



## PIMA COUNTY LOCAL DROUGHT IMPACT GROUP

Wednesday, September 12, 2012

2:30 p.m.

Public Works Building  
201 N Stone Avenue  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Tucson AZ 85701

Attendance:	Kathy Chavez	RWRD	Karen Wilson	RWRD
	Lillian von Rago	RWRD	Sue Cotty	PAG
	Chris Smith	USGS	Marie Light	PC DEQ
	Dan Hartley	TON		
Speakers:	Mitch Basefsky	CAP	Erin Boyle	NOAA

1. Welcome & Introductions – Introductions were made
2. Updates – Kathy Chavez summarized the July LDIG meeting that featured a round table discussion on drought and water conservation outreach with representatives from Tucson Water, Oro Valley Water and Pima County.
  - Drought Status Long- and Short-Term Maps – all areas of the state are experiencing some form of drought from moderate to extreme
  - State Drought Monitoring Technical Committee met August 1, 2012 and discussed the drought status and impacts on the state
  - 2012 ADWR Arizona Drought Preparedness Annual Report is due to ADWR by late October. K Chavez will prepare Pima County's LDIG report, circulate it among the LDIG members and then forward to ADWR for inclusion in the annual report to the governor.
3. CAP and the Colorado River Update – Mitch Basefsky, CAP

Lake Mead currently has 13.2 million acre feet (maf) of water or an elevation of 1116 feet. Shortage levels are declared at 1075 feet, 1050 feet triggers a shortage level 2 and if the lake reaches 1025 that would be shortage level 3. At 13.2 maf, Lake Mead is near the all-time average for September 11 and is 51% full. The maximum live storage for Mead is 25.9 maf or 1219.6 feet.

The maximum storage for Lake Powell is 24.3 maf or an elevation 3700 feet. Lake Powell's current storage level is 14 maf, 1.6 maf less than its high point for the 2012 Water Year (WY). The water year is from October 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>. The current Water Year is expected to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> driest year on record.

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) began a Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study in January 2010. The estimated completion date of the study is November 2012. The study will define current and future imbalances in the water supply and the demand on the river over the next 50 years. The report has developed and analyzed adaptation and

mitigation strategies to fill any gaps. According to the not-as-yet-released report, the average annual supply/demand imbalance in 2060 will be approximately 3.5 maf.

The report also focuses on options to increase water supplies such as

- Importation
- Desalination
- Reuse
- Local Supply
- Watershed Management

Additionally, options to decrease water demand was studied

- M & I Conservation
- Agricultural Water Conservation
- Energy Water Use Efficiency
- System Evaporation Reduction

Copies of the report will be available on the BOR website -

<http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/crbstudy/imbalanceoptions.html>

#### 4. 2012 Monsoon – Erin Boyle, NOAA

##### JUNE

- June in Pima County was hot – 20 consecutive days with triple digit highs
- Record rainfall of 0.29” on June 16<sup>th</sup> recorded at the airport with an overall total of 0.34” for the month – above the 0.24” normal

##### JULY

- Wet and cool
- July 4<sup>th</sup> had record low temperature of 86°F and 0.78” rain at the airport
- July 14 – 16 saw heavy rain and flash flooding, 2.5” rain recorded at the airport
- Official gages from several agencies recorded 1.5” to 8” of rain throughout the county
- Average monthly temperature 85.7° F (1.3° below normal)
- Only ten triple digit temperature days

##### AUGUST

- Hot and dry
- 1.17” rain at the airport – half of the normal amount of 2.39”
- Four days of record high temperatures were set or tied
- Agency gages recorded 1” – 5” of rain for the month county-wide

##### SEPTEMBER (to date)

- 0.33” of rain at the airport – barely more than ½ the normal of 0.61”
- Normal rain amount for the month of September is 1.27”
- Agency gages report rainfall from a trace to over 5” so far

June through September 12, 2012 reports observed rainfall at 5.97” half an inch more than normal rainfall for those dates – 5.45”

Through this year, January through September 12<sup>th</sup>, observed rainfall recorded at 6.65” compared to the normal rainfall amount for the same time period of 7.91”

The short-term drought map shows improvements to many areas of the state, however most of Pima County remains in the severe drought category. The U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook, valid for September 6 – November 30, 2012 predicts improvement in the State and County's drought situation.

Weak El Niño conditions are likely to develop during September 2012 and persist through December – February 2012-2013. In Arizona, the three month outlook (September – November) shows an above average probability for precipitation.

5. Round Table

Sue Cotty, PAG, reported the streamflow length for the Cienega Creek is now the shortest on record (since 1975). There are only 1.24 flowing miles among the intermittent segments. The drastically low levels have not improved this year. In the 1980's, 9.5 miles of the creek were perennial.

S Cotty also announced that PAG has completed its Shallow Groundwater Withdrawal report and that Claire Zucker is available to speak to any interested group on the subject.

Lillian von Rago announced the RWRD's Public Relation's Group is updating its drought message to school children and is excited about its January launch. Through the drought outreach program, awards will be presented to students at the annual Earth Day Celebration.

6. Next LDIG Meeting – Wednesday, November 14, 2012

- Dr. Nancy Selover, State Climatologist
- Kathy Chavez, Water Policy Manager

7. Adjournment