

Pima County Local Drought Impact Group
(Drought Monitoring Committee)
Wednesday, September 8, 2010
2:30 p.m.
Public Works Building
201 North Stone

Attendance:	Kathy Chavez	RWRD	Linda Smith	Tucson Water
	Mitch Basefsky	CAWCD	Fernando Molina	Tucson Water
	Vicki France	Pima NRCD	Dan Hartley	Tohono O'odham Nation
	Mead Meir	PAG	Susan Craig	ADWR (via telecom)
	Ken Drozd	NWS		

1. Introductions – were made
2. Recap of July 14 meeting - K Chavez summarized the July 14 LDIG meeting. There were no corrections or additions to the summary. In response to a question about the drought status of other water providers, K Chavez made an inquiry to the Southern Arizona Water Users Association. Entities that are at Drought Stage One are Pima County, City of Tucson, Town of Oro Valley, Town of Marana, Metro Water and Community Water Company of Green Valley. None reported being at any other drought stage.
3. ADWR Activities – Susan Craig, ADWR reviewed the Short-Term Drought Status Update noting precipitation in the northeastern corner and along the New Mexico border has been above average. Precipitation has not been enough to improve drought conditions in northern or western Arizona. Statewide precipitation has been localized. La Niña conditions are expected this winter which usually means below average rainfall during the winter set season.

S Craig also reported ADWR's annual drought status report to the Governor is due November 15. Pima County LDIG will be asked to provide a brief summary of highlights, drought status, impacts and actions.

4. Review of 2010 Monsoon Season – Ken Drozd, National Weather Service, gave a presentation summarizing the summer season as follows:
 - June was the 10th warmest, although there were no record highs
 - July was the 7th warmest. There were five record high minimum temperatures meaning the evenings did not cool down. Precipitation averaged 2.71" at the airport, but the Rincon Mountains recorded heavy rainfall
 - August was the 4th warmest with three record high minimum temperatures. Precipitation was 0.26" below normal.
 - Overall the summer months were warm and characterized by warmer-than-average nights.
 - The high minimum temperatures are a recent trend. Its is not clear if they reflect climate change or urban heat island effects
 - Tucson Water noted they had experienced two peak water use days.
 - Dan Hartley asked if the average reflects data from central and western Pima County. K Drozd explained the data sets are more robust in eastern Pima County because there are more temperature and precipitation monitoring locations.
 - Vicki France asked if the trend is reflective of urban Pima County or if it represents rural Pima County as well
5. Colorado River Status – Mitch Basefsky, CAWCD, gave an overview of the Colorado River Watershed. Key points were:
 - Lake Mead is at 40% capacity and at an average elevation of 1086.4 feet above mean sea level (amsl). The Secretary of Interior will declare the first stage Colorado River shortage when the elevation reaches 1075 feet amsl. Because of Arizona's junior priority status, the shortage will affect the Arizona Water Bank, the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District and excess CAP water deliveries. Municipal and industrial allocations will not be affected at this time
 - Lake Powell is at 63% capacity. It is likely that equalization with Lake Mead will occur in 2011. In essence, this means releasing about 3 million acre-feet more than normal from Lake Powell into Lake Mead to keep Mead above shortage levels.

- The Yuma desalination pilot plant is operating at 33% capacity. Its operations removes salinity from agricultural runoff before it reaches the Colorado River, thus reducing the releases from Lake Mead. These flows are required for the US to meet its treaty obligation with Mexico.
 - The Drop 2 reservoir in California was recently completed. This agricultural storage reservoir will save 100,000 acre-feet per year of Colorado River water in Lake Mead instead of being released to Mexico.
 - In 2010, Nevada is projected to use 250,000 acre-feet of their 300,000 acre-feet allocation; California is projected to use 4.3 million acre-feet of their 4.4 million acre-foot allocation; and Arizona will use most of its 2.8 million acre-foot allocation.
 - The second shortage declaration occurs when Lake Mead reaches an elevation of 1050 amsl and the third shortage declaration occurs when Lake Mead reaches an elevation of 1025 amsl. For Arizona, agricultural allocations will be affected at the second shortage stage while municipal and industrial allocations will likely be curtailed at the third shortage stage.
 - Decreased water levels at Lake Mead will also reduce the hydroelectric power generated at Hoover Dam as the hydraulic head decreases.
 - Shortages will also affect the upper basin states (Utah, Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico) as they will be required to continue to meet their release obligations into the Colorado River.
 - It is projected that the first shortage declaration will be made by the Secretary of the Interior in 2012
6. Water/Wastewater Infrastructure Study-Phase 2 Implementation Plan– Melaney Seacat was unable to attend so K Chavez provided an overview of the status of the Phase 2 Action Plan. In January 2010, the Pima County Board of Supervisors and City of Tucson Mayor & Council approved a City/County Water/Wastewater Study Phase 2 report that includes 56 recommendations for water sustainability across four functional areas; Comprehensive Integrated Planning, Water Supply, Water Demand and Respect of the Environment. Staff is preparing an action plan to implement the recommendations. The comment period is September 16 through October 6. The action plan will be available on the project website <http://www.tucsonpimawaterstudy.com/Resolutions/Resolutions.html> and will be presented to the County and City governing bodies in late October/early November. Comments are welcome.

V France asked about a regional water effort. K Chavez explained that the original scope included Phase I: City/County Water/Wastewater Inventory and Phase II: City/County Values and Policies. A Phase 3 effort was envisioned to include a regional effort. The regional effort includes the Water Resources Research Center, Pima Association of Governments, Southern Arizona Water Users Associations, Tucson Regional Water Coalition, Southern Arizona Leadership Council and environmental interests.

Mention was also made of ADWR's Water Resource Development Commission which was created by the Arizona Legislature to assess the current and future water needs of Arizona. More information can be found at http://www.azwater.gov/AzDWR/WaterManagement/WRDC_HB2661/

7. Next Meeting - The next meeting will be November 10. K Chavez announced the Pima County Drought Page is being revised.
8. Adjournment