



PIMA COUNTY LOCAL DROUGHT IMPACT GROUP

Wednesday, July 11, 2012

2:30 p.m.

Public Works Building
201 N Stone Avenue
3rd Floor Conference Room
Tucson AZ 85701

AGENDA

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| Attendance: | Kathy Chavez | RWRD | Karen Wilson | RWRD |
| | Erin Boyle | NWS | Mead Mier | PAG |
| | Chris Smith | USGS | Marie Light | PC DEQ |
| | Mitch Basefsky | CAP | | |
| Speakers: | Fernando Molina | Tucson Water | Carn Boyce | Oro Valley Water |
| | Daniel Ransom | Tucson Water | Cecilia Vindiola | RWRD |

1. Welcome & Introductions – introductions were made
2. Updates – Kathy Chavez briefly recapped the May 9, 2012 LDIG meeting that featured a discussion on burned watersheds by Ann Youberg, AZGS; the USGS involvement in monitoring and evaluating hazards from recent wildland fires by Chris Smith, USGS and the effects of the Aspen fire on the County's ALERT System given by Andy Wigg, RFCD.

K Chavez also discussed

- Long- and Short-Term Drought Status Maps – the entire state is in some level of drought with six watersheds in severe drought and the San Simon in extreme drought.
- Governor's Drought Interagency Coordination Meeting was held May 10th. At that meeting, ADWR discussed the effects of the last two La Niña years.

2010 was a wetter than average year, the snowpack and resulting run-off were impressive but not enough to reverse the effects of previous dry years. The 2011 winter storms did not produce much snowfall and runoff was sparse. The Salt and Verde reservoirs are at 64% capacity.

Colorado River flow into Lake Powell was 33% of normal and is projected to be 51% of normal for the water year (October 2011 through September 2012). It is projected that Lake Powell and Lake Mead storage will decline through 2013.

Projections include warmer temperatures, increased wildfire risk and persisting or intensifying drought.

The next quarterly meeting of the State Drought Monitoring Technical Committee is Wednesday, August 1, 2012, 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the National Weather Service offices in Tempe.

3. Drought and Water Conservation Outreach Programs Roundtable

Tucson Water – Fernando Molina and Daniel Ransom

In 2007, Tucson Water (TW) declared a Drought Stage One condition, but Tucson Water does not employ a particular drought message program, their message focuses on water efficiency and reliability.

It should be noted that drought impacts to water supplies usually do not occur without some sort of warning, particularly for a water system such as Tucson's. With planning, Tucson Water might be able to avoid experiencing a water crisis as a result of drought.

Over the years, Tucson Water's popular *Beat the Peak* program has been very successful in curbing high flow volumes and instilling conservation habits in its customers. Contrary to recent rumors, *Beat the Peak* is still viable but is being rebranded to convey a water efficiency/reliability message.

Programs offered by Tucson Water to conserve water include:

- Rainwater Harvesting rebate (TW's most popular program)
- Low flow toilet/urinal rebate
- Smart Irrigation program rebate (maximum \$300 for residential and maximum \$2,000 for commercial properties)
- Greywater rebate
- Teacher intern program
- Low Income Home Owners project (changes out fixtures in conjunction with CHIRPA, Community Home Repair Project of Arizona)

F Molina feels that Tucson Water has planned for the inevitable Drought Stage 2, which will be triggered when a shortage is declared on the Colorado River, through its many programs including long-range planning, water quality, infrastructure and its strong conservation message.

Oro Valley – Carn Boyce

Oro Valley Water (OV) announced Drought Stage One conditions, based on local and regional climatic conditions and forecasts, in May 2007. Under Oro Valley's plan, water customers are asked to take voluntary steps to conserve water.

As part of their water conservation message, OV performs inside and outside water audits (130 this year) for residents, HOAs and some commercial facilities.

Oro Valley is very proud of its three rainwater harvesting cisterns on the town campus. Each cistern holds 1800 gallons of water and is used by OV Parks and Recreation. OV Parks and Rec figures the water from those cisterns were used for at least two months replacing groundwater use.

OV Water also provides:

- Free Rain Sensors (devices for adjusting irrigation systems if it raining)
- Free Low Flow Shower Heads
- Community Water Conservation Education

- School Water Conservation Education

Pima County – Cecilia Vindiola

Pima County is not a water provider but declared a Drought Stage One in April 2007 along with Tucson Water.

Pima County's Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (RWRD) has a Community Relations component and that group has initiated a drought awareness campaign featuring Drucilla the Drought Dragon.

At community events, such as Fiesta Grande, Earth Day, Tucson Meet Yourself, etc., the community relations group distributes drought awareness/conservation materials.

Community Relations also does approximately three school presentations a year. It is estimated the drought awareness/water conservation message reaches around 4,000-5,000 people yearly.

Community Relations also partners with the County's sustainability campaign for LEED certified county buildings. An example given is the new CRAO laboratory building, WES Center, which is certified as a Silver LEED. The Regional Optimization Master Plan (ROMP) requires water conservation built into all new buildings.

4. Mead Mier, PAG, reported that the Cienega Creek is experiencing the lowest flow since record keeping began in 1975. There are fish still in the creek but the last time the flow reached the full length of the creek was in the 1980s.

AZDOT had installed a temporary well at Marsh Station for use during the construction of the new bridge which may have had some impact on the creek flows, but that well is no longer in use and water levels have risen slightly.

5. Next LDIG Meeting – Wednesday, September 12, 2012
 - Mitch Basefsky, CAP – Colorado River levels
 - Erin Boyle, NWS – Monsoon Action
6. Adjournment

http://www.pima.gov/drought/LDIG/index_LDIG.html