

PIMA COUNTY LOCAL DROUGHT IMPACT GROUP
(LDIG)

Wednesday, January 11, 2017

Pima County Public Works Building-Sixth Floor

RECAP

Attendance: Kathy Chavez (PC/OSC), Erin Boyle (NWS), Mitch Basefsky (CAP), Chris Magirl (USGS), Tullie Noltin (Metro Water), Julia Fonseca (PC/OSC), Asia Philbin (Marana)

1. Welcome and Introductions - Welcome and Introductions were made
2. Review September LDIG Meeting – There was no November meeting. The September meeting included an overview of the 2016 Summer Monsoon Season provided by the National Weather Service and Colorado River Status and draft Drought Contingency Plan provided by CAP.
3. ADWR Interagency Coordinating Group (ICG) Recap – A summary of the meeting is available at [ADWR's website](#). Key points were:
 - a. Drought Status: No significant change for long term drought improvement across the state. Santa Cruz watershed had above average precipitation in water year 2015 and 2016. Statewide precipitation rose over the last few years but not enough to say we are coming out of drought. It could be a wetter period in prolonged drought
 - b. Winter 2016-17 calls for La Niña conditions which are typically dry and warmer in early winter, then ENSO neutral for later winter
 - c. Colorado River Water Supply and Drought Contingency Plan report from ADWR reviewed shortage probability and details of the draft drought contingency plan. Additional efforts are being made in Arizona to forebear CAP delivery to maintain Lake Mead's elevation at 1075 and avoid a Tier One shortage declaration. The DCP will require approval from the State legislature
 - d. Forest and woodland health indicators: high temperatures coincide with piñon needle scale and bark beetle is down overall, except up in Payson
 - e. 2016 Wildfires and 2017 Outlook: Over 300,000 acres burned in 2016 which is more than 2015. Outlook is expected to be near average.
 - f. Impacts of drought on wildlife: quail populations more susceptible to short term drought. Deer populations are more vulnerable to long term drought and population have been declining. Water stations have helped. Fish hatcheries are also affected by drought. Water quality declines as water warms and algal blooms result in fish die off. Some lakes are not stocked. There is also an economic impact from declines in fishing.
 - g. There was a recommendation to include Tribal representation in the ICG. ADWR will reach out
 - h. Drought Recommendation: The ICG recommended to the Governor continuation of the drought declaration
 - i. No comments were received on ADWR's 2006 Arizona Drought Preparedness Report and it will be forwarded to the Governor
4. Review of Short Term and Long Term Drought Status Reports – October's short term drought status indicated no improvement. The long term drought status, covering July through September, reflects the monsoon precipitation in southeastern Arizona, but it was not sufficient

to make up for the long term moisture deficit. Therefore, the long term drought status continues. No change in November's short term drought status. Recent winter storms are taken into consideration in December's short term drought status bringing drought improvement to La Paz, Maricopa and Gila counties, from moderate drought to abnormally dry. No change in drought status is warranted for Pima County and southeastern Arizona.

5. 2016 ADWR Drought Preparedness Annual Report and Pima County LDIG Report – ADWR's Drought Preparedness Report has been forwarded to the Governor and is available at ADWR's website. The report includes a report on the activities of Pima County's LDIG.

Additional updates include:

- a. National Weather Service: precipitation in southeastern Arizona is slightly below average
 - b. Central Arizona Project: Snowpack in the upper Colorado basin is above average, as is the snowpack in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The Bureau of Reclamation will prepare a mid-year plan that may improve releases from Lake Powell. The improved snowpack in the upper basin may change operations at Lake Powell/Glen Canyon Dam. Water storage in California is improving. Discussions continue on the draft drought contingency plan. The shortages and dcp reductions will impact agriculture in Pinal and Maricopa counties. Pima County agriculture is not affected greatly. The shortage impacts are primarily to the non-Indian agricultural pool. A link to Reclamation's 24-month study, which projects elevations at Lake Mead, thus triggering shortage declarations, will be shared. See <https://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/crsp/studies/index.html>
 - c. Pima County Office of Sustainability and Conservation: The first annual report since the Section 10 USFW permit was issued is being prepared. Springs in Las Cienegas have ceased discharging. Under the permit, Pima County must annual report to USFW on riparian impacts on conservation lands
 - d. USGS: Ongoing work on documenting subsidence and groundwater declines. Working to fill open positions
6. Work Plan 2017 – The proposed annual work plan for LDIG was shared and discussed. Additional suggested topics include: Tohono O'odham Drought and Climate Adaptation, report in legislative changes to recharge credits for in stream discharge and the Town of Marana's recharge and wastewater treatment facility upgrade
 7. Adjournment and next meeting
 - a. Next LDIG meeting is Wednesday, March 8 and will include an overview of the Winter season and Colorado Drought Status