



The Weather Wire

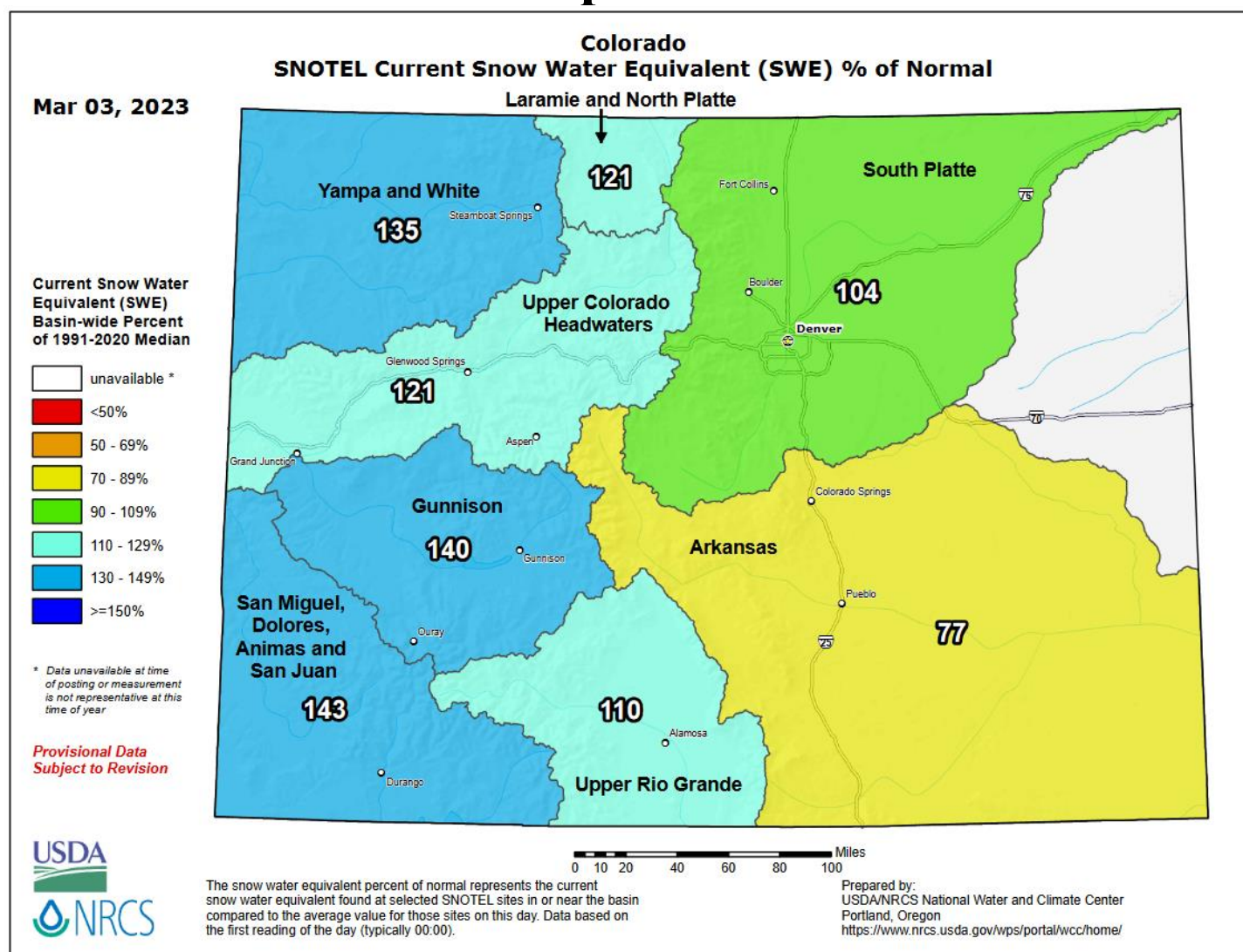
March 2023

Volume 30 Number 3

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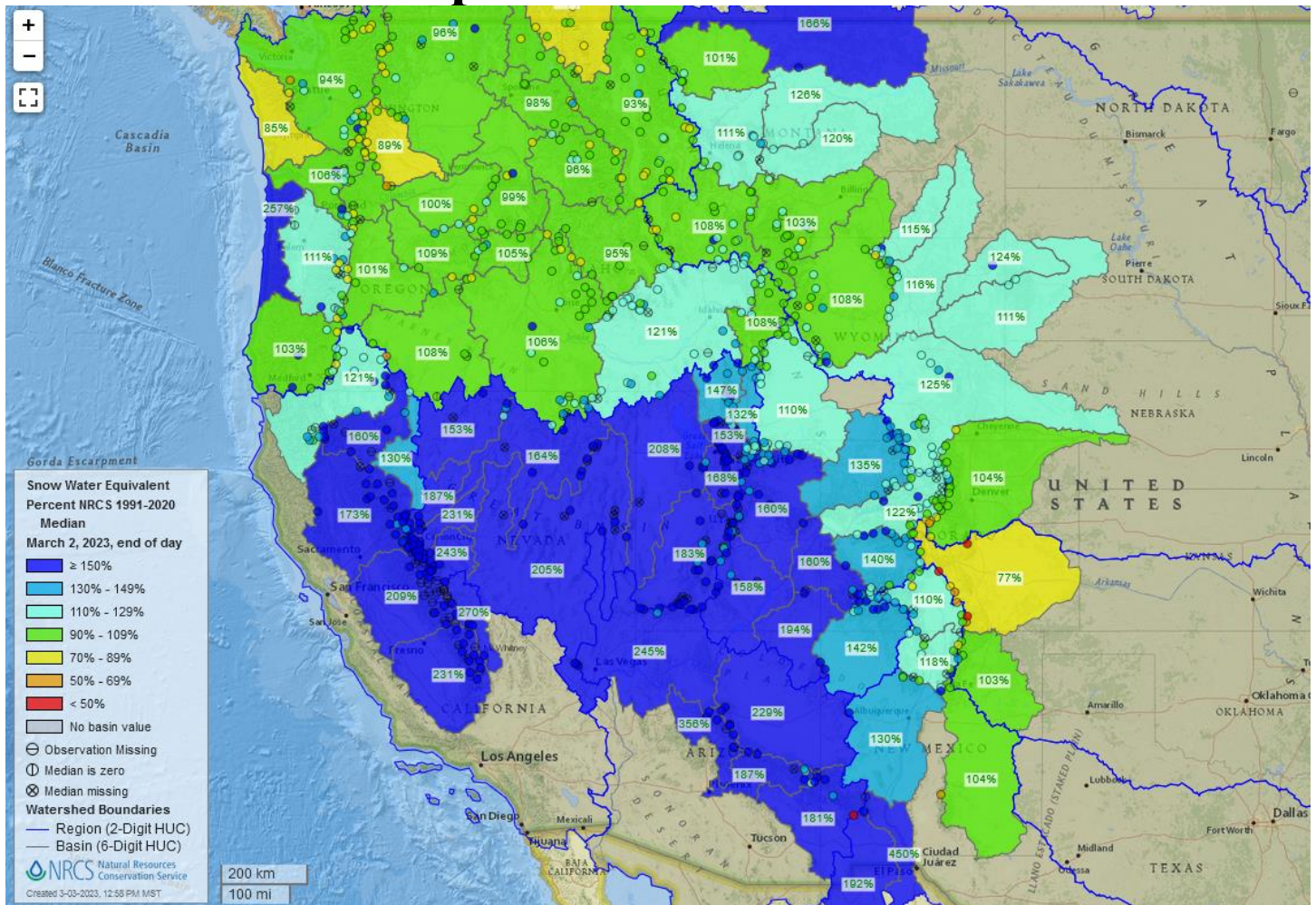
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Current Colorado Snowpack



Colorado snowpack is above normal for all river basins in the state except for the Arkansas River of SE Colorado. The western mountains are doing the best on the west side of the Continental Divide with the current snow water equivalent. There are 2 more months of potential significant accumulation with the month of May starting the melting and then the melt season accelerates into June.

Western US Snowpack



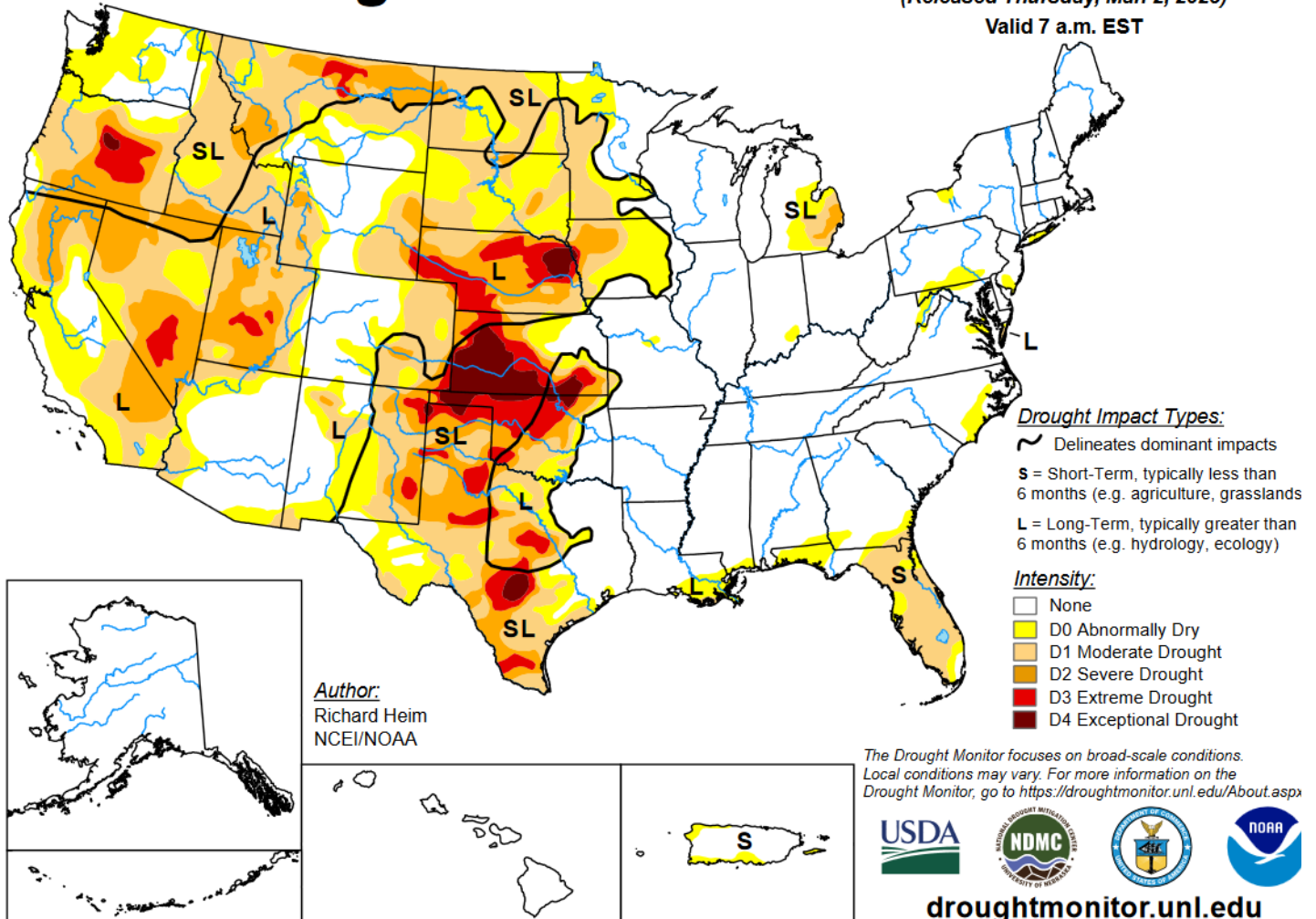
The map above shows snow water equivalent or if all the snow melted, how much water it would melt down to over the western US. This map expands on the Colorado map above and shows how significant the snow cover is over parts of AZ/CA/NV/UT! With a continuation of an active storm track over the west these numbers are likely to increase. Some areas of CA/UT/NV are experiencing snow totals not seen in years! This bodes well for the Colorado river as much of that water actually originates in WY and UT and then connects to the Colorado river via the Green river. The abundant moisture will help to fill reservoirs but it will likely take more than 1 season to of well above normal snowfall to significantly improve lakes such as Lake Powell and Lake Mead.

Drought Update

Overall, much of eastern CO remains under abnormally dry conditions or moderate drought. Much of western Colorado is currently drought free. Drought conditions remain but have improved significantly over AZ/CA/NV and UT over the past few months. East of the Mississippi river drought coverage is minimal and not severe. The hardest hit areas but drought currently are our neighbors to the east over parts of NB/KS/OK and TX.

U.S. Drought Monitor

February 28, 2023
(Released Thursday, Mar. 2, 2023)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



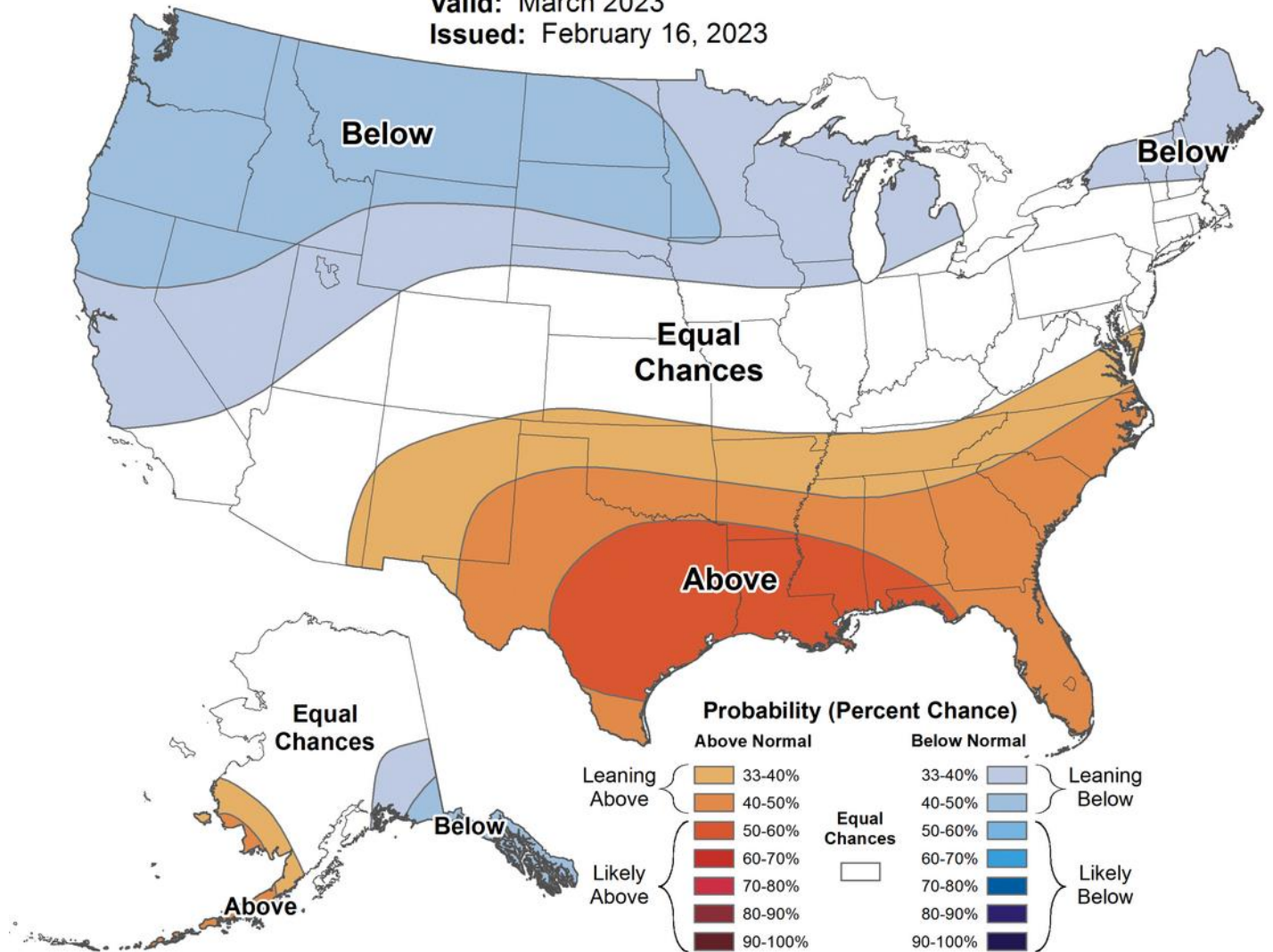
The map below shows forecasted temperature deviances for March 2023. There are equal chances for above or below normal temperatures over the state of Colorado.



Monthly Temperature Outlook



Valid: March 2023
Issued: February 16, 2023



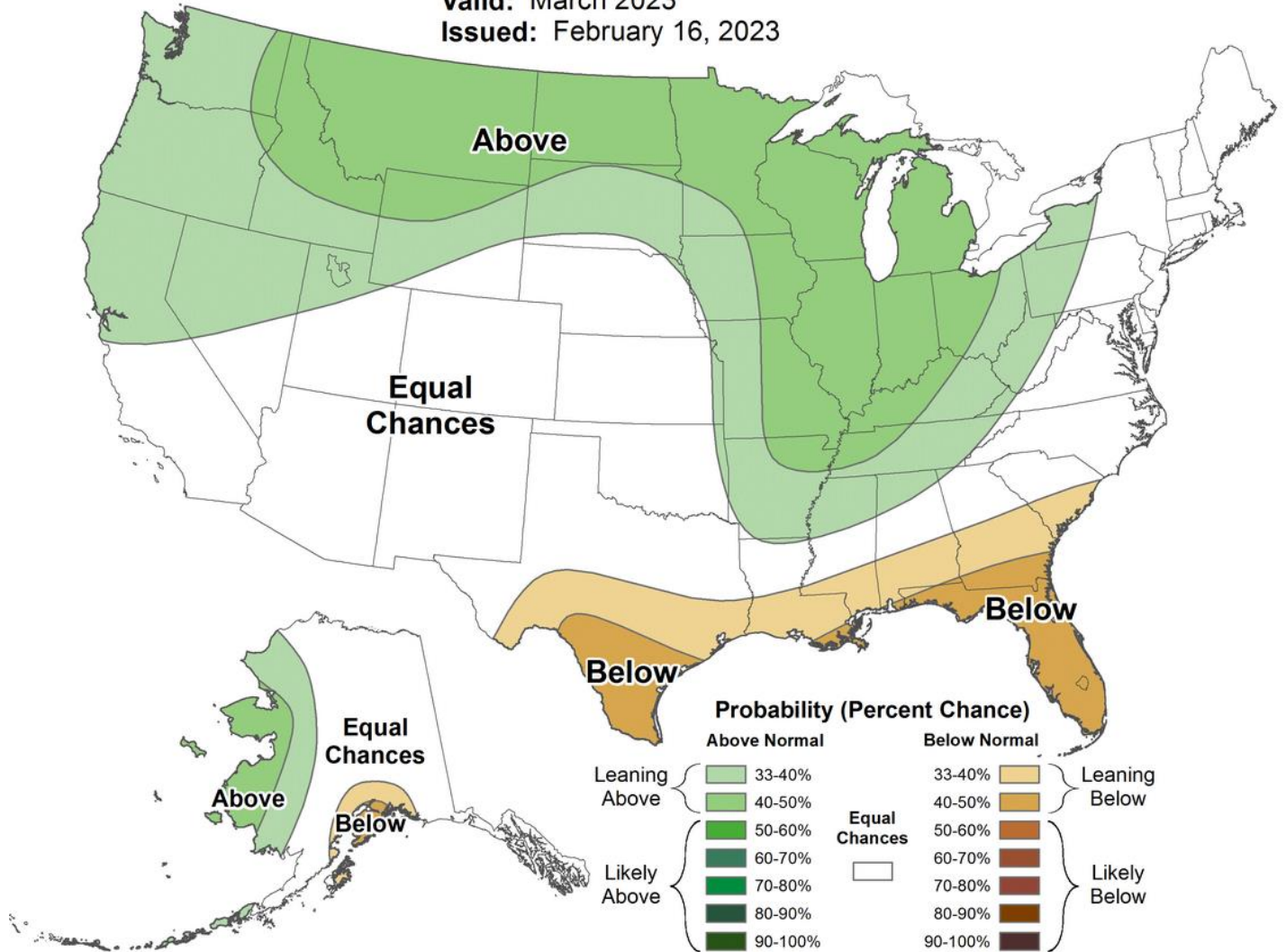
The map below shows forecasted precipitation deviances for March 2023. Colorado is projected to have equal chances for above or below normal precipitation for the month. Chances for above normal precipitation is over the northern states into the Great Lakes region.



Monthly Precipitation Outlook



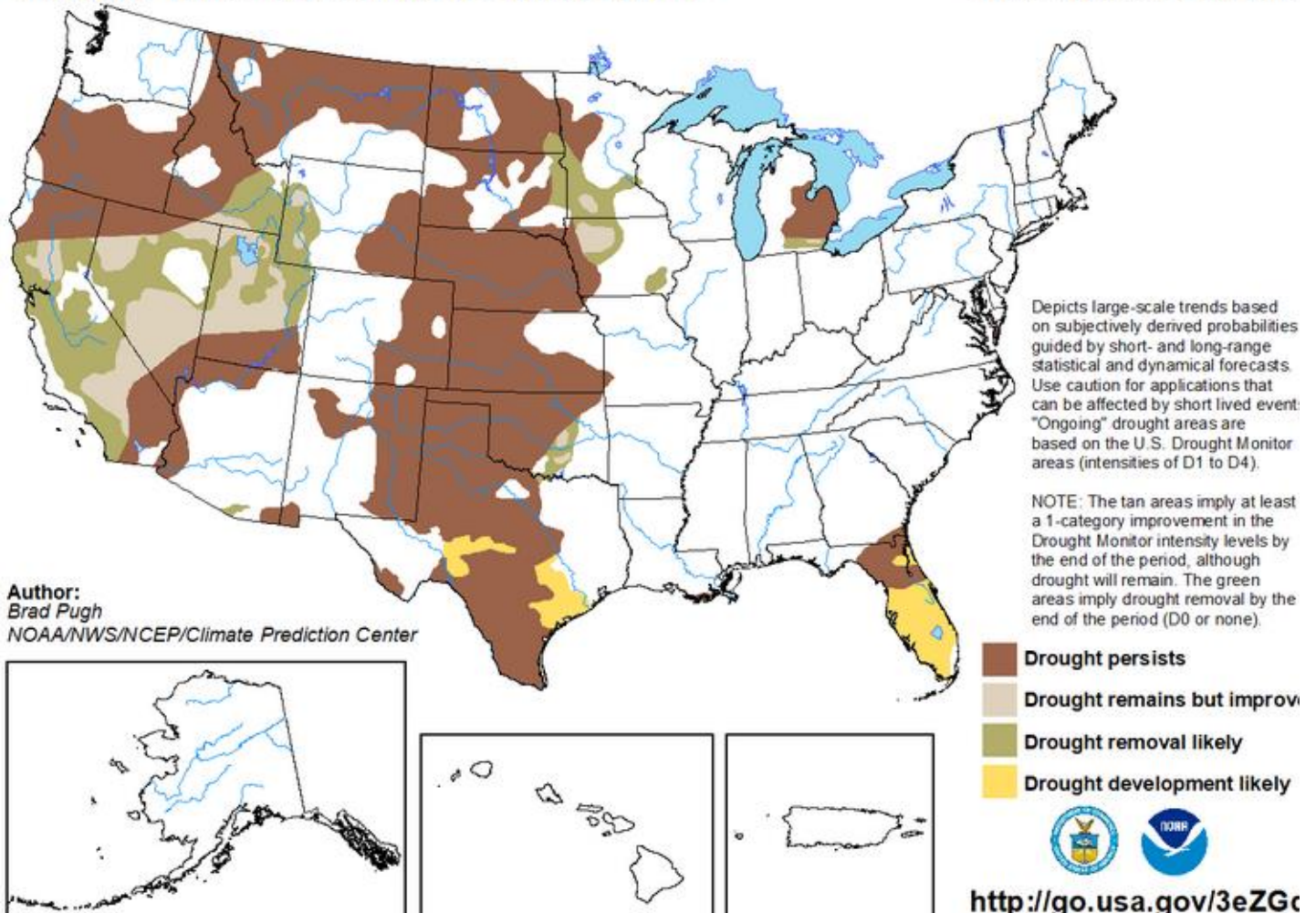
Valid: March 2023
Issued: February 16, 2023



Drought conditions are expected to persist over eastern Colorado during the month of March. Drought conditions are expected to improve dramatically or be removed over parts of CA/NV and UT. Drought development appears likely over parts of FL and TX.

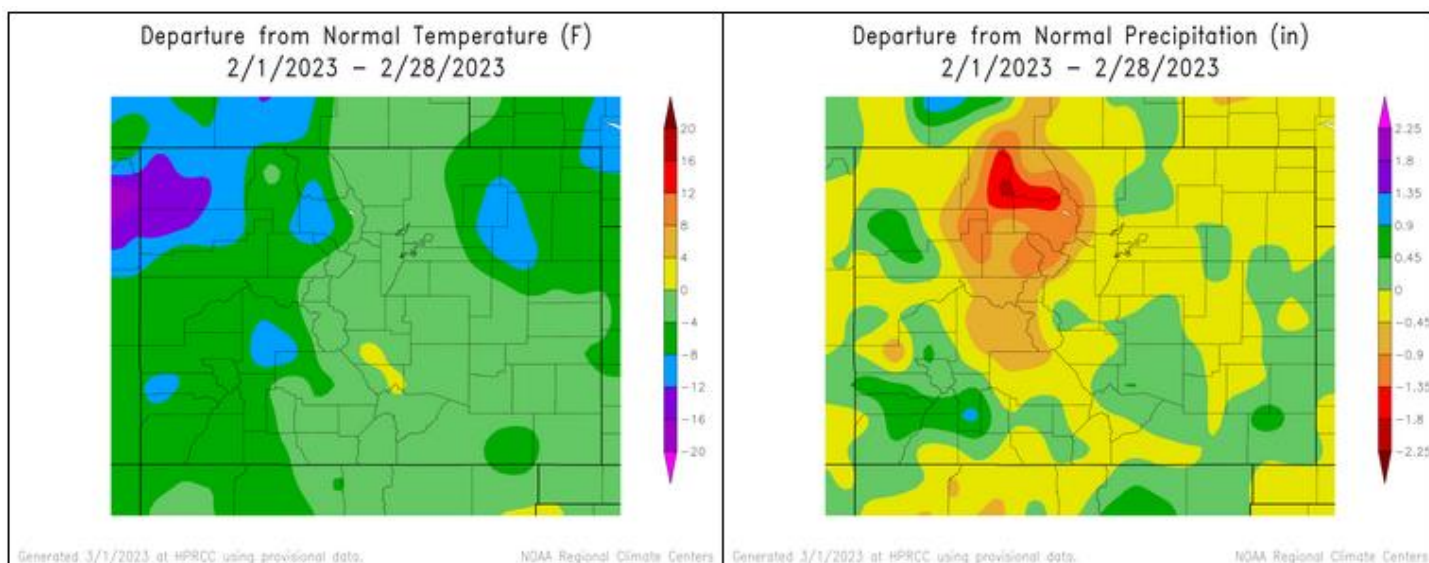
U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

Valid for March 2023
Released February 28, 2023



February Summary

February of 2023 produced below normal temperatures and below normal to above normal snowfall for NE Colorado from Fort Collins to Castle Rock. Average highs for the month at DIA came in at 43.3°F versus the normal of 45.7°F, or 2.4 degrees below normal. Average lows for the month were 19.0°F or 0.7 degrees below the normal of 19.7°F. Combining the average highs and lows for the month resulted in a monthly mean temperature of 31.1°F which was 1.6 degrees below the normal of 32.7°F. The highest temperature during February was 62°F on the 26th with the coldest temperature of -11°F just 3 days ahead on the 23rd. The high of 62°F on the 26th was the first time DIA reached 60 degrees or above this year! DIA reported 0.25" of moisture which was 0.16" below the normal of 0.41". There were 8-10 days during the month with at least a trace of snow for any particular location but only 2 storms produced meaningful snow on the 14-16th and the 21-22nd with minor events on the 8-9th and 23-24th. Snow totals for the month were higher W of I-25 with accumulations ranging from 6-15" or more with locations E of I-25 generally reporting between 5-8" of snow for the month. Areas W of I-25 were closer to normal in snowfall with some areas reporting slightly above normal snowfall for February standards including the City of Boulder. Areas south of the Denver Metro area into Douglas County were slightly warmer overall and experienced slightly below normal snowfall for areas such as Castle Rock but locations just a little further N into western Highlands Ranch reported slightly above normal snowfall. Variable snowfall amounts in relative short distances was common this month due to the storm on the 14-16th which was the largest snowfall producer and favored areas near the foothills. Below are maps showing departure from normal temperature and precipitation over the state of Colorado. Most of the state was below normal to well below normal in temperature except for a small area in and around Canon City. Precipitation was variable statewide with above or below normal precipitation.



Over SE Colorado from Colorado Springs to Pueblo, February of 2023 produced slightly above and below normal temperatures and above normal snowfall for most. Average highs for the month in Colorado Springs came in at 49.0°F and average lows were 19.0°F. Combining the average highs and lows for the month resulted in a monthly mean temperature of 34.4°F which was 1.0 degree above the normal of 33.4°F. The highest temperature during February was 65°F on the 26th with the coldest temperature of -2°F just 3 days ahead on the 23rd. The city of Pueblo recorded average monthly high temperature of 53.0°F and an average low of 14.5°F producing a monthly mean temperature of 33.7° which was 1.4 degrees colder than average. There were 4 snow events during the month which occurred on the 8-9th, 14-16th, 21-22nd and 23-24th. The majority of the snow fell from the 14-16th with the municipal airport in Colorado Springs reporting 10.2" from that storm alone and Pueblo coming in with 6.5". For the month the airport in Colorado Springs recorded 12.4" of snow which was 7.8" above normal and the 10th snowiest on record. Pueblo reported 8.3" of snow for the month which was 3.6" above normal and the 31st snowiest on record. Total precipitation was 0.48" in Colorado Springs which was 0.16" above normal while

Pueblo tallied 0.46” of moisture, 0.14” above normal. Snow totals for the month generally ranged from 8-15” from Monument into Pueblo with lesser amounts into Canon City of 5-7”. The 5-7” towards Canon City and Penrose was near normal while other areas experienced above normal snowfall for February standards.

February Statistics DIA

TEMPERATURE (IN DEGREES F)	OBSERVED VALUE	NORMAL VALUE		DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL
AVERAGE MAX	43.3°F	45.7°F		-2.4°F
AVERAGE MIN	19.0°F	19.7°F		-0.7°F
MONTHLY MEAN	31.1°F	32.7°F		-1.6°F
DAYS WITH MAX 90 OR ABOVE	0.0	0.0		0.0
DAYS WITH MAX 32 OR BELOW	4	5.3		-1.3
DAYS WITH MIN 32 OR BELOW	28	26		2.0
DAYS WITH MIN 0 OR BELOW	3	2		1
	OBSERVED VALUE	DATE(S)	NORMAL VALUE	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL
HIGHEST	62°F	2/26		
LOWEST	-11°F	2/23		
HEATING DEGREE DAYS				
MONTHLY TOTAL	943		904	39
SEASONAL TOTAL (since 7/1)	4540		4306	234
COOLING DEGREE DAYS				
MONTHLY TOTAL	0		0	0
YEARLY TOTAL (since 1/1)	0		0	0
PRECIPITATION (IN INCHES)				
MONTHLY TOTAL	0.25”		0.41”	-0.16”
YEARLY TOTAL	1.50”		0.79”	0.71”
GREATEST IN 24 HOURS	0.23”	2/15-2/16		
DAYS WITH MEASURABLE PRECIP.	3		5.5	-2.5
SNOWFALL (IN INCHES)				
MONTHLY TOTAL	4.7”		7.6”	-2.9”

SEASONAL TOTAL	41.6"		33.0"	8.6"
GREATEST IN 24 HOURS	3.6"	2/15		
GREATEST DEPTH	4.0"	2/1-2/2		

March Preview

Even though the calendar says the Spring season starts on the 20th of the month in association with the equinox, in the eyes of meteorologists the first day of “Meteorological Spring” is March 1st. March is certainly a transition month from Winter to Spring as there are frequent and rapid changes in the weather with warm followed by a storm. March is well known for producing “blizzards” and the largest storm in Denver history was observed in March back in 2003. March is also the snowiest month of the year on average but “average” only happens on paper here in Colorado and there are years where other months will surpass March in snowfall. Average March snowfall is also decreasing since moving the official reporting station to DIA as not many years ago the average March snowfall was 10.7” and as of today the average March snowfall for the 1991-2020 period is 8.8”. Average moisture in the form of rain and melted snow is 0.86” and if all the average moisture fell as snow it would roughly produce a 10” of snow to 1” of water ratio which is a “wet” snow for Colorado standards. Due to a higher sun angle in March and warming ground temperatures snow encounters more melting, especially during daylight hours and snow melts more quickly after storms are over relative to the Dec-Feb period. Snowfall in March can make or break a winter snow season and this year will be no different. Temperature wise average highs start out at 50 degrees and end the month at 60 degrees with average lows starting out at 23 and ending the month at 31. Temperatures in the 80’s and as low as -11°F have occurred during March making for a potential 90+ degree temperature extreme historically. March of 2023 is expected to most likely feature near normal to slightly below normal temperatures and variable snowfall with some areas likely above normal and others below normal snowfall along the I-25 corridor from Fort Collins to Pueblo.

DENVER'S MARCH CLIMATOLOGICALLY NORMAL	
(NORMAL PERIOD 1991-2020 DIA Data)	OBSERVED VALUE
TEMPERATURE	
AVERAGE HIGH	55.7°F
AVERAGE LOW	27.5°F
MONTHLY MEAN	41.6°F
DAYS WITH HIGH 90 OR ABOVE	0.0
DAYS WITH HIGH 32 OR BELOW	1.7
DAYS WITH LOW 32 OR BELOW	23.2
DAYS WITH LOWS ZERO OR BELOW	0.2
PRECIPITATION	
MONTHLY AVERAGE	0.86"
DAYS WITH MEASURABLE PRECIPITATION	6.2
AVERAGE SNOWFALL IN INCHES	8.8"

DAYS WITH 1.0 INCH OF SNOW OR MORE	NA
MISCELLANEOUS AVERAGES	
HEATING DEGREE DAYS	726
COOLING DEGREE DAYS	0
WIND SPEED (MPH)	9.7 mph
WIND DIRECTION	South
DAYS WITH THUNDERSTORMS	<1
DAYS WITH DENSE FOG	1
% POSSIBLE SUNSHINE	69%
EXTREMES	
RECORD HIGH	84 on 3/26/1971
RECORD LOW	-11 on 3/28/1886
WARMEST	50.4 in 1910
COLDEST	26.4 in 1912
WETTEST	4.56" in 1983
DRIEST	0.03" In 2012
SNOWIEST	35.2" in 2003
LEAST SNOWY	TR in 2012 and 2017

Snowfall

City	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr/May	Total
Aurora (Central)	TR	8.2"	12.4"	10.5"	5.8"			36.9"
Boulder	0.1"	24.5"	16.0"	9.3"	17.3"			67.2"
Brighton	0.0"	9.0"	10.2"	11.6"	5.2"			36.0"
Broomfield	TR	15.1"	16.1"	10.7"	8.6"			50.5"
Castle Rock	3.8"	5.6"	11.1"	13.3"	5.2"			39.0"
Colo Sprgs Airport	TR	7.4"	3.9"	5.3"	12.4"			29.0"
Denver DIA	TR	10.9"	13.0"	13.0"	4.7"			41.6"
Denver Downtown	TR	9.1"	9.6"	9.7"	8.0"			36.4"
Fort Collins	0.2"	9.2"	4.0"	8.8"	4.8"			27.0"
Golden	2.0"	22.6"	16.2"	10.5"	14.7"			66.0"
Highlands Ranch	2.5"	10.6"	11.2"	8.6"	5.8"			38.7"
Lakewood	TR	10.6"	14.2"	9.0"	8.7"			42.5"

Littleton	1.2"	14.1"	11.0"	8.8"	7.8"			42.9"
Monument	5.5"	5.8"	13.2"	13.3"	10.0"			47.8"
Parker	1.0"	6.9"	11.0"	12.6"	5.8"			37.3"
Sedalia - Hwy 67	5.2"	7.6"	10.6"	15.2"	8.0"			46.6"
Thornton	TR	12.6"	12.5"	11.8"	6.3"			43.2"
Westminster	TR	13.3"	15.5"	10.2"	9.6"			48.6"
Wheat Ridge	TR	15.2"	14.4"	12.0"	9.1"			50.7"
Windsor	0.0"	8.6"	7.3"	9.9"	6.0"			31.8"

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