

**ADWR Interagency Coordination Group
Spring Meeting
May 9, 2017**

1. Welcome
2. Drought Status – Nancy Selover, ASU
 - a. Colorado River basin had decent precipitation in 2010, then dry seasons until improving into this year. El Nino had no beneficial impact to Arizona, only California. Have transitioned from El Nino to weak La Nina to current neutral ENSO.
 - b. Short term statewide; overall moderate drought was improved by monsoon rains in the northwest and southeast of the state. Extreme and severe drought has been abated and moderate conditions improving.
 - c. Long term statewide; Verde watershed is moderate with rest of state holding as abnormally dry.
 - d. Moving to gridded SPI data set to reflect historical data better; incorporating evaporative index for a gridded SPEI to gauge how quickly precipitation is drying out. Streamflow added soon to SPEI.
 - e. State stream flow; Verde is improving after last dry season, Salt is doing well last two years, and Gila and Santa Cruz helped by last three years of wet monsoon.
 - f. Statewide precipitation has seen an uptick, could be entering a wet period but brief wet phases have been seen before in this extended drought (such as 2005).
3. Winter 2016-17 Weather Update – Mark O'Malley, NWS
 - a. Review of SW monsoon influences (subtropical high pressure, El Niño, amount of drought). Weak La Niña this winter that had little to no impact on Arizona.
 - b. 50/50 chance of El Niño conditions for winter. ENSO doesn't affect monsoon as much.
 - c. Warm water in eastern Pacific means favorable tropical activities toward Arizona (may be good for moisture).
 - d. Summer warmer than average. Precipitation outlook-no indication either way though could experience later onset of monsoon season with southern Arizona receiving most of moisture.
 - e. Next winter odds are for warmer than average- again no indication for precipitation outlook.
 - f. Currently ENSO neutral.
 - g. Colorado River had an above average wet winter but a warm, dry spring has tempered outlook. This year's snowpack was below same in 2011 due to March weather.
 - h. BOR April 24 Month Study predicts Mead elevation at 1,079.8' (Dec 2017) and 1,102.3' (Dec 2018). No shortage is expected in 2018- chances are: 31% (2019), 32% (2020), 34% (2021). Chances for Tier 2 or 3 have dropped to single digits.
 - i. Arizona has lost most of its snow cover by now.
4. Colorado River Water Supply – Jeff Inwood, ADWR
 - a. Review of conditions in Colorado River Basin – have seen better. Has tempered outlook. Contents about the same (about 50% full). Mead at 1,084 feet which is better than last year.

- b. Snowpack is better than 30-year median, but dropping off. Still at 124% of median.
 - c. Estimate of inflow. With dry spring, Lake Powell inflow will be between 2011's 16 maf and 2016's 9.5 maf. Latest forecast indicates 119% of average or 12.9 maf. Side inflows will be 130% of average or additional 227,000 af- enough for 3' rise in Lake Mead.
 - d. BOR April 24 Month Study predicts Mead elevation at 1,079.8' (Dec 2017) and 1,102.3' (Dec 2018). No shortage is expected in 2018- chances for any shortage are: 31% (2019), 32% (2020), 34% (2021). Chances for Tier 2 or 3 have dropped to single digits.
 - e. Projected December 2018 hydrology ranges from 1,125' to 1,075'.
 - f. .
 - g. MTOM/CRSS model probability is 0 in 2017 and negligible in 2018.
5. Drought Contingency Plan – Tom Buschatzke, ADWR
- a. Mead is 5 feet above trigger elevation for shortage; 8 feet of current Mead elevation is artificially created through conservation efforts of CAP and Mexico. Would not be above trigger without it.
 - b. Weather has given hiatus on urgency planning, ADWR will pursue aggressive conservation despite hiatus.
 - c. CAP and others are storing water in Mead. California may also increase stored water at Mead, an additional 200,00 af of ICS due to significant Sierra Nevada snowpack
 - d. Structural deficit in lower basin still exists. More leaving system than coming in. Contingency plan minimized impact of deficit.
 - e. Last 30 years natural flows at Lee's Ferry have been below average
 - f. Recap of probability of shortage. It has been reduced.
 - g. Arizona suffers 320,000 af reduction at Tier One shortage
 - h. Contingency planning with lower basin states, Reclamation and others. Goal is to restore risk to levels achieved in 2007 guidelines, conserve 1.5-3 maf in Mead over next five years, reduce risk of shortage.
 - i. Agreement to do as much as necessary to preserve 1,020 elevation, creating incentives for ICS storage. Would allow counting ICS toward triggered reductions.
 - j. Description of DCP and impacts to Arizona; cuts are twice 07 guidelines.
 - k. Agriculture loses all Colorado water under DCP; DCP+ is possible solution to hold elevation at 1,075' and provide buffer for agriculture.
 - l. ADWR working on adaptive conservation to achieve buffer goals.
 - m. ADWR to continue working on plan, working with others. BOR has made a commitment to Mead conservation.
 - n. Next steps: discussion on voluntary reduction in Arizona, communication and messaging, finalize DCP among lower basin states, Arizona legislature and federal legislation.
 - o. Weather has helped us, but not saved us.
 - p. Review of Minute 319. Continues collaboration with Mexico, allows Mexico to exchange water with US users, allow Mexico to store in Lake Mead. Signing 32X agreement is largely procedural. Administration seems amenable.
6. Salt & Verde Watersheds – Charlie Ester, SRP

- a. Not as much as other wet years, but a relief compared to previous six dry years.
 - b. System is at 76% of capacity (total storage). Before winter was 44%.
 - c. Good snowfall in White Mts and resulting runoff.
 - d. Roosevelt did not fill during this winter. Storms favored the Verde watershed. Granite Dam had to spill in March. GRUSP operations and storing water. Gilbert Road breached.
 - e. SRP reservoirs have done well during drought years.
 - f. Drought has been relentless: watersheds, forest, ranges and wildlife suffering immensely. Drought not over. We need additional wet winters and decent summers to heal the land.
 - g. Blue Ridge reservoir (Craigien) reached capacity and spilled into East Clear Creek- Verde reservoirs are smaller.
 - h. Mix of groundwater to surface water: 2.8 maf surface water 0.5 maf of groundwater.
7. 2017 Wildfire Outlook – Jeff Whitney, Arizona Department of Forestry
- a. Wildfire season here. Two significant fires in southern Arizona; Sawmill and Mulberry.
 - b. In good shape in upper elevation. Good snowfall in upper elevations. Higher than normal threat of wildfires in lower elevations.
 - c. Mid elevation depends on temperature and winds (pinions and juniper).
 - d. Lower elevation have standing crop of grasses. Sawmill and Mulberry didn't do much damage due to soil moisture.
 - e. Outlook for 90 days is active fire season. Expecting normal or early monsoonal season this summer and guardedly optimistic. But also results in higher incidence of lightning.
 - f. Working on forest mitigation, fuels reduction and working with SRP. Working on salt cedar control and mesquite eradication. Goal is to create watershed resiliency.
8. Drought Declaration Recommendation
- a. Summary: short-term outlook encouraging. Long term many areas are in extreme condition. Recommendation to Governor Ducey to maintain drought declaration. Provides support to agriculture and ranching sectors. Continue with planning and management efforts. Presentation will be summarized and recommendation forwarded to the Governor
9. Call to the Public
- a. No calls from public
10. Closing Remarks and Adjournment