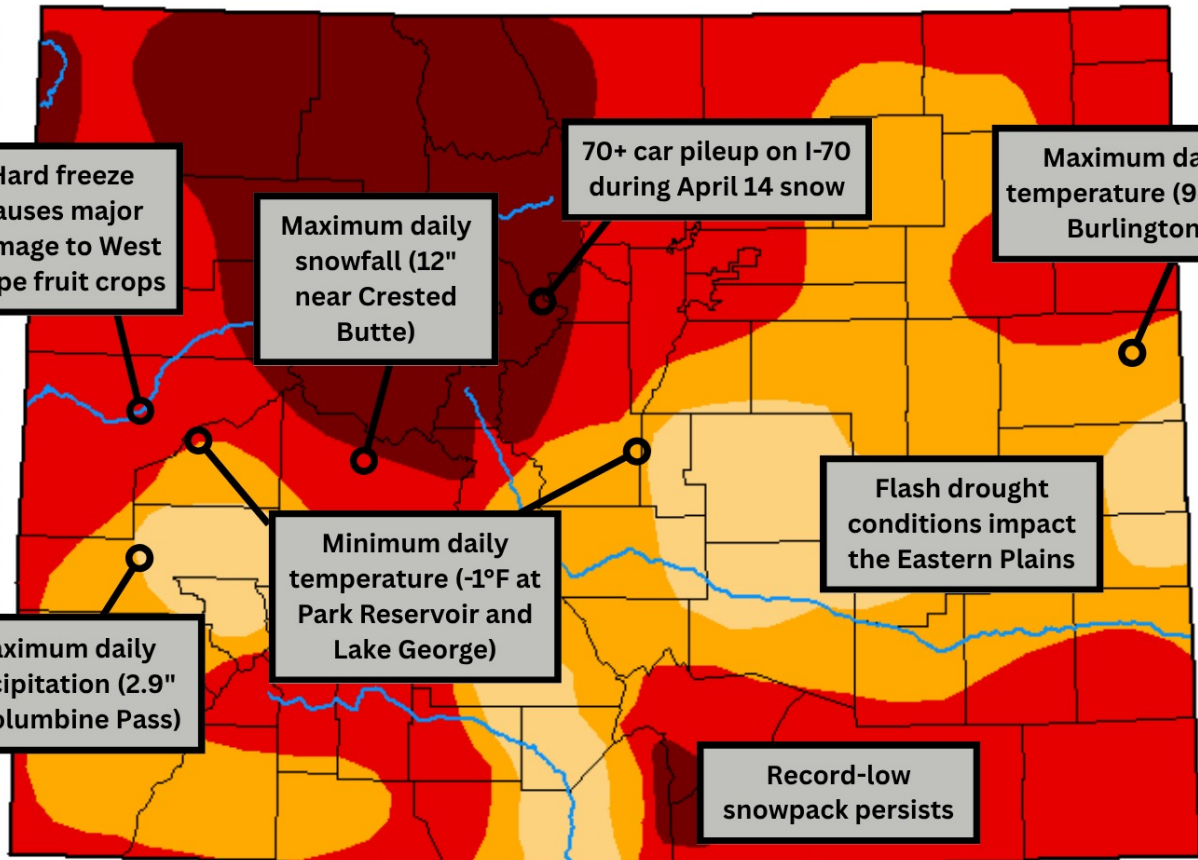


April 2026

Colorado Monthly Climate Summary



US Drought Monitor for April 28, 2026

Statewide Temperature and Precipitation Ranks for April 2026

(based on 1895-2026 data)

13th warmest (above average) ■ **36th driest (below average)**



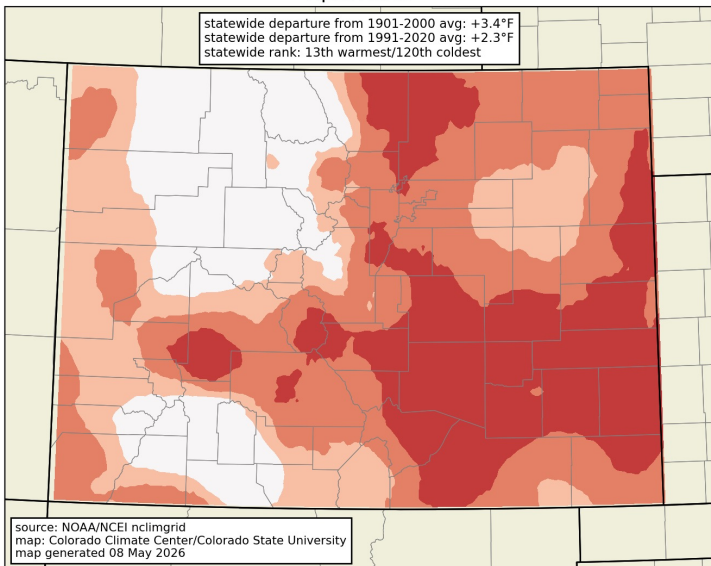
Yampa River
April 4, 2026
Photo by Allie Mazurek



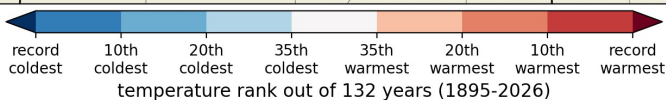
temperature

average temperature rank
April 2026

statewide departure from 1901-2000 avg: +3.4°F
statewide departure from 1991-2020 avg: +2.3°F
statewide rank: 13th warmest/120th coldest



source: NOAA/NCEI nclimgrid
map: Colorado Climate Center/Colorado State University
map generated 08 May 2026

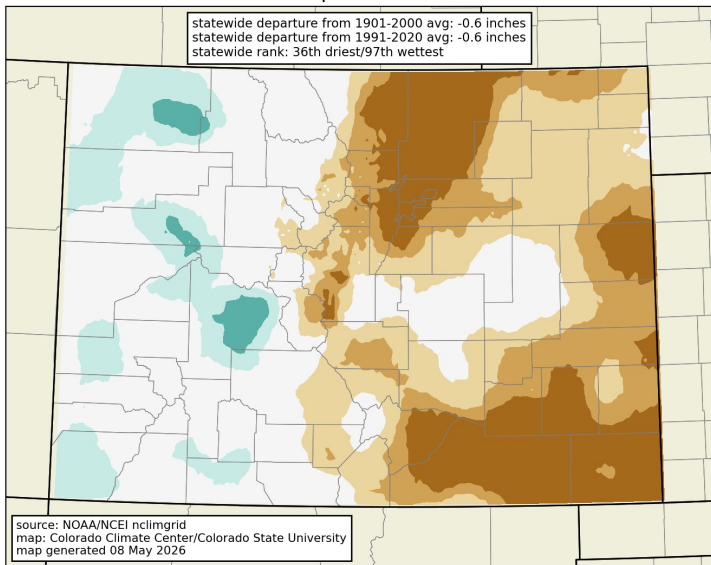


April was warmer than average across Colorado, but it was nearly a degree cooler than March! The April warmth was especially pronounced across eastern Colorado, where it was a top-10 warm April in most places. In the mountains, April temperatures were closer to average, a welcome reprieve after the record-shattering March.

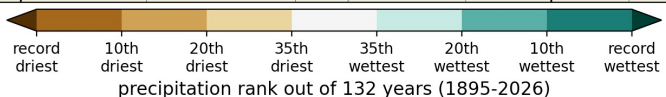
precipitation

precipitation rank
April 2026

statewide departure from 1901-2000 avg: -0.6 inches
statewide departure from 1991-2020 avg: -0.6 inches
statewide rank: 36th driest/97th wettest



source: NOAA/NCEI nclimgrid
map: Colorado Climate Center/Colorado State University
map generated 08 May 2026



April was split across the state in terms of precipitation. On the western slope and in the mountains, a series of storms brought near- to above-average precipitation for April. In contrast, eastern Colorado was very dry, with the northern Front Range and the southeastern Plains seeing near-record-dry conditions for April.



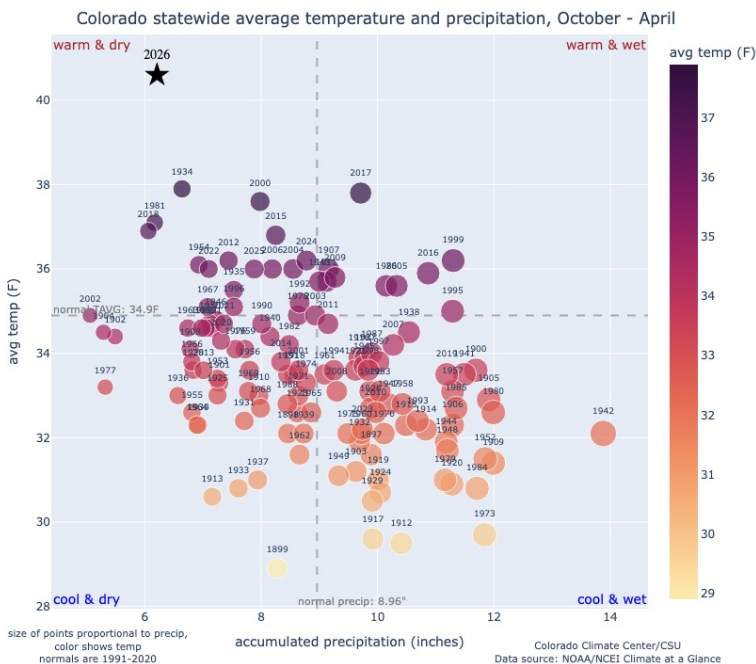
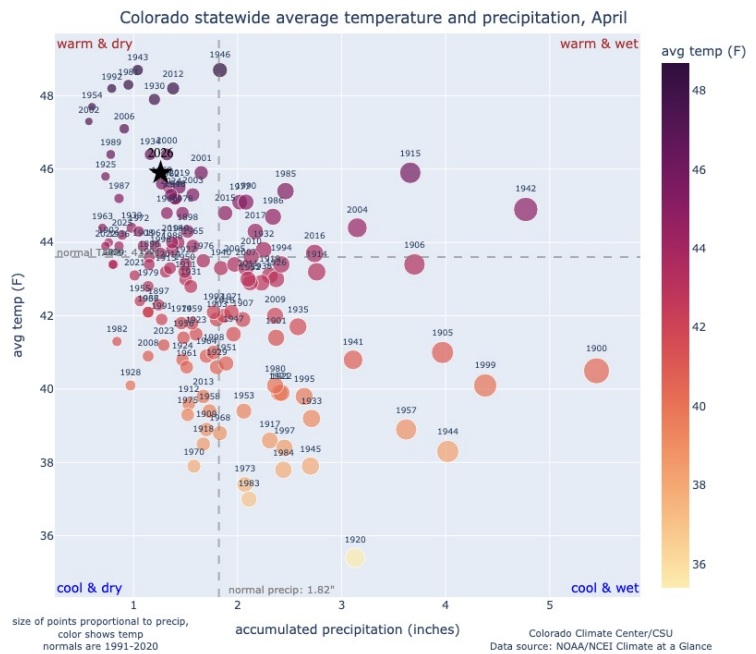
quadrant charts

Each dot plots the precipitation on the horizontal axis and the temperature on the vertical axis. Dots are colored based on temperature and size is based on precipitation. The current year is denoted with a star. The 1991-2020 averages are denoted by the dashed lines.

April 2026 was warmer and drier than average, but not nearly as extreme as some other recent months in Colorado. Averaged across the state, it was tied for the 13th-warmest April, 3.4° F warmer than the 20th-century average and 2.3° F warmer than the 1991-2020 average. It was tied for the 35th-driest April, with statewide precipitation 0.58” below the 30-year average.

Water year 2026 continues to be the warmest on record by a large margin. Statewide average temperature has been 7.4° F higher than the 20th-century average, 5.7° F above the 1991-2020 average, and 2.7° F warmer than any previous October through April period. It is the 7th driest start to a water year, 2.77” below average for precipitation statewide.

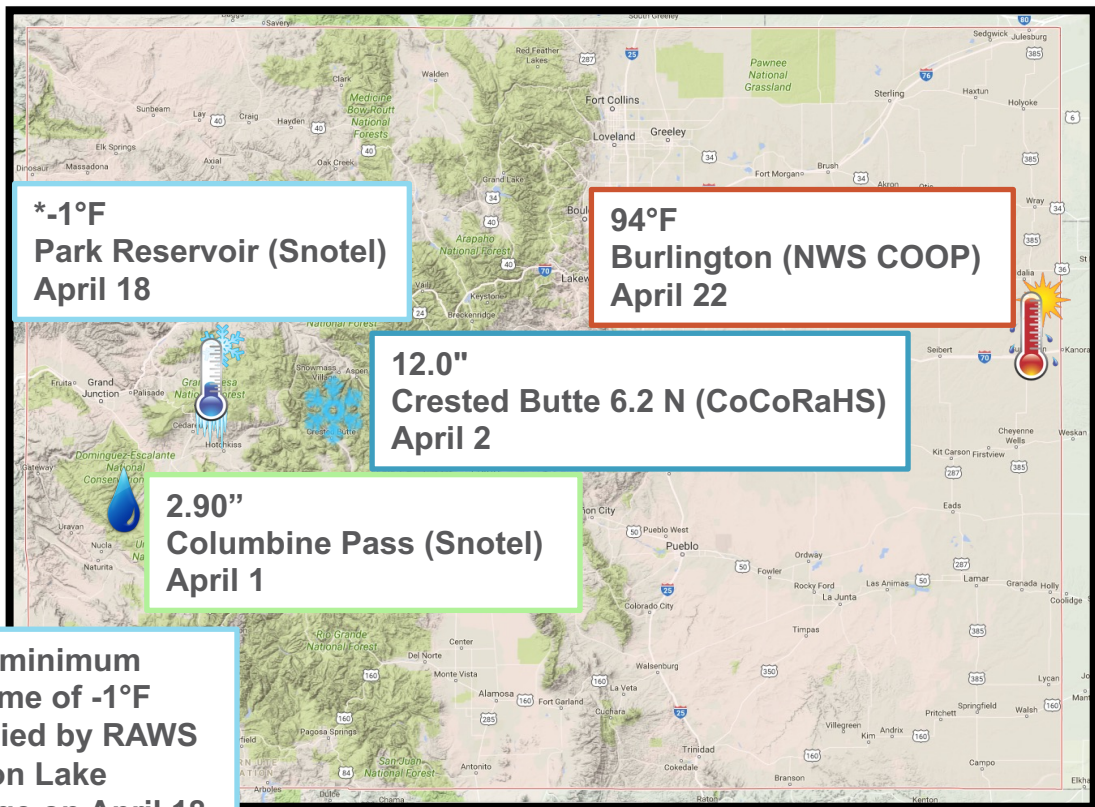
[view all quadrant charts](#)



	High Max	Low Max	High Min	Low Min	Precip	Snow
Daily	31/53	9/35	47/199	4/9	25/79	0/4
Monthly	1/1	0/0	2/0	0/0	4/10	0/0
All-time	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0

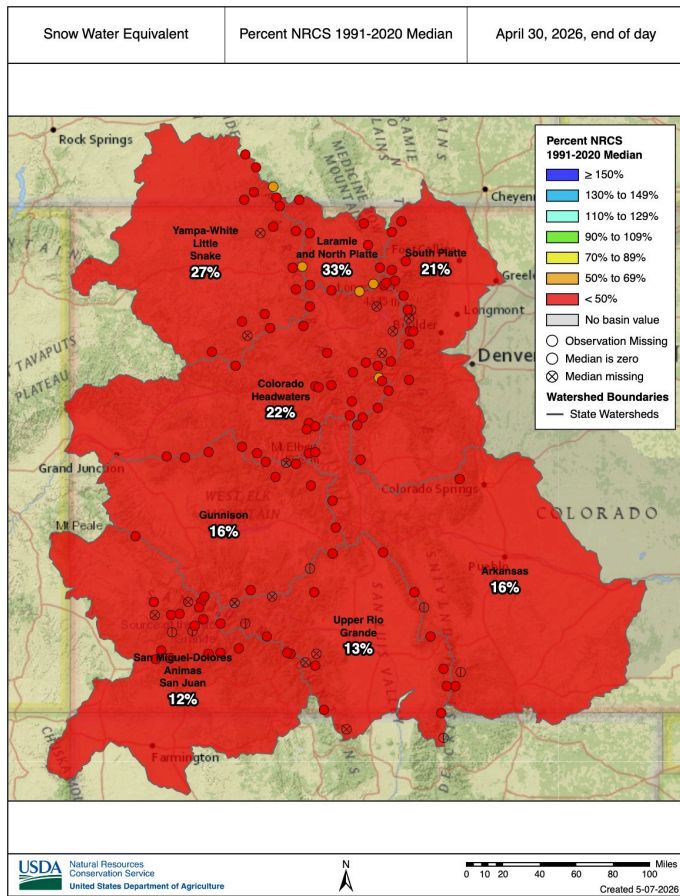
Tied/Broken, from NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information

state extremes



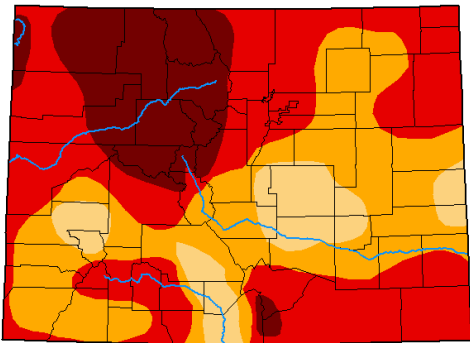
drought & snowpack

Snowpack melt-off slowed throughout April thanks to cooler temperatures, and a few small storm systems brought some snow to the mountains. Still, snowpack remained at record low levels as of the end of April, with all of the state's mountain ranges far below average. Statewide, the snow water equivalent was just 19% of the 30-year median value as of the end of April.



[Colorado Drought Update Page](#)

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado



April 28, 2026
 (Released Thursday, Apr. 30, 2026)
 Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	89.78	58.54	17.69
Last Week 04-21-2026	0.00	100.00	98.27	89.44	57.86	21.91
3 Months Ago 01-27-2026	30.06	69.94	52.36	22.73	5.67	0.83
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2026	25.96	74.04	46.22	15.77	4.35	0.67
Start of Winter Year 09-30-2025	45.82	54.18	45.19	35.88	14.34	0.00
One Year Ago 04-29-2025	38.54	61.46	43.74	17.27	3.81	0.00

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

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>

Author:
 Brad Rippey
 U.S. Department of Agriculture

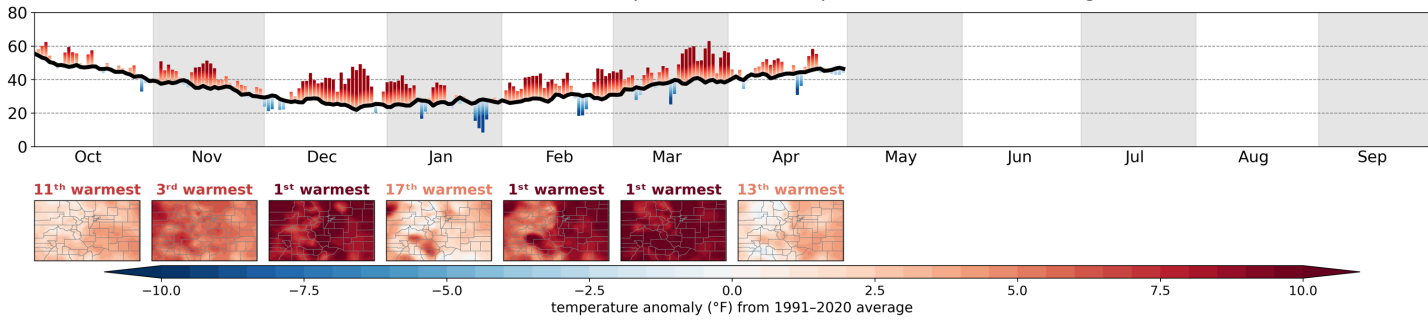


Prolonged warm, dry weather led to quickly-intensifying drought conditions over the past month, especially in eastern Colorado. The entire state was in drought conditions as of April 28, and over half of the state was in D3 (extreme) drought conditions or worse. The western slope had some modest improvements resulting from April rain and snow, but the southeastern Plains saw degradations of three to four categories since early March.

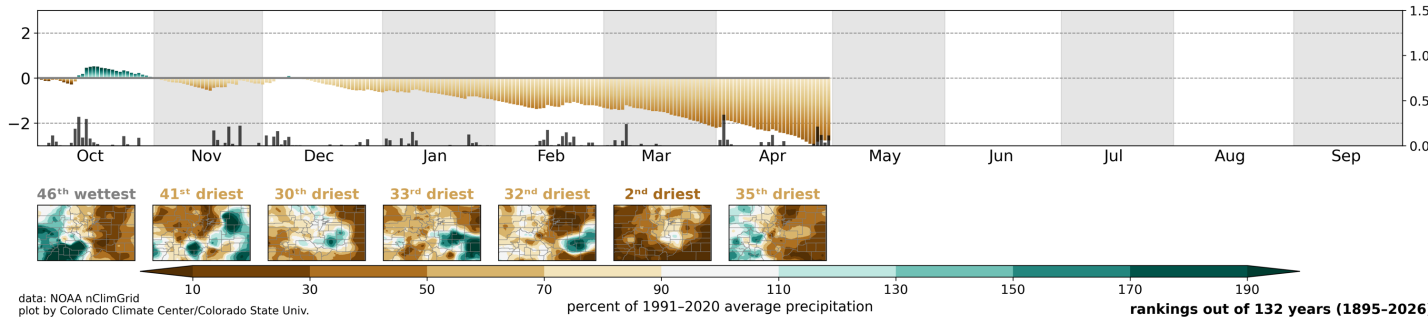


significant events

Colorado Water Year 2026 temperatures (°F) compared to 1991-2020 average

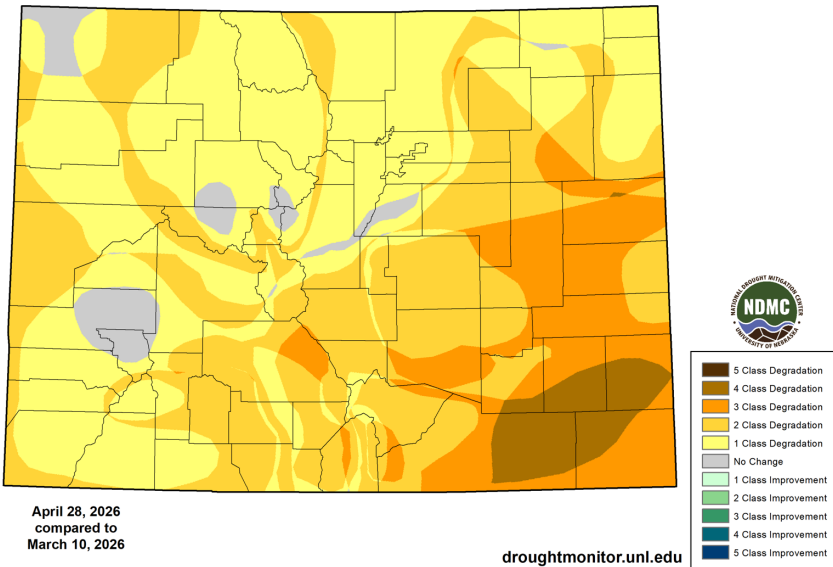


Colorado Water Year 2026 accumulated precipitation (inches) compared to 1991-2020 average; daily precipitation (black bars, right axis)



Summary of temperature and precipitation with respect to average for Water Year 2026 through April.

U.S. Drought Monitor Class Change - Colorado
7 Week



Change in US Drought Monitor categories over the 7 weeks between March 10 and April 28, 2026.

As discussed on previous pages, although April was not as exceptionally warm and dry as March, precipitation deficits continued to mount. This is illustrated on the summary graphic above, which shows the water-year deficit building after the heavy precipitation that fell in October. “Flash drought” conditions emerged in eastern Colorado: on the US Drought Monitor, parts of southeastern Colorado went from no depiction to D3 (extreme) drought in the span of seven weeks.



CCC in the news

- ❑ **April 1, 2026: [‘On a whole other level’: rapid snow melt-off in American west stuns scientists](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in The Guardian
- ❑ **April 3, 2026: [Experts at CSU's Colorado Climate Center look at March 2026 mega records](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in CBS Colorado News
- ❑ **April 8, 2026: [A record-hot March. Now comes an El Niño?](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in Big Pivots
- ❑ **April 9, 2026: [March heat wave fueled worst end-of-winter snowpack on record](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in Aspen Journalism
- ❑ **April 9, 2026: [Eastern Colorado farmers face dire crop conditions as severe drought continues to worsen across the region](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in Denver 7 News
- ❑ **April 9, 2026: [Record heatwave decimates Colorado snowpack, raising concerns for water supply](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in The Sentinel
- ❑ **April 10, 2026: [Western snowpack record-low, hopes resting on April and El Nino moisture](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in the Fence Post
- ❑ **April 10, 2026: [A super El Niño is building. Can it bring relief to Colorado's drought?](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in the Coloradoan



CCC in the news - continued

- ❑ **April 10, 2026: [Market to Market podcast](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in Iowa PBS Market to Market Podcast
- ❑ **April 11, 2026: [How a Super El Niño could affect our local weather](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in KJCT ABC Channel 8 Grand Junction
- ❑ **April 12, 2026: [Colorado farmers and ranchers prepare for difficult season after hot, dry weather](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in the Daily Camera
- ❑ **April 13, 2026: [Side-by-side photos show the incredible amount of snowpack Western states lost in one month](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in the Outdoors
- ❑ **April 13, 2026: [Amid record low snowpack, Colorado cities impose restrictions, farmers brace for ‘disaster’](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in the Denver Gazette
- ❑ **April 14, 2026: [The West’s snow drought meant record dryness — but also record flooding](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in High Country News
- ❑ **April 14, 2026: [A super El Niño is in the forecast. Here’s what that means for Colorado](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in The Colorado Sun
- ❑ **April 14, 2026: [Hot, Dry, No Snow Raises Alarm From the West](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in Iowa PBS Market to Market Podcast
- ❑ **April 16, 2026: [Will summer monsoons, super El Niño alleviate Colorado drought?](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in The Denver Post



CCC in the news - continued

- ❑ **April 16, 2026: [What Impact Super and Normal El Nino's Have on Colorado Snowpack](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in the Coloradoan
- ❑ **April 16, 2026: [Department of Atmospheric Science featured on PBS NOVA around severe weather phenomenon of 'rain bombs'](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in The Source
- ❑ **April 23, 2026: [Heavy Spring Rains Pelt County](#)**
 - Featuring Noah Newman in the St. Lucie Voice
- ❑ **April 24, 2026: [Brian Head, Breckenridge Announce Extra Days After Ending Seasons](#)**
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in The Inertia
- ❑ **April 24, 2026: [Impact of moisture this week could be short lived](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in KDVR Fox 31 Denver
- ❑ **April 25, 2026: [Can a Super El Niño save Colorado from deepening drought conditions?](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in The Aspen Times
- ❑ **April 27, 2026: [Is snow in Denver still possible this season?](#)**
 - Featuring Allie Mazurek in The Denver Post
- ❑ **April 28, 2026: [We answered your questions about the expected water shortfall this summer](#)**
 - Featuring Peter Goble in CPR News



CCC in the news - continued

- ❑ **April 29, 2026:** [More than 60 percent of U.S. is covered by drought as impacts worsen](#)
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in The Washington Post
- ❑ **April 29, 2026:** [Are recent rains enough to relieve Colorado's drought?](#)
 - Featuring Peter Goble and Allie Mazurek in CPR News
- ❑ **April 29, 2026:** [Future of Our Water](#)
 - Featuring Russ Schumacher in The Pagosa Springs Sun

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