

A topographic map of a mountain range is shown on the left side of the slide. A yellow line runs vertically through the map, and a white arrow points horizontally to the right from a point on this line. The background of the slide is a dark teal color with light teal contour lines.

Concerning Snowmelt Runoff

Words of wisdom from
Colorado's former State Climatologist
Nolan Doesken 2011

A vertical strip on the left side of the slide shows a topographic map of a mountain range. The map features contour lines, a yellow vertical line, and a red horizontal line. The background of the slide is a dark teal color with faint, light blue contour lines.

Important Reminder

With all the attention that is traditionally placed on snowpack this time of year, it is important to remember that historically, the most damaging floods in Colorado have almost always been from rain-induced events.



Some Key Flood Points to Remember

- Really big floods are not that uncommon (usually at least once per decade). Most would not have been anticipated one week in advance even with today's forecasting skill.
- Colorado snowmelt is usually well behaved.
- Snowmelt floods usually require prolonged very warm temperatures and/or widespread late season snowpack including snow on south facing slopes.
- Most of Colorado's worst floods are rainfall floods.
- Floods and drought are not mutually exclusive.