



The I-70 Scout

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Drought: Gov. announces Phase 3 response

Prospects for summer wheat harvest, grazing conditions less than optimistic

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

Despite near-normal May moisture and spring storms last week across much of the state, it hasn't been enough to override excessively dry conditions over the previous months and, as a result, concerns continue to ratchet.

On June 4, Gov. Jared Polis activated Phase 3 of Colorado's Drought Response Plan and issued a statewide Drought Emergency declaration in response to worsening drought conditions driven by record-low snowpack and prolonged warm temperatures across Colorado.

"With every county in the state experiencing drought conditions, activating Phase 3 of our Drought Response Plan allows us to better coordinate agencies, prepare for wors-

ening conditions, and support Colorado communities, agriculture, water users, and our environment," Polis' statement said. "State agencies will do their part to reduce water usage at state facilities and I strongly encourage every Coloradan to use water wisely."

The declaration follows recommendations from the Colorado Drought Task Force and the Water Conditions Monitoring Committee after months of monitoring water and worsening drought conditions statewide.

Last week's declaration followed March's activation of Phase 2 of Colorado's Drought Response Plan, which formally convened the statewide Drought Task Force. Phase 3 activation includes possible responses in the form of potential emergency

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STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Even near-normal moisture along the I-70 Corridor last month hasn't been enough to pull a struggling wheat crop out of a funk that could result in the state's poorest harvest since 1965.

Enjoying new 'Burg park!



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Young Jireh Juarez finds a little solace under a water fountain during the grand opening celebration for Strasburg Parks & Recreation District's new Community Park East June 3. **SEE PAGE 12.**

Corridor avoids widespread hail damage

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

Despite reports of golf- and tennis-ball size stones, the I-70 Corridor appeared to miss out on widespread severe damage from its first hailstorm of the season June 1 that wreaked more havoc further west along the Front Range.

While areas closer to Highway 36 (Colfax Avenue) in and around Watkins, Bennett and Strasburg received hail between nickel-size to three- or four-inches in diameter, other areas received softer versions of the white stuff.

"Looked really bad when it first started coming down and expecting the worse but a lot of the big stuff was splatting and disintegrating once it reached the ground or whatever surface it hit," said a Bennett caller to *The I-70 Scout* Monday night. "Also had a stretch along the highway of just really fine stuff coming down fast and starting to run down the street and gutters. A



LISA BAER HUDSON/For The Scout

Above, pea-size hail accumulates along eastbound I-70 before the Bennett exit between 2:30-3 p.m. June 1. Below, stones collected around Bennett and surrounding communities included golf-ball size and bigger but widespread damage across the I-70 Corridor was avoided.

few dummies stopped under the overpasses between Bennett and Strasburg, but we avoided any major catastrophes."

Neither Adams nor Arapahoe County sheriff's offices or local fire districts reported any significant impacts from the storm.

While a tornado warning was issued around 3 p.m., including activation of the Strasburg emergency sirens,

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ASPEN THERIAULT/For The Scout

Gubernatorial candidate visits old stomping grounds prior to ballot release

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BENNETT — When Colorado voters receive their primary election ballots starting this week, among their decisions will be whether to cast a Democrat or Republican ballot for the race for governor.

If selecting on the Republican side, one of the three candidates has ties to the I-70 Corridor,

which he revisited recently for a campaign stop.

On May 29, current state representative from Colorado Springs and former pastor with Journey Church in Strasburg Scott Bottoms visited with old acquaintances and campaign supporters during a speaking engagement at the Bennett Community Center May 29.

Bottoms, who led the Journey Church congregation for about 12 years before moving out of the

area, said his primary focus as governor would be ridding the legislature of corruption and of an alleged pedophilia ring.

"Four years in the legislature, I feel it's closer than ever this coming year," said Bottoms, referring to ongoing investigations that he has spearheaded. "It's been 2 1/2-years with this pedophile investiga-

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