



# WESTERN WATER ASSESSMENT

A NOAA RISA TEAM

## July 2021 Newsletter

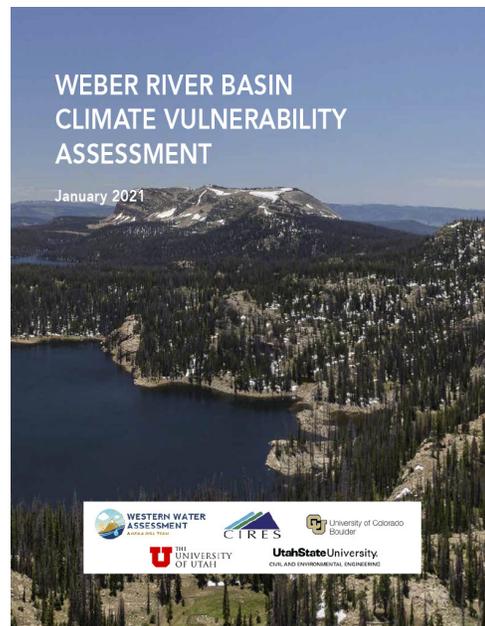
### In this newsletter...

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- The Nature Conservancy Snowtopography Handbook
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## Research and Products

### Weber Basin Climate Vulnerability Assessment

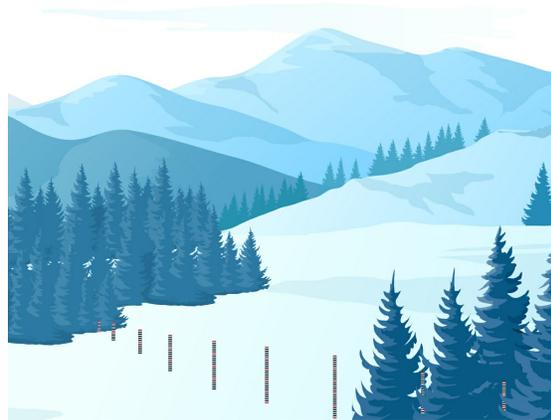
Western Water Assessment recently completed the *Weber River Basin Climate Vulnerability Assessment*. The project was a collaboration with Weber Basin Water Conservancy District (WBWCD), a wholesale water provider in northern Utah that supplies municipal and agricultural water for approximately 600,000 residents. Scientists from WWA, University of Utah and Utah State University provided a historical analysis of climate (including snowpack and streamflow) and projections of future climate (including temperature, precipitation, snow-water equivalent, streamflow and evaporation). Projections of future Weber River streamflow were used in a systems model along with other information such as population, water demand and agricultural water deliveries to determine what conditions would lead to water shortages. WBWCD will use the information in the report to better understand how to provide water to northern Utah in the future.



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## The Nature Conservancy Snowtopography Handbook

Western Water Assessment is collaborating with The Nature Conservancy and the USDA-Agricultural Research Service this summer to develop a handbook that will provide guidance on how to build and operate flexible, low-cost, low-maintenance systems to monitor snow depth, snow water content, and soil moisture. The project is part of the larger TNC Colorado River Program strategy to support better forest management for water supply. The target audience for the handbook is practitioners wanting to collect observations of how forest management and disturbance affect their snowpack, but who have limited resources, such as operational staff of the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Natural Resources Conservation Service, tribes, and conservation groups.



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## Graduate Summer Fellows

We are happy to welcome two CU Boulder graduate students as the 2021 Western Water Assessment Summer Graduate Research Fellows! **Ethan Burns** is earning a MA in Geography with a focus on forest hydrology. This summer he is developing fact sheets about ecological drought and wildfire impacts on water systems and communities, in collaboration with WWA, the North Central CASC, and the USDA Northern Plains Climate Hub. **Aislyn Keyes** is earning a PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology with a focus on the interactions between humans and natural systems. This summer she is working with WWA's Liz Payton to evaluate flood risk and resilience in manufactured housing communities. We look forward to sharing the results of their projects in the coming months!

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## Climate Event

### June 13-19, 2021 Extreme Heat Event

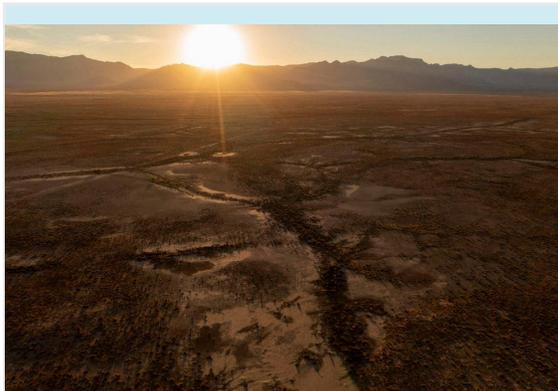
A record-shattering heat wave covered the Intermountain West in

mid-June. From June 13-19, record high temperatures were reached throughout Colorado, Utah and Wyoming including several all-time record high temperatures. The mid-June heat wave was particularly notable because of how early in the summer it occurred. In Colorado, Cortez and Alamosa had record high temperatures on 6 consecutive days including tying the all-time high of 102°F in Cortez on two days. Grand Junction saw record high temperatures on three consecutive days; record high temperatures were also observed in Colorado Springs, Denver, Pueblo and Steamboat Springs. Salt Lake City observed three consecutive days of triple digit temperatures that broke daily records, including tying the all-time record high of 107°F on June 15. Cheyenne, Riverton and Sheridan Wyoming all saw record high daily high temperatures. Sheridan tied the all-time record high of 107°F on June 15.



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## WWA Features



Drier Springs Bring Hotter Summers in the Withering Southwest

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Record-shattering heat wave bakes western US, raising drought and fire concerns

[Read article](#)



Scientists Are Studying The Changes Occurring In Glen Canyon As Lake Powell Recedes

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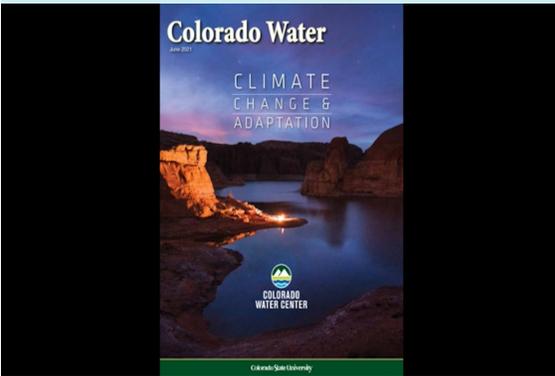
How an infrastructure bill can help rural communities in the West

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Low Reservoir Reveals Glen Canyon Treasures: Photo Essay

[Read article](#)



Colorado River Basin Climate and Hydrology: State of Science, A Synthesis Report to Support Water Planning and Management

[Read article](#)

## Looking Forward

Over the coming year, we will have a growing focus on building resilient water systems and communities in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. We will also be deepening our work with frontline communities and smaller utilities. Stay tuned for more details!

Also, our new Western Water Assessment website is currently under development. We plan to launch it later this month, so be on the lookout!

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