

October Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

As is so often the case during October in the Tri-Lakes region, we quickly transitioned from summer to winter and back a few times during the month. Overall, the month was drier than average, continuing the trend we have seen since last March. Temperatures averaged slightly cooler than normal for the month. Let's hope this winter and next spring bring some significant snows so we can make up for some of the water shortages experienced over the last year.

This winter is a weak El Nino to neutral ENSO pattern, which often will result in an average to slightly above average snow season for us. To follow the ENSO pattern and learn about its effects on our weather, check out this link from the Denver NWS office, http://www.crh.noaa.gov/images/bou/showimages/AUGUST-OCTOBER_2012_Outlook-Baker.pdf.

We experienced a little bit of everything during the first week October. The morning of the 1st started off with low clouds and fog, then sunshine returned by afternoon.

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Highs were a little below normal, only hitting the mid-60s. Mild and sunny weather quickly moved in the next two days, ahead of a cold front. This cold front brought a dramatic change to our weather pattern starting on the afternoon of the 3rd, with temperatures falling from the upper 70s that afternoon to freezing by midnight.

Cold air stuck around the next few days, as another reinforcing shot of cold air moved in. Highs were stuck in the 40s on the 4th with low clouds and fog at times, then were held in the 30s on the 5th and 6th. In addition, our first hard freeze of the season occurred by the morning of the 4th, with low 20s common thorough the region.

The next morning saw our first snow of the season when a dusting to a half inch fell just before sunrise on the 5th. The fog, low clouds, and freezing temperatures also left a nice coating of ice on exposed surface that day and again on the 6th, as high temperatures barely made it above freezing. Over the two-day period, we picked up a little more than 0.1 inch of precipitation. Sunshine returned with abundance to end the first weekend of the month, but temperatures were still 10 to 15° cooler than normal, in the upper 40s to low 50s on the 7th.

The second week of October was mostly quiet and dry, with the exception of one area of low pressure that moved through late in the week. Temperatures were near to slightly above normal for the first few days of the week, with mid- to upper 60s on the 8th, then about 10° cooler on the 9th, and back to the mid- and upper 60s on the 10th and 11th. We remained dry through that time as well, with plenty of sunshine. But an area of low pressure moving through Southern California and into Arizona, Nevada, and Utah began to affect the region late on the 11th.

Clouds and scattered showers greeted us on the 12th as the first portion of the storm moved through. The cold, unsettled portion of the low moved over us the next day, and some wrap-around moisture hit the region during the afternoon of the 13th. This brought some cold rain and penetrating winds that afternoon. The storm moved out quickly that evening and the weekend ended sunny and dry, with seasonal temperatures in the upper 50s and low 60s.

The next week was dry as temperatures fluctuated from slightly below normal to slightly above normal. High temperatures ranged from the low 7s on the 15th, 16th, and 20th to the mid- and upper 50s on the 17th and 18th. The dry air and long, clear nights allowed overnight lows to dip into the 20s and 30s every morning, with some chilly upper teens on the morning of the 18th. A couple weak pushes of cooler air moved into the area, one early on the 17th and another late on the 20th. A quick-moving disturbance associated with a storm moving just to our north also brought some showers during the early hours of the 17th, but unless you were awake around 2 a.m., you probably didn't even notice.

Our first good snow of the season occurred during the third week of October, pretty much right on schedule for the region. The week started off quiet enough, with

temperatures in the 60s to low 70s on the 22nd and 23rd. This mild air was ahead of a developing storm system about to move through the area out of the Pacific Northwest. Winds kicked up pretty well ahead of this storm, with the cold front pushing through during the mid-afternoon of the 24th. Clouds quickly filled in and by 7 p.m., snow was falling for most of us. Snow continued at a pretty good clip through the evening, with blowing snow overnight as well.

By the time the snow tapered off the next morning, 4 to 8 inches had accumulated. Another quick-moving storm followed and produced another round of snow from the afternoon through just before midnight on the 25th. This produced another inch or so of snow and reinforced the cold air across the region. Overall, this stormy period brought a nice shot of much needed moisture to the area, with around a half inch of liquid equivalent accumulating.

Temperatures stayed at or just below freezing for highs on both the 25th and 26th, making for a couple of pretty raw days. Sunshine returned by the afternoon of the 26th and continued over the weekend. Temperatures struggled to reach the low 40s even with all the sunshine on the 27th, then broke into the 50s on Sunday the 28th.

Sunshine returned for the remainder of the month, providing beautiful weather for the last few days of the month and perfect weather for trick-or-treaters during Halloween.

A look ahead

November is generally dry and cool around the region. We usually get several light snowfalls interspersed with sunny skies. Gusty winds commonly develop on a couple of days as the jet stream becomes more active and more directly affects Colorado. Our first subzero morning low temperatures occur during the month as well. High temperatures average in the upper 40s early in the month to low 40s by the end with overnight lows often dipping into the teens and single digits.

October 2012 Weather Statistics

Average High	58.7° (-0.5)
100-year return frequency value max	67.7° min 50.7°
Average Low	28.0° (-1.3)
100-year return frequency value max	36.8° min 26.4°
Monthly Precipitation	0.84" (-0.67")
100-year return frequency value max	4.63" min 0.18"
Monthly Snowfall	7.1 (-6.9")
Highest Temperature	78° on the 3rd
Lowest Temperature	16° on the 27th
Season to Date Snow	7.1 (-7.1")
(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)	
Season to Date Precip.	7.26" (-2.25")
(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)	
Heating Degree Days	671 (+37)
Cooling Degree Days	0 (0)

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Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 35.
Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in *Letters to Our Community* should not be interpreted as the view of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

Vote yes on 5A

In 2004, voters passed a one-cent sales tax to fund the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA). Funding from PPRTA has completed numerous beneficial road projects in the Pikes Peak region and specifically in the Tri-Lakes area, the Baptist Road/Hodgen Road connection, the Baptist Road/Struthers Road connection, and the widening of Baptist Road.

Now, ballot measure 5A asks voters to extend the capital projects portion of the PPRTA one-cent tax for another 10 years. The one-cent tax is broken out as follows: 55 percent for a specific list of capital projects, 35 percent for maintenance projects, and 10 percent for metro transit. Even if 5A is voted down, the 45 percent for maintenance projects and metro transit will still continue. According to the PPRTA website, the entire one-cent tax costs the average household approximately 42 cents per day.

This is an important issue for the entire Pikes Peak region, but especially to the Tri-Lakes area. Monument

Hill Road is the only access to Palmer Ridge High School, and it has absolutely no shoulder, let alone a bike lane. This road has long been identified as needing safety improvements, but the issue is funding. If 5A passes, 4-foot shoulders will be added to Monument Hill Road, making the trip to school much safer for bikers, pedestrians, and car drivers alike. Additionally, Deer Creek Road from Monument Hill Road to Woodmoor Drive, Beacon Lite Road from Highway 105 to County Line Road, and Highway 105 from I-25 to Highway 83 are all slated for improvements if 5A passes.

Any tax question can be contentious, but I urge every voter to become informed on this issue by visiting the PPRTA websites, www.pprta.com and www.extendpprta.org, and to vote yes on 5A.

Vicki Sullivan

Vote no on 5C

Tax increase 5C is a 3 mill property tax increase that will cost the average Tri-Lakes household almost \$1,000 per year. If we don't pay, we are told the fire district will have to close a fire station and lay off three firemen, but the midyear financial assessment from July shows the fire district funding and spending is running as expected.