

Broomfield golf club closes, citing drought

HRMD

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The Broomfield Eagle Trace Golf Club permanently closed last week. The cause? Drought, according to the club's staff.

"The drought in Colorado this year left us with very little water available, and has forced us to close as we will no longer be able to maintain the course," read a statement on the club's website addressed to "all our valued and loyal customers that have supported us through the years."

The golf course was built and established in 1963, according to multiple golf course information guides. The club was already scheduled to shutter in November after a full lack of water access went into effect due to a water-rights issue, according to reporting by The Denver Gazette's news partners 9News.

The club's owner privately sold the water rights to Owl Creek water brokers for more than \$4 million, according to a Sept. 16 Eagle Trace Community Development Corporation town hall meeting.

"The drought is affecting golf courses all over the state, and they're not closing, so I think there's a lot going on," Bruce Erley, a board member, secretary and communications chair for the Eagle Trace Communication Development Corporation, told 9NEWS. "My personal feeling is the drought is certainly a factor, but it's not the only reason."

Colorado suffered from poor snowpacks and warmer weather, compelling several jurisdictions to impose restrictions and other strategies to conserve water. Denver Water, for example, declared a Stage 1 drought in March after Colorado's snowpack peaked at about 58% of normal and weeks earlier than usual. The water utility, which relies on mountain snowpack to supply 1.5 million people across the metro area, imposed restrictions in an effort to preserve reservoir levels and avoid more severe measures.

Jurisdictions along the Front Range adopted similar strategies. The Eagle Trace Communication Development Corporation was created in response to the golf club's struggles. *Note*

No other Front Range golf courses have permanently shuttered this year as a result of the drought pillaging parts of the West, but many have had to adapt to new restrictions and decreased water access.

On June 4, Gov. Jared Polis declared a statewide drought emergency and activated phase 3 of Colorado's Drought Response Plan.

Denver is under a Stage 1 drought declaration, and businesses were ordered by Denver Water to turn off their lawn watering and spray irrigation systems Oct. 1, with hand watering using a handheld hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle and low-volume irrigation as exceptions.

All eight municipal Denver city-owned golf courses have cut their water budgets by 20%, the Greenway Park Golf Course in Broomfield is operating at 25% below allowed water limits, Aurora Golf was given a water consumption allocation and restrictions on watering timing for the season, and some Westmin- *Note*

ster courses, including Walnut Creek Golf Preserve, are using resources like rain sensors, irrigation with nonpotable reuse water and hand watering with a hose to cut down on water usage.

A survey on the Eagle Trace CDC website, which closed Sept. 28, requested community input on the future of the property. No official decision on what the course might become had been released as of Sunday.