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Subject: Update on Rain in Colorado

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 16 Sep 2013 19:55:38 GMT

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Paul van Delst writes:

> My comment was a tad flippanant - sorry about that. You guys are getting  
> hammered out there. Even though Fort Collins is also being inundated,  
> Boulder and Denver are really getting dumped on. The precip 7-day total  
> in one location in Boulder is >20!"  
>  
> Crikey.  
>  
> [http://www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/?n=preciptotals\\_multiday](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/?n=preciptotals_multiday)

The sun is shining outside my window, finally! Rescue helicopters are in the air and flying directly over my office. We have over 300 people still unaccounted for in the county--more in the Boulder area--and pretty much all of the roads leading into the mountains are closed with wash-outs or debris flow from the big fires last summer. Most of the unaccounted for are probably OK, we just can't get to them or contact them. The burn scar just to the west of me got hit with over 10 inches of rain in the past couple of days, as compared to a little over 4 inches here in Fort Collins.

It has been reported that Highway 34, which leads from here to Rocky Mountain National Park, is in worse shape than it was in 1976, when a flash flood killed 144 people. So far, there have been only two presumed deaths in that canyon, but it will take at least a year, they estimate, to get the road open again. In the Narrows part of the canyon there is simply no place to build a road anymore. Much of the soil is gone. I've heard that over 1200 homes in northern Colorado have been damaged or destroyed.

I belong to a group that patrols and maintains 54 hiking trails in the immediate area. We expect many of those trails to remain closed for a year or more until we can get to them and get them open again. We had 50 people on a trail the weekend before this, finally getting a trail open that had been closed by last summer's fires. It was a total mess and a tremendous amount of work opening it. We fully expect all that work to be for naught and to have to start over on that. All of our local open space (probably the reason many of us live in Colorado) is in the same shape. Heavily eroded, bridges washed away, trees down on the trail, etc. On most of our trails, chain saws are prohibited, so all of this remediation work is done with hand tools and strong backs.

Fortunately, we realize this area is subjected to frequent flooding so the city and county have done a great deal of mitigation work over the

years. There is no question what they have done has saved lives. The area I live in flooded heavily in 1997, but new retention ponds, etc. have kept everyone in my neighborhood out of water this year. We are grateful for our blessings and our thoughts and prayers are with those less fortunate this time.

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>

Sepore ma de ni thue. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

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