

Pima County Local Drought Impact Group
(Drought Monitoring Committee)
Wednesday, March 10, 2010
1:30 p.m.
Public Works Building-3rd Floor Conference Room

Attendance:	Kathy Chavez	RWRD	Linda Smith	Tucson Water
	Val Little	WaterCASA	Mitch Basefsky	CAP
	Glen Sampson	NWS	John Glueck	NWS
	Kelly Mott Lacroix	ADWR	Evan Canfield	RFCD
	Bill Petroustou	PDEQ	Chris Brooks	Tohono O'odham
	Lilian von Rago	RWRD	Renee Johns	WRRC

1. Introductions were made and K Chavez reviewed the summary of the November 4, 2009 meeting. There were no corrections or additions.
2. ADWR Activities
 - Kelly Mott Lacroix reviewed the January Drought Monitoring Report noting that conditions have improved in most areas of the state. The short term drought has eased, although a change in the long term status will depend on accumulation of several years. Reservoir levels in Lake Mead and Lake Powell remain low; 43% and 59% of capacity, respectively.
 - ADWR will be changing the approach to the state drought monitoring report in favor of a web-based reporting system used by the US Drought Monitor. There will still be monthly short-term and quarterly long-term reports, but the State Monitoring Technical Committee will place its efforts into weekly reporting to the US Drought Monitor. The US Drought Monitor is a weekly publication that synthesizes multiple drought indices and is widely recognized throughout the nation. See <http://drought.unl.edu/DM/MONITOR.html>.
3. Winter Season Update

John Glueck, National Weather Service, gave an update on the winter season, noting that December was cool and the 37th driest December, while January was the 8th wettest January. On January 22, a record low pressure and highest daily precipitation for that day were recorded. February was also cool and the 11th wettest February. The forecast is for above normal precipitation this spring and normal temperatures. The summer forecast calls for normal precipitation and warm temperatures. It will take several winters of above average precipitation for drought conditions to ease. The 2010 monsoon season will be an important indicator. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/twc/climate/seazDM.php>
4. Drought Impacts to Water Providers

Mitch Basefsky, CAP, noted that although local drought conditions have eased, the Colorado watershed snow pack is 70% of average. Since this is the watershed that feeds the Colorado River, it can impact a shortage declaration. A shortage declaration is declared when water levels at Lake Mead fall below the elevation of 1075 feet above mean sea level. Currently it is projected that a shortage declaration could occur in 2012; it would have impacts to CAP water deliveries to agriculture and to the excess CAP Pool. Water deliveries to CAP municipal subcontracts would not be affected. Linda Smith, Tucson Water, explained that a shortage declaration triggers the City of Tucson to move to Drought Stage Two.
5. Discussion of Drought Declaration

Although the short term drought has eased, it will take several years of above average precipitation for the long term drought status to improve. Tucson water is conducting their annual drought assessment. They are reviewing drought indicators and can provide an annual update at the next meeting. The consensus of the group is to remain at Drought Stage Level One.
6. City/County Water/Wastewater Study Update

Kathy Chavez reported that the Board of Supervisors and City of Tucson Mayor and Council had approved Phase 2 of the City/County Water/Wastewater Study which contains 19 goals and 54 recommendations. Staff is preparing an action plan to implement the study recommendation.

One of the goals is to be prepared for climate change and drought. City and County staff will be returning to the LDIG with more information after the action plan is completed.

7. Next Meeting
 - The next meeting will be on May 12. Mitch Basefsky offered to hold the meeting at the Twin Peaks pumping plant including a tour of the pump station. Items for the agenda include an overview of the US Drought Monitor, Weather Data at the Tohono O'odham Nation, Status of the Colorado River and Tucson Water's Drought Assessment.
8. Adjournment