

PIMA COUNTY LOCAL DROUGHT IMPACT GROUP

Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Recap

Attendance:

Kathy Chavez	Pima County/OSC	Mitch Basefsky	CAP
Erin Boyle	NWS	Marie Light	Pima County/DEQ
Wally Wilson	Metro Water	Thomas Arnold	Tucson Water
Michelle Stokes	NWS/CBRFC	Michael Atherton	CWC of Green Valley
Chrystal Spires	PAG	Asia Philbin	Marana Water
Marc Singer	NWS	Paul Miller	NWS/CBRFC
Zack Richards	ADWR (via phone)		

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. **Review March 14 LDIG meeting** – K Chavez, Pima County, reviewed the March meeting consisting of NWS recap of winter season and CAP update
3. **ADWR Activities and Updates** – Z Richards, ADWR, reviewed April Short-Term Drought Status Report, April-June Long-Term Drought Status Report and April 24 Monitoring Technical Committee meeting

The April Short-Term Drought Status Report reflects worsening drought conditions with 50.7% of the state in Extreme Drought. Short-term drought status has shown continuing worsening since November 2017, due to the dry winter patterns through central and southern Arizona.

The January-April Long-Term Drought status also reflects extremely dry conditions over the past seven months with extreme drought expanding to southwestern Arizona. ADWR is now using a gridded map. Record low inflow into the Salt-Verde reservoir system and below average runoff into Lake Powell are expected. As spring is typically a dry season in Arizona, drought conditions are likely to persist or worsen. In the past year, the long-term drought status has worsened in Arizona.

ADWR's Monitoring Technical Committee met April 24 to hear a presentation from the National Integrated Drought Information System on collaboration opportunities. The Navajo Nations reports worsening conditions. Drought conditions throughout the state continue to worsen. The Drought Interagency Coordinating Committee will hold its Spring meeting May 29 at 10 am. Additional information is available at <https://new.azwater.gov/drought/interagency-coordinating-group>

4. **Overview of the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center** – Michelle Stokes, CBRFC explained the CBRFC's twelve forecast centers provide streamflow forecasts, ten-day forecasts for flood warnings and recreational use and develop probabilistic forecast of water volumes expected during the snow melt season for reservoir operations and planning.

The Colorado River Forecast Center, based in Salt Lake City, provides forecasts to the US Bureau of Reclamation use in operational decisions of the Colorado River system including releases from lakes Mead and Powell. Use of satellite imagery to observe dusty snow is improving streamflow forecasts. MStokes gave examples of streamflow hydrographs and water supply forecasts and explained the CBRFC's role in Colorado River Management. In Arizona, CBRFC provides decision support to the Salt River Project, CAP and ADWR. Data sources used to develop forecasts include

precipitation, temperature and snow information. Current conditions of the Colorado Basin are the fifth driest on record with Lake Powell's unregulated inflow forecasted to be 51% of average for the water year 2018.

In the Colorado Basin, the CBRFC forecasts are primarily driven by snowmelt and not as much by precipitation. Satellite observations, used to monitor dust on snow, help forecast snowmelt. Dust on snow is not driven by any particular event, but it is more prevalent in the San Juan basin. Based on the recent mid-year report released in April, Reclamation is planning a nine million acre-foot equalization release from Lake Powell.

The CBRFC is holding a stakeholder engagement and open house on November 6 at the Salt River Project offices in Tempe with a focus on Lower Colorado River Basin issues. RSVPs can be made to <https://goo.gl/forms/0SwJcKD0JRY7jTDE3>

5. **Reaffirmation of Drought Stage One** – Pima County, along with the major water providers, are at Drought Stage One. Although drought conditions persist, no CAP shortage affecting Pima County has been declared. There was agreement that Pima County remain in Drought Stage One. Should there be a CAP shortage declared in 2019 or 2020, the drought stage will be reconsidered at the time and a recommendation made to the Board of Supervisors.

6. Updates

- a. Mitch Basefsky reported CAP anticipates no shortage in 2019. CAP and ADWR are holding meetings
- b. Tom Arnold reported Tucson Water demand is down, but spikes are expected with temperature increases
- c. Wally Wilson reported Metro's Water demand is up by 4-5% over the fiscal year. Metro Water is considering an update to its Drought Response Plan
- d. Marie Light announced Pima County is developing a green infrastructure plan with the goal to address extreme drought and preserve trees.
- e. Asia Philbin explained Marana Water's gpcd is primarily influenced by new residential construction and they have not seen a drop in demand. The small increase in demand is driven by growth. Marana is also considering an update to its drought response plan
- f. Erin Boyle announced the National Weather Service outlook for July and August is above average precipitation and above average temperatures. They are preparing for monsoon season

7. **Adjournment and next meeting** – July 11