



Drought & Water Restrictions

Erie Town Council

March 24, 2026

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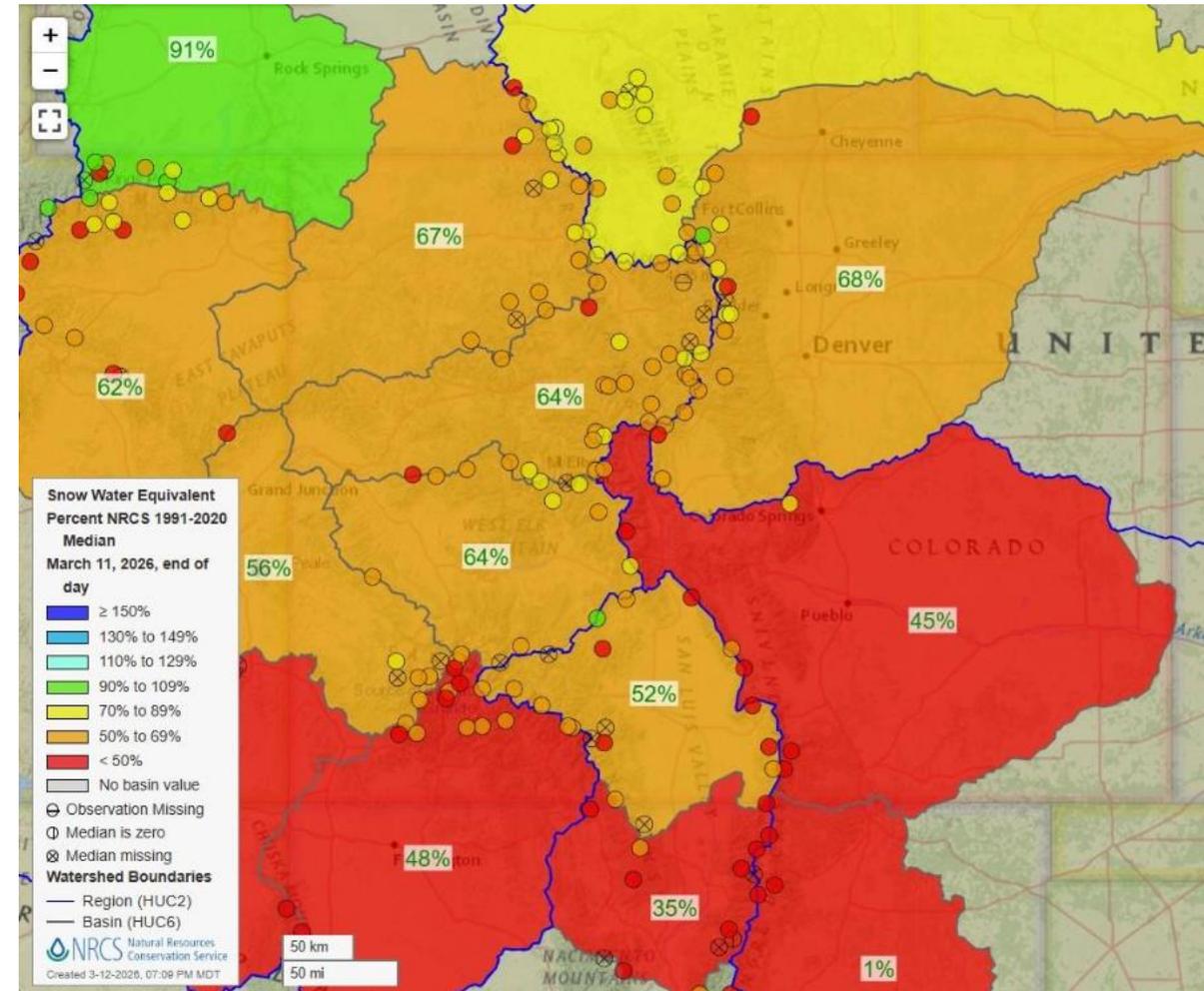


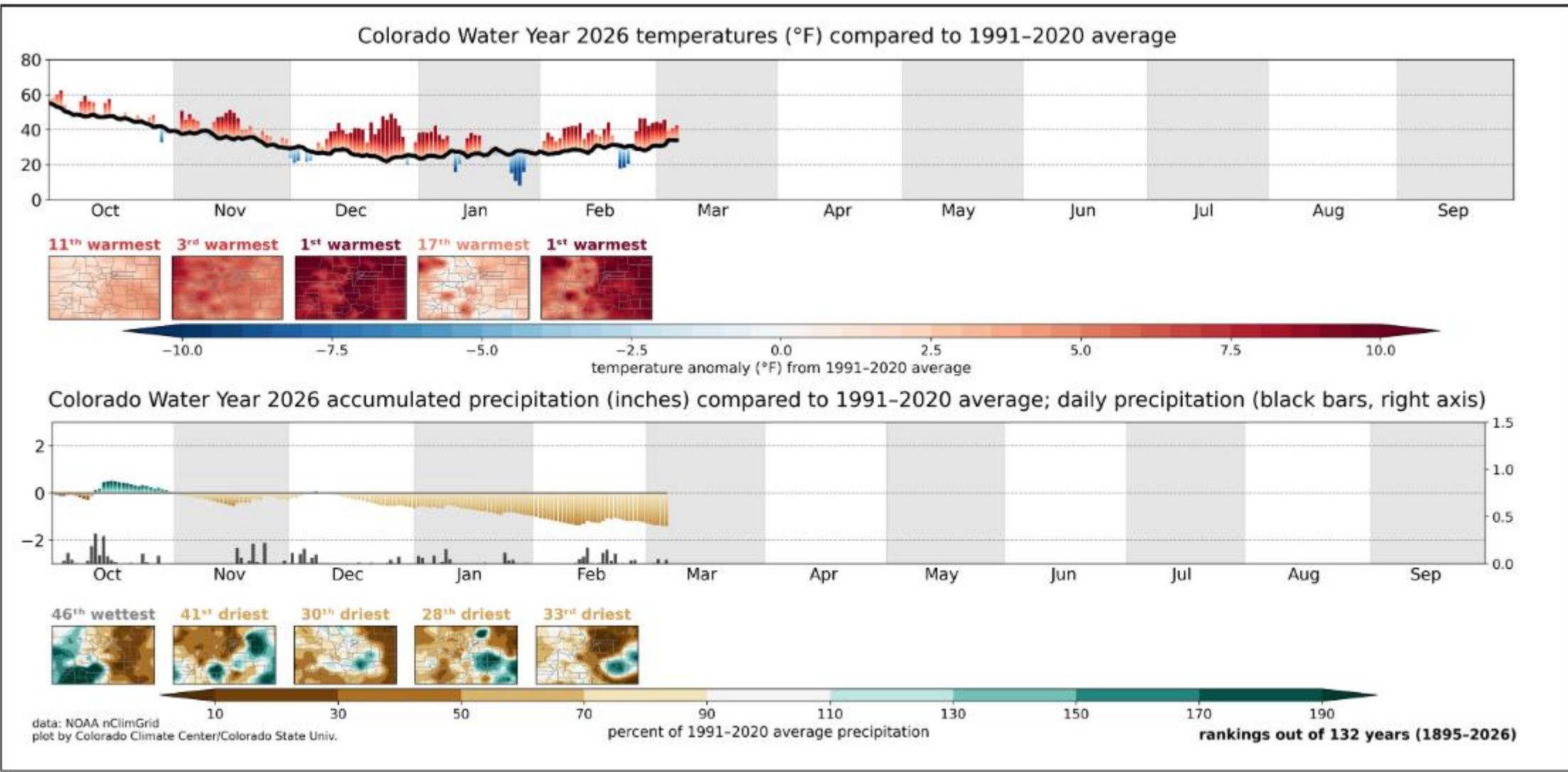
Agenda

1. Current Drought Conditions
2. Implications for Erie
3. Water Windows & Restrictions
4. Actions of Erie's neighbors
5. What Erie is Doing
6. Next Steps

Drought Conditions

- Snowpack across much of Colorado is below the historical median
- Key basins supplying the front range are well below normal
- Warmer winter temperatures have limited snow accumulation
- "Snow Drought"



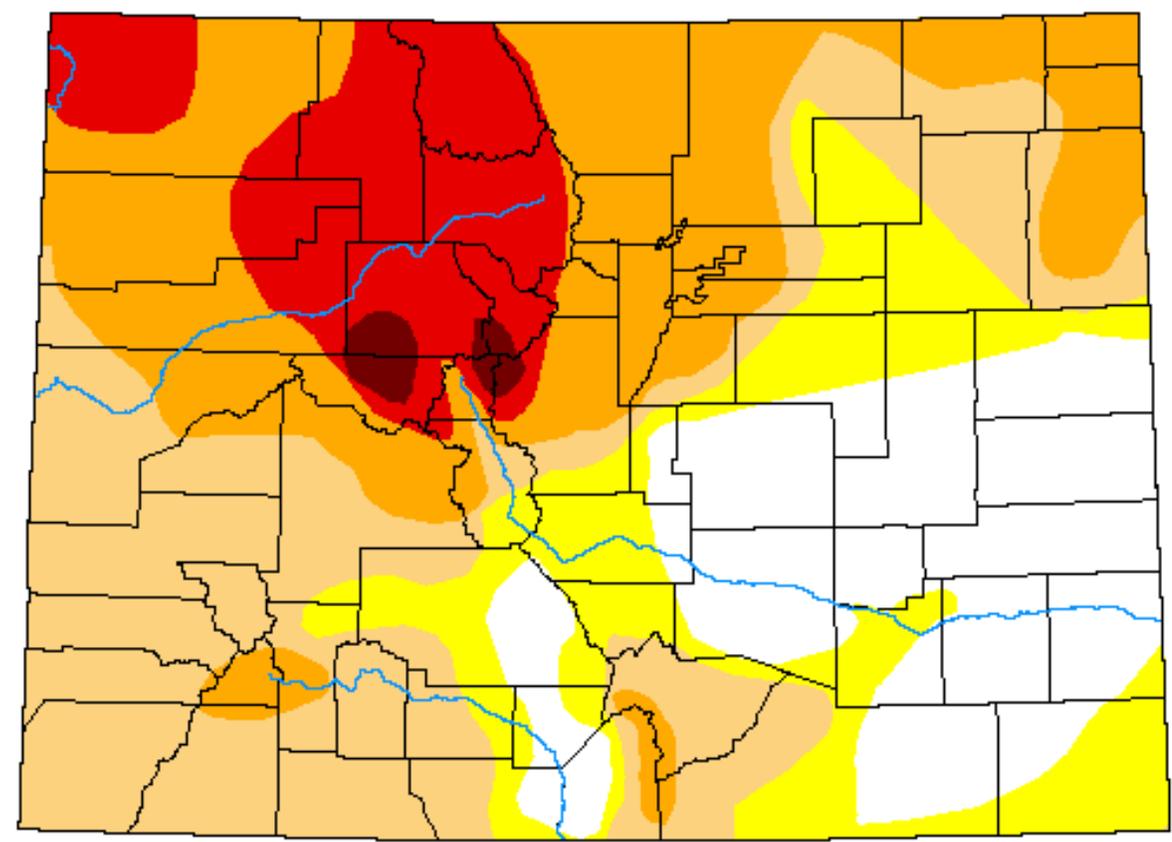


- December 2025 & February 2026 were the record warmest compared to 1991-2020 average
- Warmest first four months combined in 131 years of records



U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado

March 10, 2026
(Released Thursday, Mar. 12, 2026)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

-  None
-  D0 Abnormally Dry
-  D1 Moderate Drought
-  D2 Severe Drought
-  D3 Extreme Drought
-  D4 Exceptional Drought

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>

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droughtmonitor.unl.edu



Drought Implications for 2026 Irrigation

- Erie's water portfolio is strong.
- Low snowpack increases risk of tighter regional supply.
- Warmer than average winter and spring weather drives early irrigation demand.
- Early conservation actions help reduce peak summer demand.
- Communication will be the most effective tool.



Drought & Supply Shortage Response Framework

- Erie's Drought Plan uses a Shortage Index (supply relative to demand) to determine stages:
 - Stage 1 (Voluntary): ~10% total reduction target
 - Stage 2 (Watch): 10-20% total reduction
 - Stage 3 (Severe): 20-45% total reduction
 - Stage 4 (Emergency): >45% reduction, possible prohibitions
- We are not declaring a stage today

Proposed Two Day Watering Schedule

- **Even Addresses:** Monday & Thursday
- **Odd Addresses:** Tuesday & Friday
- Optional third day if needed
 - **Even:** Saturday
 - **Odd:** Sunday
- Third day necessity to be determined by Town staff reviewing previous and future temperature and precipitation forecasts.
- 2-day-per-week watering schedules are common practice suggestions across the front range



Regional Context

- Many Front Range communities use a similar watering schedule. Some enforce it only during times of drought.
- Erie staff participate in regional drought conversations through organizations like Northern Water, Colorado Water Conservation Board, Colorado WaterWise, and others.
- These groups encourage regional collaboration through outreach campaigns and aligned messaging.



Actions the Town is Taking

- Reducing irrigation on non-functional and low trafficked turf areas at Town facilities.
- Maintaining irrigation on high-use recreation areas to support summer activities and community amenities.
- Continuously investing in, and expanding, its raw water and re-use supplies to reduce treatment demands.



Water Conservation Programs

- The Town offers the following water conservation and efficiency programs:
 - Water Efficiency Rebates (indoor and outdoor - fixture and technology upgrades)
 - Slow the Flow Sprinkler Consultations
 - Garden in A Box garden kits
 - Turf Replacement Rebate Program

Next Steps (Monitoring and Communication)

- Staff will continue to monitor snowpack, runoff forecasts, and regional actions.
- Continue to communicate early irrigation guidance to residents and businesses.
- Encourage voluntary restrictions.
- Staff will return to Council if conditions warrant formal drought stage action.



Questions & Discussion