



Drought Information Statement for South Central and Southeast Colorado

Valid May 19th, 2024

Issued By: NWS Pueblo, Colorado

Contact Information: nws.pueblo@noaa.gov

- This product will be updated June 12th, 2024 or sooner if drought conditions change significantly.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/pub/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/> for regional drought status updates.

- Drought deepens across portions of the southeast Plains
- Drought improves across portions of south central Colorado





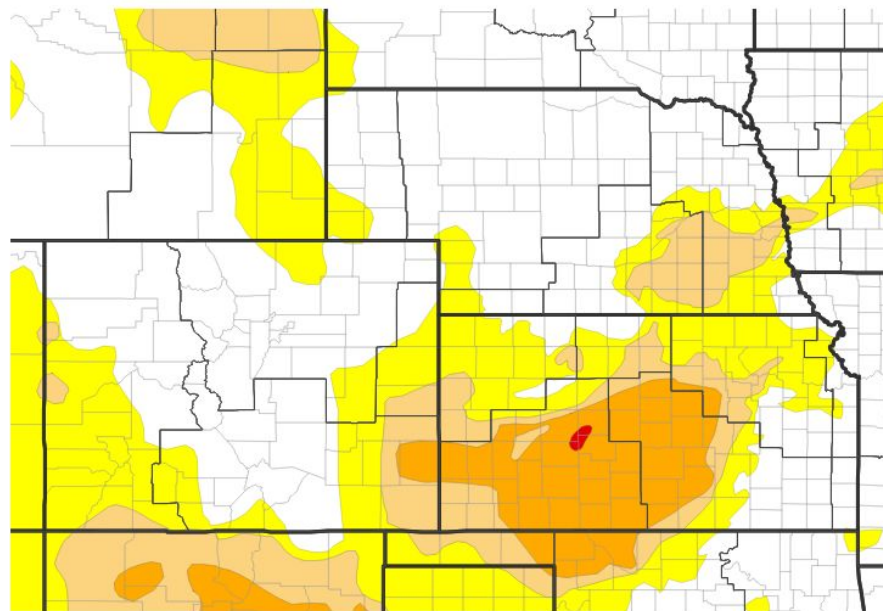
U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Colorado

Valid Tuesday May 14th, 2024

- Drought intensity and Extent
 - **D4 (Exceptional Drought):** N/A
 - **D3 Extreme Drought:** N/A.
 - **D2 Severe Drought:** Most of Prowers County into extreme eastern portions of Bent County.
 - **D1 Moderate Drought:** Portions of Kiowa, Bent, Prowers and Baca Counties.
 - **D0: Abnormally Dry:** Portions of Kiowa, Crowley, Otero, Bent, Las Animas, and Baca Counties, as well as portions of Saguache, Mineral, Rio Grande, Conejos and Costilla Counties.

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor



Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 05/14/24





Recent Change in Drought Intensity

- Four Week Drought Monitor Class Change.
 - Drought Worsened: Portions of the southeast Plains.
 - No Change: Most of south central Colorado.
 - Drought Improved: Portions of the higher terrain along the Continental Divide, the San Luis Valley and southeast Mountains.

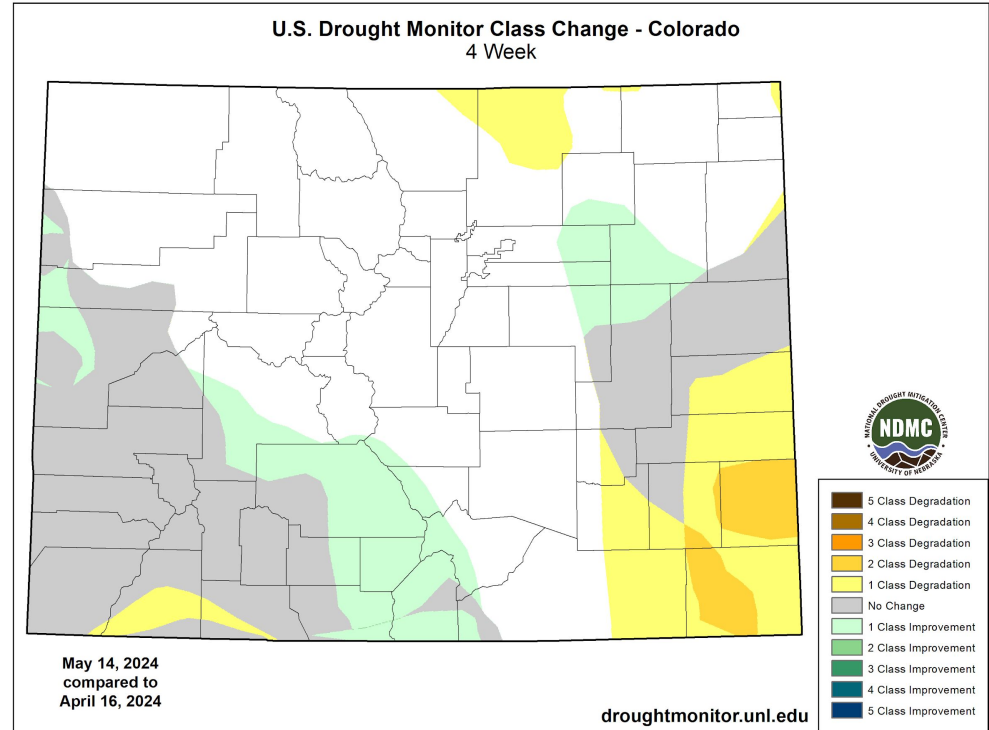


Image Caption: [Drought Monitor Colorado 4 Week Change Map](#)
valid May 14th, 2024





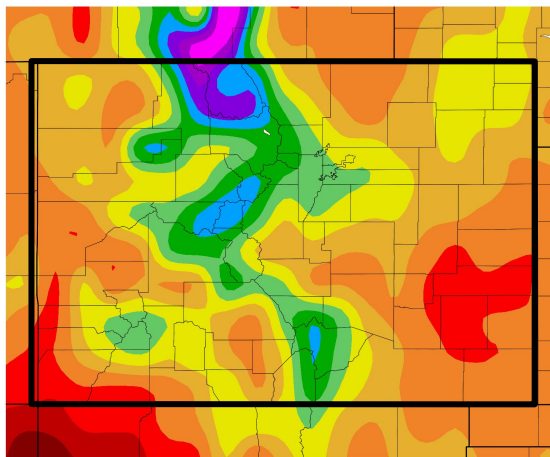
Precipitation

Links to the latest [HPRCC Precipitation Accumulation](#) and [Departure from Normal](#) for the past 60 days

Much of April saw warm, dry and windy conditions across south central and southeast Colorado. However, two storm systems at the end of April and two more through the month of May thus far, have brought widespread precipitation to areas over and near the higher terrain.

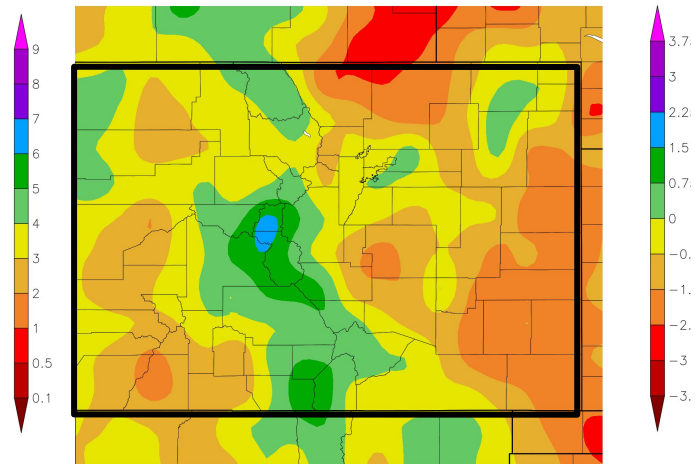
Portions of the far southeastern Plains have missed out on much of the precipitation associated with these passing weather systems.

Precipitation (in)
3/20/2024 – 5/18/2024



Generated 5/19/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
3/20/2024 – 5/18/2024



NOAA Regional Climate Centers 24 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Center





Summary of Impacts

Links: See/submit [Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#) and view the [Drought Impacts Reporter](#)

Hydrologic Impacts

- April precipitation and snowpack was below median, however, May storms thus far, has boosted snowpack, especially across the northern basins. ([NRCS Colorado Snowpack](#))

Agricultural Impacts

- Soil moisture at and above normal across south central Colorado with soil moisture deficits developing across the southeast Plains. ([CPC Daily Soil Moisture Ranking](#))

Fire Hazard Impacts

- Spring moisture and temperatures has aided in green up and has lowered fire danger across most of the snow free areas of south central and southeast Colorado.

Mitigation Actions

- Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information.



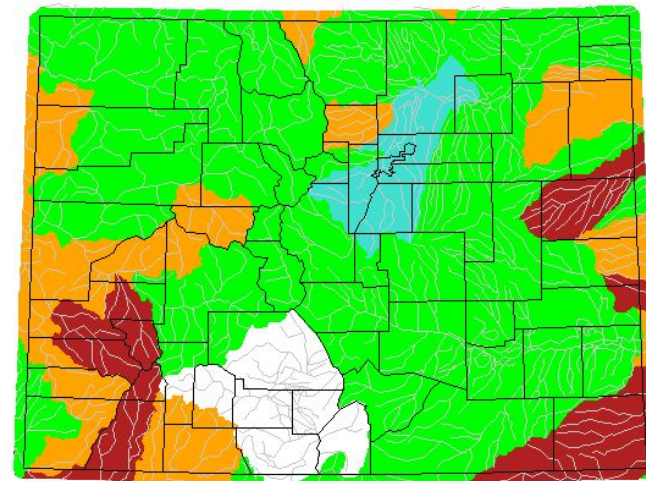


Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

Links to [Current NRCS Mountain Precipitation](#) and [NRCS StreamFlow Forecast \(January-June\)](#)

Saturday, May 18, 2024

- Current 7 day average stream flows are at or above normal across most of south central and southeast Colorado, save the far southeast Plains.
- NRCS data indicated **statewide mountain precipitation** for the month of April was at 81 percent of median, as compared to 71 percent of median at this time last year. Water Year to date precipitation is now down to 98 percent of median, as compared to 113 percent at this time last year.
- In the **Arkansas basin**, April precipitation came in at 62 percent of median, as compared to 71 percent of median at this time last year. Water Year to date precipitation is now down to 99 percent of median, as compared to 90 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the **Upper Rio Grande basin**, April precipitation came in at 53 percent of median, as compared to 58 percent of median at this time last year. Water Year to date precipitation is now down to 88 percent of median, as compared to 104 percent of median at this time last year.



USGS

| Explanation - Percentile classes | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------|---------|
| Low | <10 Much below normal | 10-24 Below normal | 25-75 Normal | 76-90 Above normal | >90 Much above normal | High | No Data |

Image Caption: [USGS 7 day average streamflow for Colorado](#)
valid May 18th, 2024



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Hydrologic Conditions Colorado Snowpack

Link to [USDA NRCS Colorado Water Supply Outlook Report \(January-June\)](#)

- On May 1st, NRCS data indicated [Colorado Statewide Snowpack](#) was at 90 percent of median. Storms through May thus far, has boosted snowpack, especially northern basins.
- In the [Arkansas basin](#), May 1st snowpack was at 84 percent of median. May 1st NRCS streamflow forecasts ranged from 52% of median at Grape Creek near Westcliffe to 127% of median at Chalk Creek near Nathrop.
- In the [Upper Rio Grande basin](#), May 1st snowpack was at 56 percent of median. May 1st NRCS streamflow forecasts ranged from 32% of median at Sangre de Cristo Creek to 116% of median at Saguache Creek near Saguache.

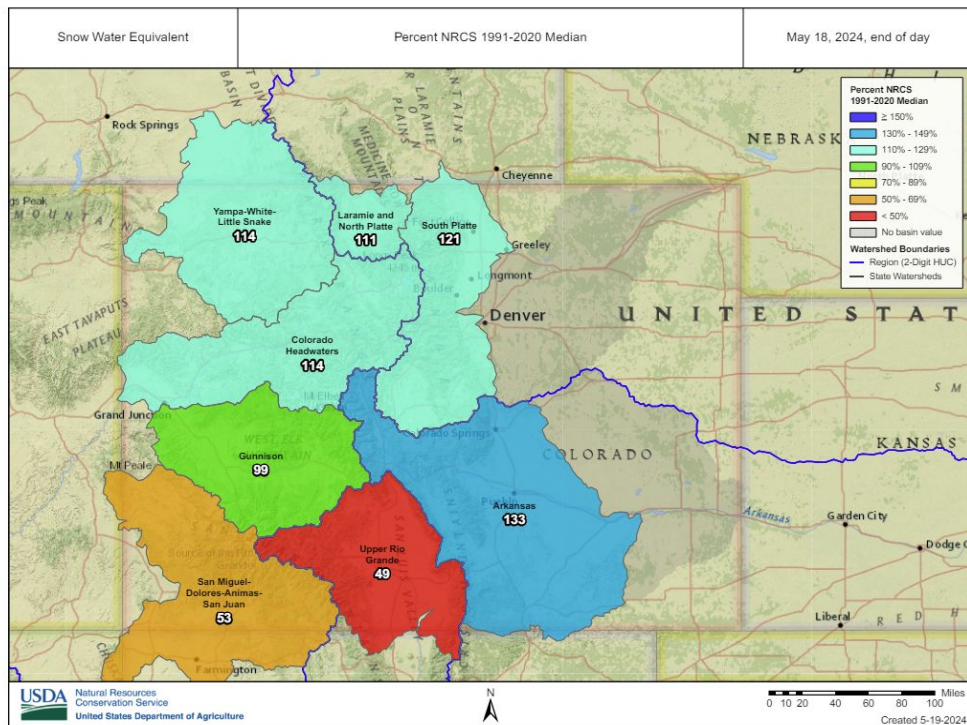


Image Caption: Current [USDA NRCS Colorado SNOWTEL SWE % of Normal](#)



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Agricultural and Water Storage Impacts

Link to the latest [USDA Colorado Crop Progress and Condition Report](#)

- CPC data indicates soil moisture around seasonal norms across south central Colorado with some deficits indicated across portions of southeast Colorado.

Calculated Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile
MAY 18, 2024

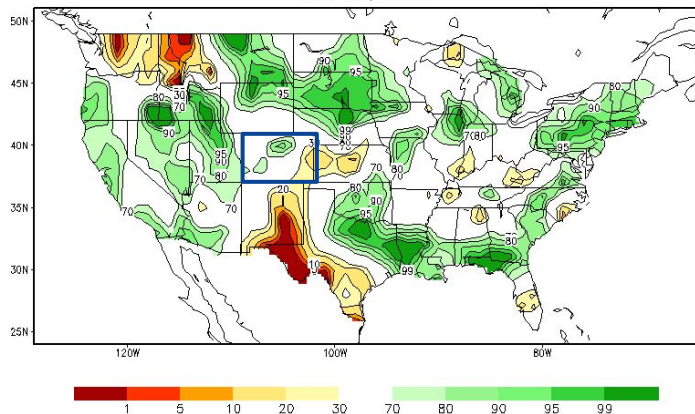


Image Caption: [CPC Daily Soil Moisture Ranking](#)
valid May 18th, 2024

- NRCS data indicated [statewide Colorado Reservoir Storage](#) was at 99 percent of median at the end of April, as compared to 86 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the Arkansas basin, reservoir storage was at 108 percent of median at the end of April, as compared to 91 percent of median at this time last year.
- In the Rio Grande basin, reservoir storage was at 113 percent of median at the end of April, as compared to 104 percent of median at this time last year.





Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center](#).

- Mid May moisture has helped with green up and has lowered fire danger across most of the snow free areas of south central and southeast Colorado.

Link to [Latest Fire Restrictions across the state of Colorado](#)

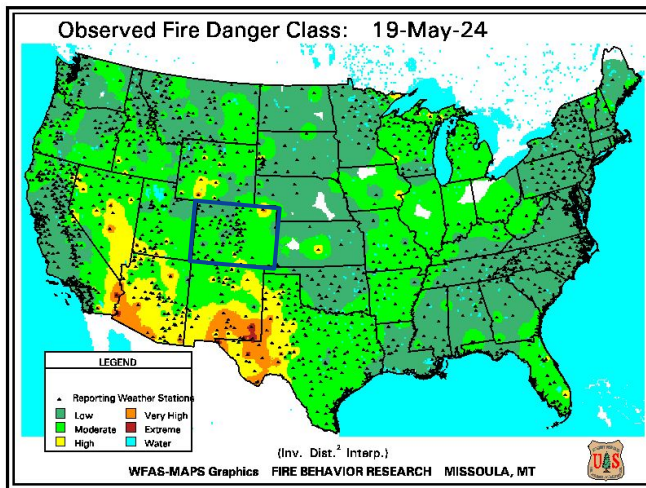


Image Caption: [Wildland Fire Assessment System Observed Fire Danger](#) valid May 19th, 2024

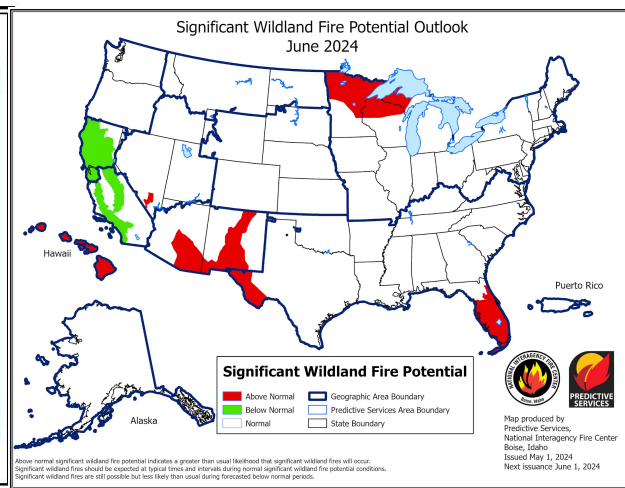


Image Caption: [NIFC Monthly Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#) valid June 2024





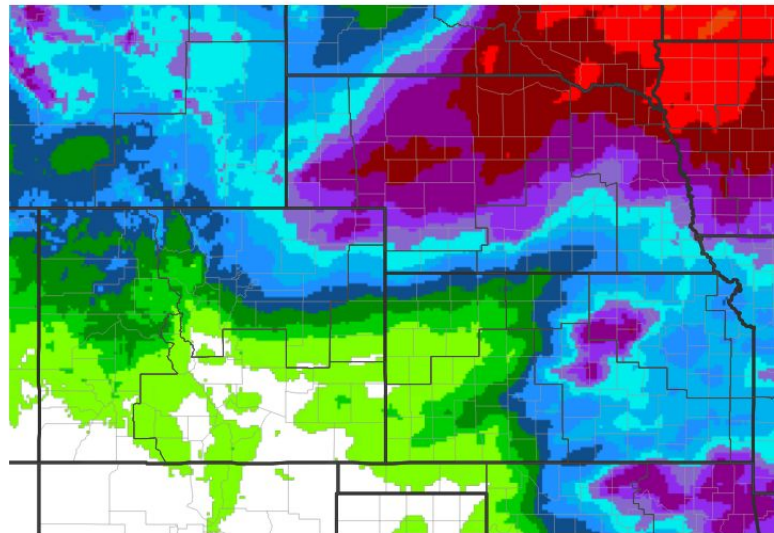
Seven Day Precipitation Forecast

Link to [WPC 7 day Precipitation Forecast](#)

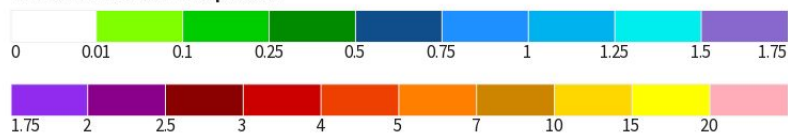
- WPC 7 Day Precipitation Forecast
(vaild 00Z May 20th-27th)

Keeps much of south central and southeast Colorado dry with the bulk of the precipitation expected to stay across northern portions of the state.

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast



Predicted Inches of Precipitation



Source(s): National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 05/19/24

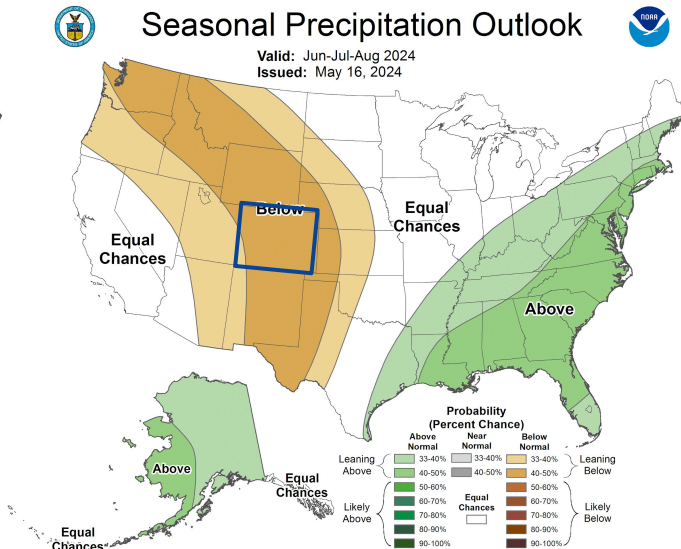
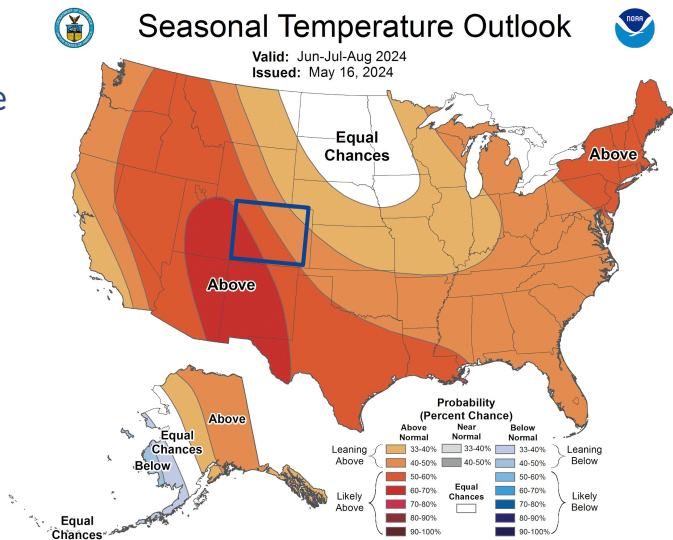




Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

The CPC Temperature and Precipitation Outlook for the summer (June, July and August), leans to above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation across south central and southeast Colorado.



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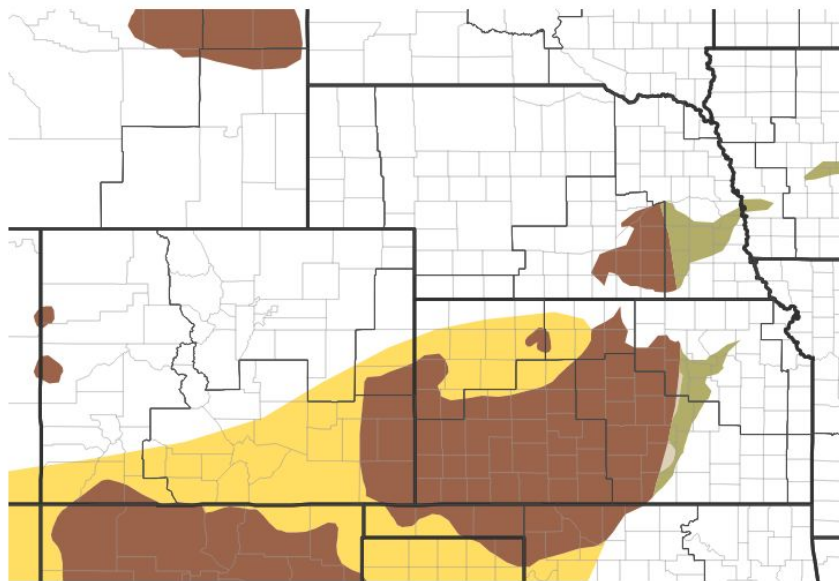


Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the [CPC homepage](#)

- Drought conditions are predicted to persist and expand across portions of south central Colorado for the rest May through August.

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook



Drought Is Predicted To...



Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 05/16/24

Valid May 16th through August 31st, 2024

Links to the latest:

[Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook](#)

[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook](#)



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