

PIMA COUNTY LOCAL DROUGHT IMPACT GROUP  
(LDIG)

Wednesday, September 14, 2016  
Pima County Public Works Building

**RECAP**

Attendance: Kathy Chavez (RWRD), Marie Light (PCDEQ), Erin Boyle, NWS, Mitch Basefsky, CAP

1. Welcome and Introductions -Welcome and Introductions were made
2. Updates – Kathy Chavez, RWRD
  - a. Recap of July 13 meeting
  - b. Joint Hazard Mitigation Plan: Pima County is working with local jurisdictions to update the Joint Hazard Mitigation Plan. It includes drought as one of the hazards. K Chavez is coordinating with the Pima County Office of Emergency Management
  - c. ADWR Annual Drought Report: Each year ADWR prepares a report on the status of drought in Arizona. It is expected to be submitted to the Governor in November. ADWR will be reaching out to the LDIGs for a report on their activities. A draft to be prepared in October will be shared with LDIG for review before being submitted to ADWR.
  - d. Other Updates:
    - i. The CAP Board will be meeting in Tucson on October 6 at Omni Tucson National
    - ii. The National Weather Services' Mike Cantin has transferred to Idaho. Ken Drozd is serving in an acting capacity until his replacement is hired.
3. 2016 Summer Monsoon Season Overview – Erin Boyle, NWS, provided a presentation that including the following key points:
  - a. Sumer 2016 was the 4<sup>th</sup> hottest for Southern Arizona and the 8<sup>th</sup> straight summer in the top 10 warmest
  - b. Summer precipitation was slightly higher than normal: 6" compared to the normal of 4.86". Overall, Western Pima County and the Tohono O'odham Nation were drier than Eastern Pima County
  - c. Since 1895, when weather records have been kept, precipitation has been variable, but average summer temperatures have steadily increased starting in 1965
  - d. June was the 6<sup>th</sup> warmest and 2<sup>nd</sup> wettest on record. There were 22 days of temperatures exceeding 100°F. As is typical with summer monsoons, rainfall was variable throughout the Tucson Area ranging from 0.23" to 3.96"
  - e. July was the 3<sup>rd</sup> hottest with 25 days of temperature exceeding 100°F. It was the 24<sup>th</sup> wettest, but there were 15 consecutive days with no rain at the airport
  - f. August was the 36<sup>th</sup> warmest and 26<sup>th</sup> driest. It was also the 10<sup>th</sup> straight August with below normal rainfall
  - g. To date, September's precipitation has been above normal, primarily due to remnants of Hurricane Newton
  - h. Monsoon rainfall totals have generally been above normal throughout southeast Arizona, except for Organ Pipe which was drier than normal
  - i. Drought conditions have not changed significantly since the start of the monsoon and most of Arizona is in some stage of drought

- j. Precipitation is expected to be near normal for the 2016 water year which ends September 30 and for the 2016 calendar year ending December 31.
  - k. The US seasonal outlook for drought calls for continued drought persisting in the Southwest and California
  - l. The three-month outlook is for above 50% chance of warm weather in the Southwest and equal chances of above or below normal precipitation. La Niña watch has been replaced by neutral conditions in the Eastern Pacific
  - m. The Colorado Basin River Forecast Center shows most of the basin is expected to receive more than 100% of average precipitation
4. Colorado River Status and Drought Contingency Plan – Mitch Basefsky, CAP, reviewed the status of the Colorado River and programs to protect the water level at Lake Mead, making the following points:
- a. Status of the Colorado River
    - i. Lake Mead is 37% full and Lake Powell is 53% full
    - ii. Without mitigation action, the probability of a Tier 1 shortage in 2018 is 50%
    - iii. The Bureau of Reclamation’s recent 24-month projection indicates a shortage will not be declared in 2017. Although slight, the probabilities of the Tier 3 shortage increase starting in 2019. At Tier 3, the Secretary of the Interior can mandate, as yet undefined, cuts to water deliveries to the lower basin states
    - iv. Lake Powell has a regulatory obligation to release 7.5 million acre-feet (maf), but typically releases 8.23 maf which includes the Upper Basin share of Mexico’s 1.5 maf allocation. The structural deficit in Lake Mead is not related to releases from Lake Powell, but is a result of outflows that are greater than inflows.
    - v. California is transitioning from fossil fuel to renewable energy, including hydroelectric power, thus their interest in maintaining levels in Lake Mead as it generates hydroelectric power. Power generation efficiency decreases as the lake level decreases. California is also concerned about curtailments from the State project as a result of ongoing local drought
    - vi. Two key programs, the Lower Pilot Basin Drought Response MOU and the Pilot System Conservation Agreement, have prevented Lake Mead levels from falling below the 1075-foot elevation and triggering a Tier 1 shortage declaration
  - b. Drought Planning Efforts
    - i. The Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) is a collaborative effort among the lower basin states and Reclamation to participate on voluntary reductions to protect Lake Mead’s elevation from falling below 1025 feet
    - ii. The proposed reductions are in addition to the reductions established in the 2007 Guidelines
    - iii. M Basefsky described the CAP priority pools and how they would be impacted by tiered shortages under the 2007 Guidelines
    - iv. The proposed DCP reductions and 2007 tiered reductions for each of the lower basin states at various Lake Mead levels were described
    - v. The impacts to each of the CAP priority pools of the proposed DCP and 2007 reductions were discussed
    - vi. The goal of the DCP is to change the structural deficit trend of the Lake Mead’s elevation
    - vii. Percentile reductions with no action and with the proposed DCP reductions were discussed

viii. CAP will be launching a public outreach campaign that features the actions being taken to *Protect Lake Mead*.

5. Adjournment and next meeting

- a. Next LDIG meeting is Wednesday, November 9. A presentation on the various global climate patterns, including the Quasi-Biennial Oscillation, was suggested
- b. Meeting adjourned