

PIMA COUNTY LOCAL DROUGHT IMPACT GROUP

Wednesday, July 11, 2018

Recap

Attendance:

Kathy Chavez	Pima County/OSC	Zack Richards	ADWR
Erin Boyle	NWS	Thomas Arnold	Tucson Water
Wally Wilson	Metro Water	Colby Bowser	Pima County/OSC
Mitch Basefsky	CAP	Chris Magril	USGS

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. **Review May 9 LDIG meeting** – K Chavez, Pima County, reviewed the May meeting consisting of ADWR updates and presentation from Colorado Basin River Forecasting Center. She reminded everyone their open house has been rescheduled to November 15 at SRP's offices in Tempe
3. **ADWR Activities and Updates** – Z Richards, ADWR, reviewed the June Short-Team Drought Status Report, the long-term statewide precipitation chart, and the Arizona Standardized Precipitation Index for January 1981 through April 2018. The index shows drought conditions beginning in the late 1990's.

Z Richards referred to two tools to report drought impacts. The National Drought Mitigation Center's [drought reporter website](#), can be used to report drought impacts. There are not many drought impact reports in Pima County, not because there are few impacts, but because there is no active reporting. Another tool that may be available to the public for drought impact reporting in the future is [DroughtView](#). Developed by Mike Crimmins at the University of Arizona, this tool is designed to depict reported impacts to cooperative extension agents categorically and geographically throughout the state. .

Z Richards summarized the May 29 Interagency Coordinating Group meeting and announced the upcoming July 30 Monitoring Technical Committee. Mention was made of the Drought Contingency Plan effort and appointment of a steering group that will give input to the plan details. ADWR and CAP will present the plan to the legislature for approval in early 2019.

4. **Does Precipitation and Temperature affect Water Use?** – Tom Arnold, Tucson Water, explaining that many factors affect water demand, including precipitation frequency, intensity, duration, seasonality, time of day, temperature and demand management. Some recent demand management changes include trends to fewer and smaller swimming pools, conversion to artificial turf, fewer evaporative coolers and pricing that makes exterior water use pricy. Rainfall events are very skewed: Half of 1-day rain events are less than 0.10 inches and 43% of 3-day events area less than 0.10 inches. A graph of this year's June rain event shows the inverse relationship with water demand and a direct relationship with temperature. Water demand recovers rapidly after a rain event. The recovery may not be evident if the rain event occurs late in the month. Although temperature have been increasing, demand has not increased due to demand management strategies, policies and pricing (both water and sewer rates).

In response to questions, Metro Water's demand in the main service area has increased minimally. Demand has increase in the Diablo service area by 17% due to construction activity.

5. Updates

- a. Metro Water is considering an update to its drought response plan. Work is progressing on the Northwest Recharge and Recovery Delivery System, in collaboration with Oro Valley and Marana. The system will have capacity to recover and deliver up to 10,000 acre-feet of water stored in the lower Santa Cruz River area. Metro Water has found low levels of 1,4 dioxane in groundwater wells and is working with ADEQ
 - b. CAP noted Oro Valley is planning to increase the CAP connections to increase deliveries of wheeled CAP water in its potable system. August is an important month as the Bureau of Reclamation will issue its projections for Lake Mead which determine if a shortage will be declared in the Colorado River. A shortage is unlikely for 2019, but the probability for shortages in 2020 are increasing. This is why there is an urgency to finalize the drought contingency plan. A key issue is how shortages will be shared.
 - c. USGS has established a climate response network of groundwater wells and there are six in Arizona. USFW is assessing water resources in the Buenos Aires Wildlife Refuge
 - d. ADWR's Long-Term Augmentation Committee and Desalination Committee have been meeting to discuss possible water augmentation options for the state. Brackish groundwater, although plentiful in Arizona, is not a likely future water source due to a variety of social and legal complications. ADWR is assisting Water – Use It Wisely in a marketing campaign on Arizona's resilient water planning and conservation strategies.
 - e. The National Weather Service noted June's precipitation was twice the normal amount and, so far, July's precipitation is higher than normal. The short-term forecast is for higher than normal precipitation. The NWS issued a flood advisory for the Gila River. This was the first in some time.
6. **Adjournment and next meeting** – September 12 will include an update from the NWS on this season's monsoons and update on the Colorado River.