

Notes by KGS
1-11-2010

Not a flash flood
Flood of record, estimated peak discharge \approx 100-year event
i.e. \approx 12,000 cfs

1894: Boulder Creek

It rained for hours and hours, totaling 8.54 inches, and residents of Boulder began to realize Boulder Creek was rising. The creek ended up spreading around 500 yards wide by the time the peak of the storm was reached. From Boulder to Jamestown, plenty of bridges and telephone lines were washed away, while mines were being flooded. Boulder became isolated due to cutoff of communication services. Three deaths were the result of this flood and \$350k in damages.

1896: Bear Creek

Flash Flood, summer monsoon, July 25 (or 24)?

Said to be the worst flood to hit Morrison of the time, plenty of bridges, homes, and people were washed by the flood waters. A cloudburst caused flooding along Bear Creek, Turkey Creek and Mount Vernon Gulch. As result to these flooded creeks, 28 lost their lives and a ten foot wall of water roared down Bear Creek. An estimated quarter of a million dollars was calculated for damages.

1935: Kiowa Creek

Storm date May 30, Memorial Day \approx 2 feet of rain in \approx 8 hours

On May 31, 1935, the worst flood, caused by heavy rain, to hit Kiowa Creek destroyed most of the town. Businesses and homes were swept from their foundations and destroyed, along with livestock. An estimated 20 foot wall of water went down the creek and in some parts the flood waters were described as a half a mile wide. About 15 feet of water was found in the Elbert County Courthouse in Kiowa and in Bennett was practically isolated due to three washed out bridges. A 750 foot highway bridge in Bennett was washed out for at least 40 feet. An estimated 9 people were killed and an estimated damage total was \$100,000 (1935 dollars).

See 1938
USBR Report
on Cherry Creek
1935 storm
superimposed over
Cherry Creek

1938: Bear Creek

Mount Vernon Creek, Flash Flood, Sept 2-3

A cloudburst with 7.9 inches of rain in Morrison caused flooding and walls of water to travel along Bear Creek and Mount Vernon Creek. The damage was gone to many roads and bridges along the two creeks with cars being swept from the road and leaving thousands of tons of mud to be cleared off these roadways after the flood. A car was swept off with the flood water and 6 lives were lost. Damage was also done to the telephone lines and numerous amounts of livestock were drowned. The site after the flood was considered in such a bad condition that considerations of leaving the Morrison site were made.

Mega-flood
on Mt. Vernon
(2-3 times the
100-year)

1965: South Platte River

June 16-17¹⁵, 20' wall of water

A cloudburst down south by Castle Rock caused flooding along West and East Plum Creeks as well as the South Platte River Basin from Castle Rock to Denver. The storm dumped an estimated 14 inches of rain and also had 4 tornadoes touch down in different areas of the state. The flood hit 27 Colorado counties and also affected Spring Cree, Antelope Creek, Sand Creek and Purgatoire River. The Purgatoire River ran at 50,000 cfs toward the Arkansas River and many railroads were damaged in the south. Down the South Platte River a 20 foot wall of water made its way which caused most of the flooding and 'everything imaginable' was floating down the river. The crest south of Littleton was at 200 feet wide by 20

feet high with the water moving at 10 miles/hour and there was 3 feet of water on South Federal Boulevard. On several waterways about 26 or more bridges were washed out, numerous abandoned vehicles were floating in streams and debris built up on bridges causing a wall. \$2.6 Million dollars totaled for destroyed bridges and \$10 million in damage was calculated for the highway systems repair. Residential damage included damaged phone lines, power outages, flooded homes and caved in house roofs. Other damages included washed out railroad tracks in the south, eroded roads, city streets under water and some towns under 3 feet of water. The damage dollar amount was totaled at \$500 Million dollars and 21 deaths were reported.