken

	High Max	Low Max	High Min	Low Min	Precip	Snow
Daily	0/0	47/245	8/37	25/264	53/170	7/19
Monthly	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/5	0/0
All-time	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0

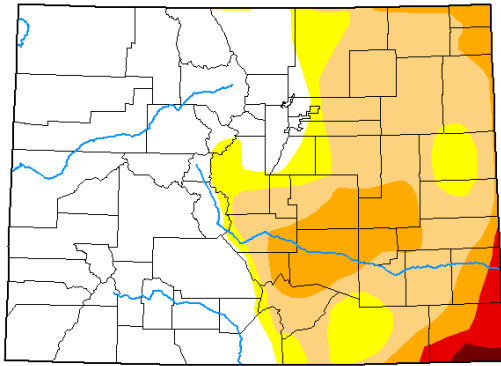
Tied/**Broken**, from NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information

state extremes



drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado



April 4, 2023
(Released Thursday, Apr. 6, 2023)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	52.49	47.51	37.88	12.75	2.24	0.43
Last Week 03-28-2023	51.97	48.03	35.94	9.05	2.24	0.43
3 Months Ago 01-03-2023	39.97	60.03	33.83	12.28	1.91	0.01
Start of Calendar Year 01-03-2023	39.97	60.03	33.83	12.28	1.91	0.01
Start of Water Year 09-31-2022	15.46	84.54	45.65	15.47	3.73	0.57
One Year Ago 04-05-2022	0.00	100.00	82.85	31.94	4.32	0.13

Intensity

None	D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry	D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought	D4 Exceptional Drought

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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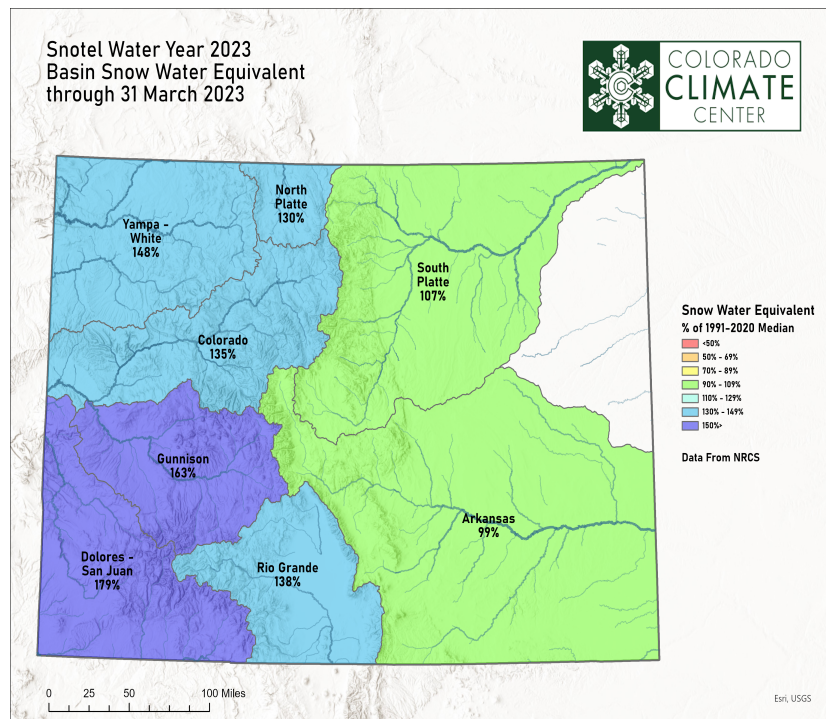
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Some drought improvement occurred over the Sangre de Cristos and in the northern San Luis Valley. A few areas in central and eastern CO saw degradation, but overall there was minimal changes in drought during the month of March.

[Colorado Drought Update Page](#)

snowpack

At the end of March, statewide average snowpack was 139% of average. This is close to the time of peak snowpack, and all of the basins west of the Continental Divide are well above average. The South Platte is slightly above average and the Arkansas basin got close to near average in March after trailing most of the winter.



CCC in the news

- ❑ [Fort Collins under high wind warning with gusts nearing 60 mph possible](#)
 - The Coloradoan, March 31, Russ Schumacher
- ❑ [CSU weather model extended advance warning time for killer Mississippi tornadoes](#)
 - The Coloradoan, March 30, Russ Schumacher
- ❑ [Machine learning model helps forecasters improve confidence in storm prediction](#)
 - Science Daily, March 30, Russ Schumacher
- ❑ [Why were Poudre School District schools open Monday during the biggest storm of the year?](#)
 - The Coloradoan, March 27, Russ Schumacher
- ❑ [Wyoming, Colorado need people to report precipitation for life-saving network](#)
 - The Fence Post, March 17, Peter Goble
- ❑ [Colorado's healthy snowpack promises to offer some relief for strained water supplies](#)
 - The Colorado Sun, March 14, Becky Bolinger
- ❑ [Artificial intelligence now used as a severe weather forecasting tool](#)
 - KXAN Austin, March 13, Russ Schumacher
- ❑ [Solid runoff season looking likely thanks to continued snowfall](#)
 - Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, March 11, Peter Goble
- ❑ [Colorado faces less impact from warmer winters](#)
 - KKCO News, March 10, Russ Schumacher

