



*Powers Conservation District
3503 South Main Street
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(719) 336-3437 ext. 122*

Powers Conservation District
Board Supervisors
3503 South Main
Lamar, CO 81052
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The Honorable Senator Mark Udall
Hart Office Building Suite
SH-730
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Honorable Senator Udall:

The Powers Conservation District (PCD), established in 1943, in Lamar, Colorado, consists of five Board Supervisors: Donald McBee, Marvin Gruenloh, Steve Shelton, Dean Reed and Monty Coen, which all board supervisors are landowners. The District oversees plans and contracts for over 400,000 acres of highly erodible land. We represent over 500 cooperators.

PCD would like to thank you for funding the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). We have 155,083.3 acres of highly erodible land of native grass in CRP. Our county hosts the lesser prairie chicken, an asset we have diligently worked to protect. Thank you also for funding the Crop Insurance, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). These programs have made a huge difference to many of our cooperators.

We are currently enduring conditions of extreme drought, making survival of rural landowners difficult. With the D4 drought, there is no safety net for producers with a disaster program. With years of depleted soil profile producers have had virtually no income from cattle, alfalfa, corn, wheat, and sorghum production. For irrigated producers, insurance is negligible for alfalfa, their main cash crop. Decreased snowpack and extreme heat and hurricane level winds have decimated the plains. Our producers need immediate help. They cannot wait for a program two years down the road. We need disaster relief now and a farm bill in the near future. Programs like Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payment Program (SURE) and Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) can be very helpful in times like these.

PCD and its cooperators urge you to take action immediately and put in place a disaster program for both ranchers and farmers. Our best resources are our producers.

PCD and its cooperators would like to thank you for your time and effort into this matter. Please feel free to contact any of the Board Members either by phone or by e-mail.

Prowers Conservation District
Board Supervisors

Enclosures (3)

Hansen, Susan - NRCS, Lamar, CO

From: Nolan Doesken [nolan@atmos.colostate.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 6:36 PM
To: Hansen, Susan - NRCS, Lamar, CO
Cc: Wendy Ryan; Noah Newman; Zach Schwalbe
Subject: Drought conditions in Prowers County -- 2013

Susan,

As you well know, drought conditions are harsh in southeastern Colorado at the present time. Storms continue to bypass your region as we move towards summer.

I dug back into the data for the Lamar, Colorado official National Weather Service Cooperative weather station. The results are not pretty. Since continuous data collection began in the late 1890s, the two most severe droughts have historically been the 1930s and 1950s. The driest stretch occurred from 1934 - 1937 with 4 years in a row with less than 10" of precipitation (rain+ melted snow) and a 4-year total of 32.92". This period was also accompanied by persistent above average temperatures. The 1950s were no cake walk either. The worst was 1952- early summer 1956. Again, heat accompanied drought, but only one year (1952) received less than 10" of precipitation for the calendar year.

Our recent drought period now dates back to May 2009. In the past 49 months, 40 have experienced below average precipitation including the past 13 in a row and 32 out of the past 38 months. The total precipitation for the past 49 months adds up to 43.80" which is roughly 22" below the average over a 49 month period. During the past 13 months, the precipitation total has been a mere 5.81". The 30-year average for this 13-month period May 2012 - May 2013 is 17.96". From the data I am looking at, this is the driest period in the entire 120 year period. Of course, there was also markedly hot temperatures last spring, summer and fall with readings hitting 108 degrees on a few days.

Calendar year 2012 precipitation for Lamar was 7.53" -- making it the driest calendar year on record. The famous drought year of 1934, by comparison, was a very close second at 7.54". Precipitation so far this year (calendar year 2013 as of this morning (May 29) was a measly 1.06"

So no matter how you cut it, western Prowers County is looking at an epoch drought. The prolonged D4 conditions shown there on the US Drought Monitor are very well justified. Areas from Holly northward in extreme eastern Prowers County may have picked up a bit more precipitation, but overall the exceptional drought conditions remain widespread in southeastern Colorado, southwest Kansas and the OK panhandle. This is by far the worst conditions seen in southeastern Colorado since the U.S. Drought Monitor came into existence in 1999.

I hope these statistics are helpful. Sorry for the delay. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know. I am ccing Noah Newman, Wendy Ryan and Zach Schwalbe of our staff in case you need followup information when I am not available.

Nolan Doesken
Colorado Climate Center
Colorado State University