



Photo: Arnie Arneson

Effective as of 8:00a.m. on Saturday, April 13, 2013, the Division Engineer issued an order for the GVVUA 730cfs call on the mainstem of the Colorado River. The swing right\* to satisfy the mainstem call is the Williams Fork Reservoir, administration number 31395.00000, appropriation date of 11/10/1935 and adjudication date of 11/05/1937.

For the Blue River basin, Green Mountain Reservoir remains as the calling structure with an administration number of 31258.00000, appropriation date of 8/1/1935 and adjudication date of 10/12/1955. \*see pg. 4



## Tuesday, April 16th

"Hello" and welcome to the inaugural issue of "The Blue River Diversion", a monthly compendium of water issues in Summit County and the Colorado River Basin.

The intent of this newsletter is to advise, inform, and enlighten interested community members, from boating enthusiasts to water right owners...irrigators

to ski resorts...municipal districts to their residential water users.

Whether your water use is limited to that which you consume inside your home, or is part of a multi-million dollar industry in our remarkable state, I trust that you will find the information within these pages helpful and illuminating.

I shall strive always to remain objective and reasonable in my presentation of issues and events, with a commitment to remain abreast of matters most relevant to you.

I encourage your feedback and suggestions...this is, after all, your Blue River watershed!

- Troy

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## Drought Update

**Extreme** drought persists.

Since January 2012, Summit County has been under drought conditions ranging from moderate to extreme due (in large part) to below average snowpack over the previous two winter seasons.

The Colorado Basin on whole fared worse during the same time period, particularly the lower basin counties of Garfield and Mesa, where extreme drought prevailed over the same 15-month period.

Potential impacts from the continued drought are numerous and far-reaching. Notably: crop yields, livestock, fire danger, groundwater levels, fish/wildlife habitat, forest health, and the myriad recreational activities

### U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado

April 9, 2013  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	88.97	45.92	13.63
Last Week (04/02/2013 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	88.97	45.98	13.83
3 Months Ago (01/08/2013 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	95.06	53.47	13.48
Start of Calendar Year (01/01/2013 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	95.06	53.47	13.48
Start of Water Year (10/01/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	61.75	16.89
One Year Ago (04/03/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	55.48	18.50	0.15	0.00

**Intensity:**  
■ D0 Abnormally Dry  
■ D1 Drought - Moderate  
■ D2 Drought - Severe  
■ D3 Drought - Extreme  
■ D4 Drought - Exceptional

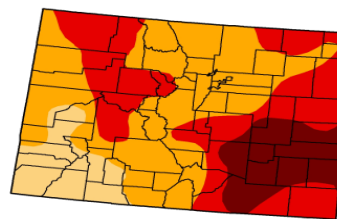
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

(and economic benefits therein) that we live for and enjoy here in Summit County.

#### Forecast...

The National Drought Mitigation Center (03/21/2013) anticipates current drought conditions con-



USDA  
 NCEP  
 NOAA  
 Released Thursday, April 11, 2013

David Miskus, NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Climate Prediction Center

tinuing through at least the end of June.

#### More information...

[U.S. Drought Monitor—Colorado](#)

[CWCB - Drought](#)

[U.S. Drought Portal](#)

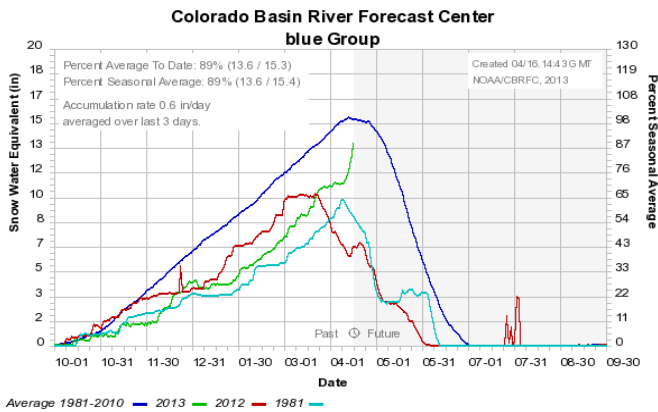
[NOAA: Origins of 2012 Drought](#)

#### Inside this issue:

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*"Water is the most critical resource issue of our lifetime and our children's lifetime.  
The health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land."  
- Luna Leopold*

## Snowpack



I included 1981 to show how closely we were flirting with the record-low snowpack that prompted a number of ski areas throughout the state to invest in snowmaking.

If our situation *seems* better than it was last year at this time...well, you're mostly right.

Whereas the first weeks of March 2012 proved to be the peak of our snowpack and were followed by warmer-than-average temperatures and high winds (effectively vaporizing what little snow we had at the time), the final weeks of March 2013 demonstrated a notable up-tick in snowfall that, thankfully, continues to nudge the snowpack upward.

While this most recent storm

has provided a 17% (!) boost to the Blue River basin's snow water equivalent (SWE, or the amount of water in the snowpack), we remain at 89% of average for the season.

Coupled with last year's abysmal snowpack, and this summer's precipitation / temperature forecasts...summer 2013 is sure to pose challenges for all of us.

SNOTEL links...

[Blue River](#)

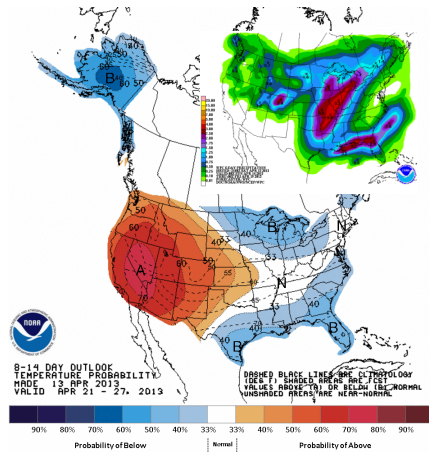
[Blue River \(above Dillon\)](#)

[Upper CO River](#)

## Weather

We have enjoyed much-needed precipitation and cool temperatures over the previous six weeks.

While the current, unsettled conditions will remain through the better part of this week (inset), mid- to long-range forecasts anticipate warmer than average temperatures (map at right) and lower than average precipitation.



*"April is the cruelest month, breeding  
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing  
Memory and desire, stirring  
Dull roots with spring rain."*

-T.S. Eliot

*"Showers and sunshine bring,  
Slowly, the deepening verdure o'er the earth;  
To put their foliage out, the woods are slack,  
And one by one the singing-birds come back."*

-William Cullen Bryant

*"Hey, it's mud season!  
Ya' wanna grab a 2-for-1 and head to Utah?"*

-anonymous Summit local

[Long-Range Forecasts](#)

## Streamflows

As you can see from the graphic, streamflows throughout the Colorado River basin are forecasted at 50 to 69% of average for the spring / summer period. Again, two low-snowpack winter seasons, and a very dry summer (2012), have created extremely dry soil conditions and reduced runoff potential.

Currently, the CO River at the

Utah border is flowing at 49% of average, placing it at the 7th percentile when compared to the historical record.

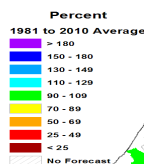
Locally, anticipate flows well below average throughout the runoff season and into fall.

Links...

[Streamflow Forecasts](#)

[Blue River Basin - stream gages](#)

Spring and Summer Streamflow Forecasts as of April 1, 2013



Prepared by  
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
National Water and Climate Center  
Portland, Oregon  
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>



## Reservoirs

Reservoir (Decreed Capacity in)	May 1, 2012	Today	Forecast* (July 1)
<b>Dillon</b> (252,678)	94%	64%	<80%
<b>Green Mountain</b> (154,645)	58%	41%	<85%
<b>Williams Fork</b> (93,637)	90%	45%	<75%
<b>Wolford</b> (65,993)	100%	38%	<60%

\* Forecasts are 'most probable' based on anticipated precipitation and temps.



## Water Administration



Don't allow this to happen to you!  
Know and understand Colorado water law...from Title 37 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.)...to the Prior Appropriation Doctrine ("first in time, first in right").

Two of the most fundamental tenets of Colorado water law are 'beneficial use' and 'no injury' to senior water rights: diverted waters must serve a beneficial purpose (i.e., agriculture, industry, municipal, recreation) without

diminution of older, established water uses.

Should you have any concerns or doubts regarding water use and the duties, privileges, and limitations therein...please consider the following links or contact me directly to discuss:

- [Citizen's Guide to CO Water Law](#)
- [CO Water Law - Synopsis](#)
- [CO Water Rights \(Water Info Prog.\)](#)
- [CO Revised Statutes \(C.R.S.\)](#)

(Title 37-Water & Irrigation)



## Well Permits

Do you wish to install, replace, or late-register a well?

Are you a realtor seeking to confirm the existence and/or transfer ownership of a well permit?

Alternatively, do you have a hot tub or Kentucky blue grass (under an exempt well permit) that requires augmentation water to remain legal and avoid the above-referenced 'disruption'

to your water supply?

If you answered 'yes', please explore the following links and give me a call:

- [Guide to CO Well Permits](#)
- [CO DWR: Well Permitting](#)
- [CO DWR: Well Permit Search](#)
- [Summit County Augmentation Water](#)
- [Vidler Augmentation Water](#)





Some of you might have asked yourself..."Volume 13, Issue 6 ? What gives? Have I missed a few issues?"

No, you haven't missed a single installment of my pedantic musings! There is, however, a very *calendrical* basis to my moniker!

Be the first to correctly identify the logic behind my naming convention...and the name of the river whereupon I photographed myself (below)...and you may adorn the front page of Vol. 13, Issue 7 with your own photo of the Blue River basin!

Hint: A renowned naturalist...think "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings" ...recorded more than 300 glaciers along its course, and it remains one of the largest, untamed rivers in North America.



Disclaimer:

The information, opinions, and content within these pages was assembled and delivered by myself, without the express consent or authorization from the State Engineer's Office. Any and all errors, omissions, and misrepresentations are a result of my own missteps...and, regrettably, will occur.

I thank you, in advance, for bringing them to my attention.

- Troy

## "Water Over Coffee"

**What:** Opportunity to discuss water issues, topics, concerns

**When:** 9-10am, every-other Monday, beginning April 22nd

**Where:** Red Buffalo Coffee & Tea

(358 Blue River Parkway in Silverthorne)

**Why:** To make myself available to all water users and better address their questions and concerns

Thank you to my wife, Amy, for the above title! I was leaning toward "Coffee With The Commish".

On the front page I announced that Williams Fork Reservoir is the 'swing right' to the Grand Valley Water Users' Association call on the Colorado River mainstem. In water administration, the swing right is the most junior water right, either totally or partially in priority, located upstream of the calling structure, which satisfies the calling right. Each water user that is junior to the calling right, but senior to the swing right, may continue to divert.

## Conservation Corner

Notable dates...

April 22nd

'Water Over Coffee'

May 6th

'Water Over Coffee'

May 7th

State of the River

6:30PM, Senior Center

May 9th

BRWG Board Meeting

6:00PM, Frisco

May 16th

Panel Discussion:

"Enough Water For All"

7-9PM, CMC Breckenridge

Were you aware that Denver, Aurora, and Colorado Springs (just to name a few) have all implemented [Stage 2 water restrictions](#) on the Front Range?

Do you believe that water frugality is prompted only by necessity...or instead, essential by nature?

What is the single largest use of household water (for the majority of CO residents) during the summer months? What might you do to reduce that use?

What does water conservation look like in your household or workplace and how might you improve it?

Is your water use congruent with the semi-arid environment we live in?

Has your attitude / perspective

toward water conservation changed in the previous three days? If 'yes'...why?

I look forward to exploring these questions...and many more...with you in future issues.

In the meantime...get your game on!

How does your water use compare with the commish?

I will provide monthly water use numbers for my "average" family of four, 3 bed, 2 bath, 1/2 acre household.

Together let's see how we can reduce our water consumption!

Cheers!

[Colorado WaterWise](#)

[CSU Extension: Water Conservation](#)

[Blue River Watershed Group](#)