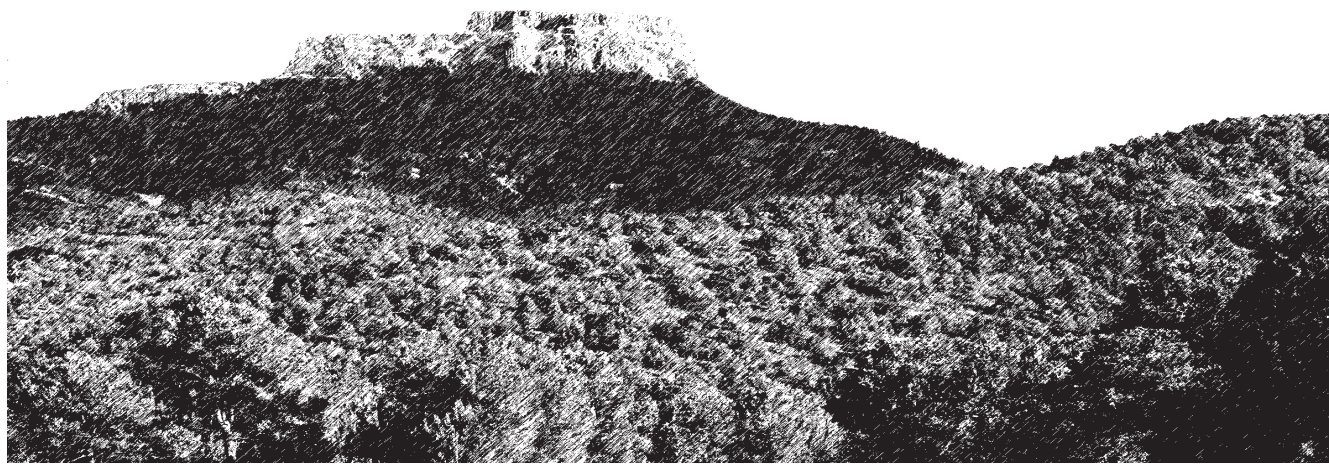


OVER THE PASS



"It's been beautiful, green and luscious, much appreciated. On the downside, our yard is muddy and we just got a new chocolate-lab puppy from Noah's Ark."

— Carla Carnes, physical therapist, Trinidad Inn Nursing Home (Trinidad)



"I like the rain. I wish we'd get more. Hopefully it'll bring us a lot more snow. I ride dirt bikes and 4-wheelers in the snow. I love clouds; it's my favorite weather."

— Raymond Vigil, builder, hardwood floors, Pueblo (Raton)

TRINIDAD-RATON CONNECTION

"What do you think about our wet summer?"

By Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News



"I haven't had to water my lawn as much this year. We need the rain. For a few years it's been kinda dry."

— Pete Vigil, Amtrak & Greyhound depot volunteer (Raton)



"This is our wettest in 14 years. We've been a foot to a foot-and-a-half low every year. It's greener and fresher this summer. It's been nice."

— Henry Paul Garner, Sr., retired oil company exploration & production, Homer, Louisiana (Trinidad)



"I really enjoy it. It's cooler weather and it's good for our rangeland and farm ground. We have horses, sheep and a of couple cows. More rain means faster-growing grass and better grazing."

— Dylan Solano, Hoehne High School junior (Trinidad)



"I like it. I grow vegetables and flowers and the rain helps my plants. It doesn't make me sweat all day—it's cooler. I love storms, very cozy. We storm chase, too."

— Suyen Silvestri, lab tech, organ transplants, Kansas City, MO (Raton)

WATER RIGHTS

13 states want judge to block new federal water rule

Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Thirteen states led by North Dakota are asking a federal judge in Bismarck to block a new rule that gives federal authorities jurisdiction over some state waters.

North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem said he will seek a preliminary injunction Monday, the deadline for such legal action to prevent the rule from taking effect on Aug. 28.

Stenehjem said he was hopeful a judge will grant a hearing on the injunction within the next few days.

North Dakota is leading a lawsuit filed on June 29 challenging the Obama administration rule that gives federal agencies authority to protect some streams, tributaries and wetlands under the Clean Water Act. Stenehjem said the "Waters of the U.S." rule by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers is "unnecessary" and "unlawful." He said it does nothing to increase water quality in North Dakota and other states.

The rule is a response to calls from the U.S. Supreme Court and Congress for the EPA to clarify which smaller waterways are protected. The EPA says the new law aims to help landowners understand which waters fall under the Clean Water Act.

Landowners — and especially farmers — are worried even a ditch or puddle could fall under federal regulations.

Other states joining the lawsuit with North Dakota are Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska,

New Mexico, Nevada, South Dakota and Wyoming.

The request for a preliminary injunction comes after Stenehjem and attorneys general and officials from 30 states sent a letter last month to the EPA and the Army Corps asking that the new law be postponed at least nine months.

"A federal regulation of this scope and significance demands a thorough judicial review before imposing costly and disruptive burdens on the states and their citizens," the letter said.

The federal agencies have not responded to the letter.

Robert Daguillard, an EPA spokesman in Washington, said Monday that his agency is still "carefully reviewing" it.

In addition to the lawsuit led by North Dakota, dozens of others have been filed by business, agriculture groups and others in at least eight U.S. district courts.

The EPA and the Army Corp have asked that the lawsuits be consolidated in a single district court.

Stenehjem said the request for an injunction he expects to file Monday also asks that the lawsuits not be consolidated.

"We think we have speculative arguments," he said.

STATE BRIEFS

Associated Press

Denver public pot use campaign turning in ballot signatures

DENVER (AP) — Marijuana activists campaigning to see pot consumption allowed in bars and other public places in Denver are turning in signatures to get the question on November's city ballots.

The Limited Social Use campaign says they have more than enough signatures to see a public vote on the matter. They need 4,700 signatures and say they have collected about 8,000 signatures.

If the measure passes, Denver would be the first American city to allow public marijuana consumption. Bars and clubs would have the final say about whether to allow pot.

Patrons would have to bring their own weed and comply with clean-air laws. That means the marijuana would have to be edible, or if smoked, consumed on an outside patio shielded from public view.

Colorado man found dead on Backers Island beach

SELDOVIA, Alaska (AP) — Seldovia police are investigating after a Colorado man was found dead on a nearby beach.

KTVA-TV reports that two fishermen spotted the body on a Backers Island beach Saturday morning. They checked if the man was breathing and then called 911.

Seldovia police responded and declared 47-year-old Troy Dean Fisher, of

Grand Junction, Colorado, dead at the scene. Fisher was temporarily working in the area.

Seldovia Police Chief Hal Henning says the body was transported to the State Medical Examiner's Office for an autopsy, but police do not consider the death suspicious.

Glenwood Springs abandoned bikes outnumber reports of theft

GLENWOOD SPRING, Colo. (AP) — Officers are trying to figure out who the owners are of 20 abandoned bikes found around Glenwood Springs in the last month.

The Post Independent reports there have been more found bikes than calls to police about stolen bicycles. Police Chief Terry Wilson says the bikes have been found scattered around town, and could be the result of a person or people making a career or hobby of the practice.

Police departments in three surrounding communities have not reported an increase in bicycle thefts.

Wilson says bike thefts sometimes go unreported for weeks. He said the department is working to return the bikes to their rightful owners.

Anyone with information should contact the department's nonemergency line.

Tens of thousands to attend vets rally in Cripple Creek

CRIPPLE CREEK, Colo. (AP) — This year's Salute to American Veterans Rally and Festival will bring in an expected 35,000 people to the gambling town of Cripple Creek.

The Gazette reports that veteran-

themed events start Thursday and will continue through the weekend with a parade for veterans at 10 a.m. Saturday to remember fallen veterans. More than 10,000 motorcycles are expected to hit the streets for the annual festival that has become Colorado's largest motorcycle event.

Cripple Creek city administrator Ray Dubois says preparation for the event has been in the works for months. Police agencies from around the Pikes Peak region have been called on to assist with traffic and fire crews will be on hand.

Cripple Creek was the site of Colorado's biggest gold rush in the beginning of the 20th century.

Colorado woman wants being topless in public allowed

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (AP) — A Colorado woman seeking to prevent citations for being topless in public is publicizing her cause by standing on a Fort Collins intersection wearing only a bikini and a placard covering her breasts.

The Fort Collins Coloradoan reports that 24-year-old Brittiany Hoagland has made occasional street demonstrations ahead of a planned protest in the city Aug. 23 to coincide with an international "go topless" day.

Hoagland tells the newspaper that it's a matter of equality and that if it's fine for men to be topless in public, the same standard should apply to women. The placard she wears to cover her breasts when she stands on a city intersection reads, "Illegal to Remove."

Fort Collins police Deputy Chief Jerry Schiager says his department writes a few citations each year for public indecency, a misdemeanor.

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