



COLORADO

Colorado Water
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

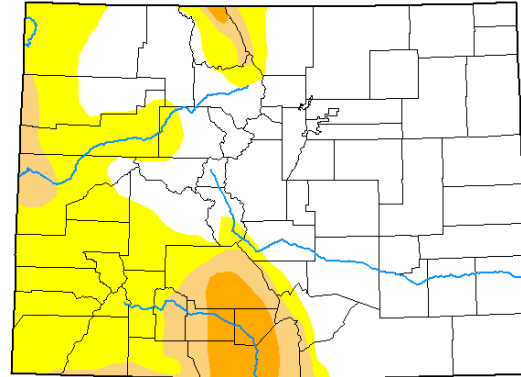
Hydrology Summary: South Platte River Basin

March 5, 2024

EAC/RCC Spring 2024 Meeting

Temperature and Drought Conditions:

Temperatures during the first four months of the water year ranked 10th warmest in the 129-year record across the state. The South Platte basin has experienced a very warm water year to date. 2023 was a good water year across the entire South Platte. Currently, the South Platte basin is not classified under any drought conditions.

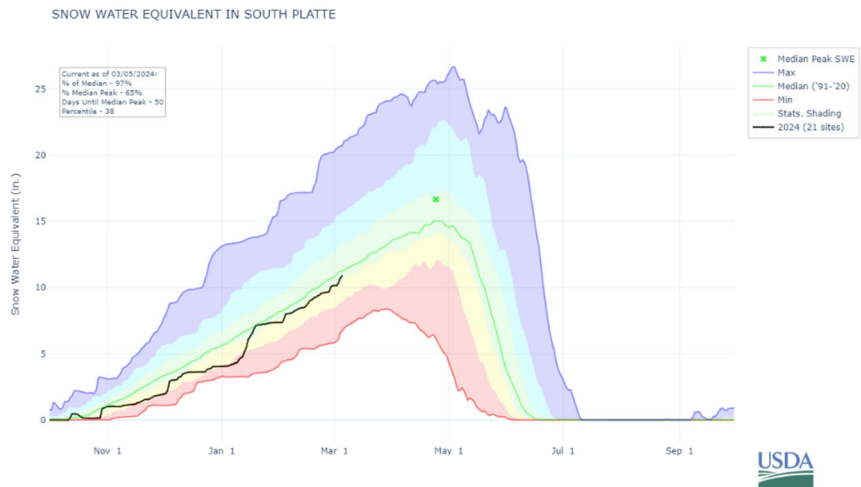


US Drought Monitor, [source](#)

Snowpack and Reservoir Storage:

Snow water equivalent (SWE) has improved considerably across the state and in the South Platte Basin since January when SWE was as low as 68% of median. Currently the statewide SWE is 95% of median. In the South Platte Basin, the SWE is 97% of median. The Colorado basin SWE is 107% of median. Reservoir conditions this year is nearly opposite of what we experienced last year. Coming off a good water year last year and having an unusually warm winter has placed reservoirs in the lower South Platte basin at full or nearly full conditions.

Seasonal outlook: The spring seasonal outlook (Mar-Apr-May) indicates uncertainty for both temperature and precipitation. Climate models may be indicating the possibility of a wetter March. The El Niño signal is strong for the rest of winter and into early spring, which typically favors wetter conditions along the western slope, mountains east of the Continental Divide, and Front Range areas. Spring conditions are very important in determining the water year in the lower South Platte, and the next few months are critical in determining how spring operations will play out.



Snow Water Equivalent in the SP basin, [source](#)

CWCB Water Conditions Monitoring Committee (WCMC): The CWCB convenes monthly WCMC meetings to monitor and report statewide conditions that affect Colorado's water supply, including snowpack, reservoir storage, streamflow, etc. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024.



References

30-day forecast: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/30day/>

Colorado Climate Center: <https://climate.colostate.edu/>

Colorado DWR, Division 1 office: <https://dwr.colorado.gov/division-offices/division-1-office>

Colorado DWR, Drought & Surface Water Supply Index: <https://dwr.colorado.gov/services/water-administration/drought-and-swsi>

Colorado's Water Availability Task Force: <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/water-availability-flood-task-forces>

Drought Monitor: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Maps/MapArchive.aspx>

Drought Monitor Class Change: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Maps/ChangeMaps.aspx>

High Plains Regional Climate Center: <https://hprcc.unl.edu/maps.php?map=ACISClimateMaps>

National Weather Service: https://www.weather.gov/bou/co_precipitationtemperature

NRCS, Water Supply and Data Products:
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/wcc/home/quicklinks/states/colorado/products/watersupply>

Snow Water Equivalent, Colorado: https://www.weather.gov/bou/co_snowpack

Snow Water Equivalent, South Platte Basin:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/co/snow/products/?cid=nrcs144p2_063323

Three Month Precipitation and Temperature Outlooks:
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=1