



## AUGUST 2013 DROUGHT UPDATE

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***Activation of Phase 2 & 3 of the State Drought Mitigation and Response Plan, and the activation of the Agricultural & Municipal Impact Task Force remain in effect to respond to ongoing drought conditions throughout Colorado.***

Following above average temperatures in July, August to-date has seen below average temperatures for most of the state. Some areas have seen temperatures 3-4 degrees below average, helping to keep down evapotranspiration rates. Strong July and August rains have also helped to keep municipal demand lower, while elevating drought conditions across large portions of the state. Reservoir storage, especially across southern Colorado, remains quite low and providers are hoping for a strong snow accumulation season to fill the deficit. Monsoonal moisture on the eastern plains has brought much needed relief to the agricultural community, but soil moisture remains low and a full recovery will take years.

- After 63 consecutive weeks with 100% of the state classified as experiencing some level of drought, a small portion (1.5%) of Northern Colorado is no longer classified. The August 20, 2013 US Drought Monitor shows 98.5% of Colorado continues to experience some level of drought classification. Due to monsoonal moisture, conditions across the state have improved over the last month. D0 (abnormally dry) classification has expanded across the northern Front Range, while D1 (moderate) conditions decreased and now cover 32% of the state. D2 (severe) conditions comprise 37% and D3 (extreme) accounts for an additional 22%. 3% of the state, isolated to the Arkansas River Basin is experiencing D4 conditions (exceptional drought).
- July precipitation was well above average statewide at 128% of normal, August to date precipitation is currently average at 100% of normal, statewide. This ranges from a low of 76% of average in the South Platte to 133% of average in the Upper Rio Grande. Since October 1, 2012 the state as a whole has received 83% of average precipitation, it is unlikely that any basin will reach average annual precipitation levels by the end of the water year on September 30th.
- Seasonal summer demands have led to a slight decline in overall statewide storage, currently at 70% of average. The Rio Grande and the basins of Southwestern Colorado have the lowest storage levels at 40% of average, well below where the basins were this time last year. All but two basins (the Upper Colorado and the South Platte) have storage levels below where they were this time last year. The San Juan, Dolores, Animas and San Miguel basins show the most significant decline in storage with 37% less than this time last year.
- Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) values remain largely negative and some have dropped since last month. The Colorado Headwaters which sits at +0.04 due to reservoir storage, is the only positive value in the state. The August SWSI uses the observed streamflow measured during July rather than a forecasted flow. Many streamflows across the state remain below average.
- The Climate Prediction Center drought outlook released August 15<sup>th</sup> and valid for August 15- November 2013 illustrates persistent drought across most of Colorado with some relief in the San Luis Valley and a likely elimination of drought conditions in the northern Front Range.
- ENSO conditions remain neutral and ENSO-neutral is favored into the Northern Hemisphere through fall 2013.

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## U.S. Drought Monitor

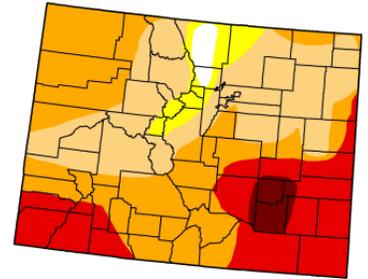
August 20, 2013  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

### Colorado

The US Drought Monitor illustrates current drought conditions across Colorado. Most of the state continues to experience severe drought conditions, although many improvements have been made across the eastern plains over the last month.

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	1.53	98.47	93.81	61.74	25.07	2.90
Last Week (08/13/2013 map)	1.53	98.47	93.82	68.72	26.33	3.04
3 Months Ago (05/21/2013 map)	0.00	100.00	93.18	71.71	23.84	15.84
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	95.06	53.47	13.48
Start of Water Year (09/25/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	61.75	16.89
One Year Ago (08/14/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.96	68.37	9.19



Intensity:



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

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

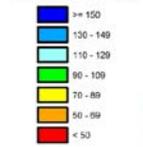


Released Thursday, August 22, 2013  
Michael Brewer, National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

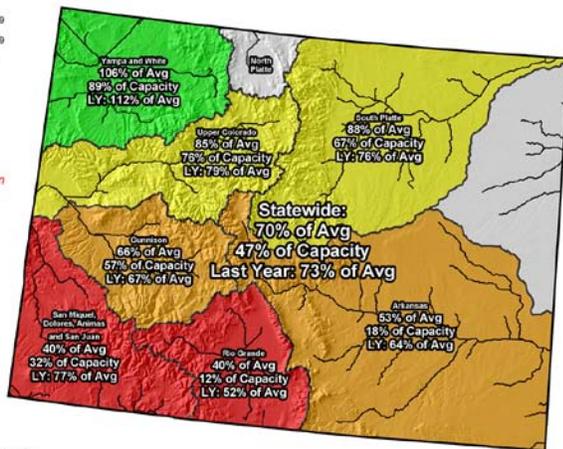
### Colorado Reservoir Storage Map



Percent of Average



Provisional Data  
Subject to Revision

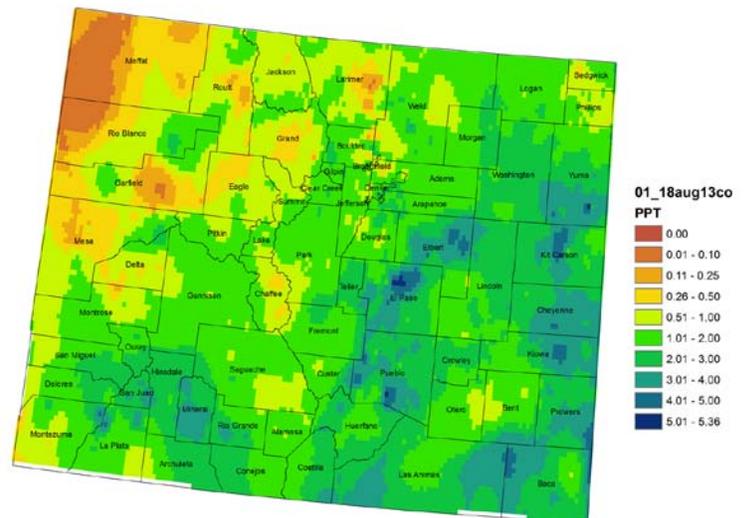


End of July 2013

Statewide reservoir storage ranges widely from 40% of average in the Rio Grande to 104% in the Yampa/White. As a whole the state storage levels sit at 70% of average, 3% lower than where levels were this time last year.

Monsoonal moisture in July and August has brought much needed relief to the eastern plains and southern Colorado. Moisture along the northern Front Range has been significant enough to eliminate drought conditions in an isolated region. While moisture is not nearly enough to end the drought it has allowed for the development of some cover in areas where dust storms have been problematic. This vegetation, even if weeds, will help better hold down soils.

### Colorado Month to Date Precipitation (in) 1 - 18 August 2013



NOTE: The next WATF meeting will be held September 18, 2013 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)