



Water and Resource Conservation

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Butte County Drought Task Force

May 18, 2021

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98638264224?pwd=a2Zha25JODI5ZHkxU1cydG9jWFIQU09>

Meeting ID: 986 3826 4224

Passcode: 130485

Phone: +1 669 900 6833

Agenda

1. Introductions/Meeting Goals – Paul Gosselin, DWRC
2. Summary of Current Conditions
 - a. Water Resources
 - i. Update on Hydrologic Conditions – Kelly Peterson, DWRC
 - ii. Water Supply Conditions – Kelly Peterson, DWRC
 - b. Well Permit Activity – Elaine McSpadden, Environmental Health
 - c. Agricultural Impacts – Louie Mendoza, Agriculture
 - d. Fire Conditions – John Messina, Fire
3. Update on State Drought Actions – Cindi Dunsmoor
4. Other Drought Reports and Impacts - All
5. Discussion and Potential Recommendation to the Butte County Board of Supervisors – Paul Gosselin
6. Public wishing to address the Drought Task Force on issues not listed on the agenda.
7. Next Meeting – TBD

*Materials attached

State of Emergency Proclamation

WHEREAS climate change is intensifying the impacts of droughts on our communities, environment and economy, and California must therefore improve drought resiliency and prepare to respond to more frequent, prolonged, and intense dry periods; and

WHEREAS much of the West is experiencing severe to exceptional drought and California is in a second consecutive year of dry conditions, resulting in drought or near-drought throughout many portions of the State; and

WHEREAS these drought conditions can result in degraded water quality, fallowing of productive farmland, setbacks to vulnerable and rural communities through job losses and longer-lasting recoveries, significant impacts to tribal, commercial, and recreational salmon fisheries, constraints on access to traditional lifeways, loss of aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity, and ecosystem impacts; and

WHEREAS drought conditions vary across the State and some watersheds, including the Russian River and Klamath Basin, are extremely dry and are facing substantial water supply and ecosystem challenges; and

WHEREAS it is necessary to expeditiously mitigate the effects of the drought conditions within the Russian River Watershed, located within Mendocino and Sonoma counties, to ensure the protection of health, safety, and the environment; and

WHEREAS experience in the last drought has demonstrated the value of preparing earlier for potential sustained dry conditions, the need to improve our monitoring and forecasting capabilities, and many other lessons that are captured in the Administration's *Report to the Legislature on the 2012-2016 Drought*; and

WHEREAS the State and its many partners have strengthened drought resilience since the last drought including state investments in water management systems, implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, establishment of the Safe and Affordable Fund for Equity and Resilience Program, development of the Administration's *Water Resilience Portfolio*, and continued water conservation by Californians whose current statewide urban water use is 16% lower than at the beginning of the last drought; and

WHEREAS state agencies have been actively responding to current drought conditions and preparing for the possibility of a third dry year including through convenings of the interagency drought team, which was established at my direction, to organize, focus, and track changing conditions, coordinate state agency responses, and work closely with partners across the State; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that the conditions caused by the drought conditions, by reason of their magnitude, are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single local government and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to appropriately respond; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8625(c), I find that local authority is inadequate to cope with the drought conditions; and

WHEREAS to protect public health and safety, it is critical the State take certain immediate actions without undue delay to prepare for and mitigate the effects of, the drought conditions within the Russian River Watershed, and under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this Proclamation would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the drought conditions of the Russian River Watershed, located within Mendocino and Sonoma counties.

NOW THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, section 8625, **HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist in Mendocino and Sonoma counties due to drought conditions in the Russian River Watershed.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. To further the success of California's water conservation efforts and increase our drought preparedness, state agencies shall partner with local water districts and utilities to make all Californians aware of drought, and encourage actions to reduce water usage by promoting the Department of Water Resources' Save Our Water campaign (<https://saveourwater.com>) and other water conservation programs.
2. To continue coordination with partners across the State for the potential of prolonged drought impacts, the Department of Water Resources, the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board), the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Food and Agriculture shall work with regional and local governments, including groundwater sustainability agencies, to identify watersheds, communities, public water systems, and ecosystems that may require coordinated state and local actions to address issues stemming from continued dry conditions, to ensure that we can respond to water shortages and protect people, natural resources and economic activity.
3. To continue partnership and coordination with Californian Native American tribes, state agencies shall engage in consultation, collaboration, and communication with California Native American tribes to assist them in necessary preparation and response to drought conditions on tribal lands and potential impacts to cultural and traditional resources within ancestral lands.
4. To prioritize drought response and preparedness resources, the Department of Water Resources, the Water Board, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with the Department of Finance, shall:
 - a. Accelerate funding for water supply enhancement, water conservation, or species conservation projects.
 - b. Identify unspent funds that can be repurposed to enable projects to address drought impacts to people, ecosystems, and economic activities.
 - c. Recommend additional financial support for water resilience infrastructure projects and actions for potential inclusion in the upcoming May Revision.

5. To increase resilience of our water supplies during drought conditions, the Department of Water Resources shall:
 - a. Work with counties to encourage reporting of household water shortages, such as dry residential wells, on the website the Department maintains for that purpose, to enable tracking of drought impacts.
 - b. Work with counties, and groundwater sustainability agencies as appropriate, to help ensure that well drillers submit required groundwater well logs for newly constructed and deepened wells in a timely manner.
 - c. Work with agricultural water suppliers and agricultural water users to provide technical assistance, including implementation of efficient water management practices and use of technology such as the California Irrigation Management Information System.
 - d. Work with urban and agricultural water suppliers to encourage timely submittal by water districts and public posting of urban water management and water shortage contingency plans and agricultural water management and drought plans.
 - e. Accelerate updating the land subsidence data it is providing to support implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

6. To increase resilience of our water systems during drought conditions, the Water Board shall:
 - a. Use its authority, provide technical assistance, and where feasible provide financial assistance, to support regular reporting of drinking water supply well levels and reservoir water levels where the Water Board determines that there is risk of supply failure because of lowering groundwater levels or reservoir levels that may fall below public water system intakes.
 - b. Prioritize the permitting of public water systems that anticipate the need to activate additional supply wells where water quality is a concern and treatment installation needs to proceed to relieve a system's potential supply concerns.
 - c. Provide annual water demand data, information on water right priority, and other communications on water availability on its website.
 - d. Identify watersheds where current diversion data is insufficient to evaluate supply impacts caused by dry conditions, and take actions to ensure prompt submittal of missing data in those watersheds.

7. To address the acutely dry conditions in the Russian River Watershed, the Water Board shall consider:
 - a. Modifying requirements for reservoir releases or diversion limitations in that watershed to ensure adequate, minimal water supplies for critical purposes.
 - b. Adopting emergency regulations to curtail water diversions when water is not available at water rights holders' priority of right or to protect releases of stored water.

For purposes of carrying out this directive, Public Resources Code, Division 13 (commencing with section 21000) and regulations adopted pursuant to that Division are suspended in the counties of Mendocino and Sonoma to the extent necessary to address the impacts of the drought in the Russian River Watershed. The Water Board shall identify the projects

eligible for the suspensions pursuant to this paragraph and maintain on its websites a list of the activities or approvals for which these provisions are suspended.

8. To ensure that equipment and services necessary for drought response in the Russian River Watershed can be procured quickly, the provisions of the Government Code and the Public Contract Code applicable to procurement, state contracts, and fleet assets, including, but not limited to, advertising and competitive bidding requirements, are hereby suspended to the extent necessary to address the effects of the drought in the Russian River Watershed, located within Mendocino and Sonoma counties. Approval of the Department of Finance is required prior to the execution of any contract entered into pursuant to this provision.
9. To increase the resilience of our natural habitats to protect vulnerable species during drought conditions, the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall:
 - a. Evaluate and take actions to protect terrestrial and aquatic species and, wherever possible, work with water users and other parties on voluntary measures to protect species.
 - b. Work to improve State hatcheries and increase water use efficiency on State wildlife areas and ecological reserves to maintain habitat for vulnerable species.
 - c. Respond to human-wildlife interactions related to ongoing dry conditions and increase public messaging and awareness.
 - d. Work with commercial and recreational salmon fishing and tribal representatives to anticipate and develop strategies to mitigate and respond to salmon fishery impacts, with particular emphasis on addressing impacts to salmon fisheries in the Klamath Basin.
10. To support our agricultural economy and food security during drought conditions, the Department of Food and Agriculture shall:
 - a. Provide technical assistance to support conservation planning, on-farm water and energy conservation practices and technologies, including augmenting the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program.
 - b. Conduct an economic analysis of drought impacts to agriculture, including land use, jobs, and rural food economies, expanding on existing research done in the last drought to include thorough regional analysis especially in the Central Valley, and in the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and alternative land uses for fallowed land.
 - c. Maintain a web page with drought resources for farmers and ranchers, including the United States Department of Agriculture and other federal and state resources.
 - d. Work with federal agencies to assist Klamath Basin farmers and ranchers contending with reduced water supplies.
11. To ensure the potential impacts of drought on communities are anticipated and proactively addressed, the Department of Water Resources, in coordination with the Water Board, shall develop groundwater management principles and strategies to monitor, analyze, and minimize impacts to drinking water wells.
12. To provide critical information on the different drought conditions across the State, the Department of Water Resources, in consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Food and Agriculture,

and the Water Board, shall develop a California Drought Monitor by December 31, 2021, as recommended in the Administration's *Report to the Legislature on the 2012-2016 Drought*.

13. To prepare for potential salinity issues in the Delta, the Department of Water Resources, in consultation with the Water Board, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Delta Stewardship Council, and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, shall initiate actions necessary to prepare for and address potential Delta salinity issues during prolonged drought conditions.

14. To prepare for potential impacts of drought conditions on species, the Water Board and the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall work with federal agency partners to manage temperature conditions for the preservation of fish in the Sacramento River downstream of Shasta Dam while balancing water supply needs.

This Proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Proclamation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 21st day of April 2021

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

DR. SHIRLEY WEBER
Secretary of State



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF BUTTE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Resolution No. 04-200

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY OF BUTTE TO ADOPT THE BUTTE COUNTY DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the County considers it imperative that the understanding, enhancement, and protection of water and other resources occur during drought contingencies; and

WHEREAS, the County seeks a comprehensive approach to planning for drought contingencies that protects the agricultural, ecological, and economic health as much as possible, while improving resource management for all beneficial uses; and

WHEREAS, the County participated in the development of the California Drought Contingency Plan; and

WHEREAS, Section 19632 of the California Water Code requires drought contingency planning in Urban Water Management Plans; and

WHEREAS, the County has approved the gray-waster use for on-site plant irrigation during critical water shortages in Chapter 19-20 of the Butte County Code; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) has required the County of Butte to complete a Drought Preparedness Plan as a part of Contract # 4600001634, "The Butte County Integrated Watershed and Resource Conservation Plan;" and

WHEREAS, the Butte County Water Commission recommended the approval of the "Butte County Drought Preparedness and Mitigation Plan."

NOW, THEREFOE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors that the County accept the recommendation of the Butte County Water Commission to adopt the Butte County Drought Preparedness and Mitigation Plan, with the changes suggested by the Commission.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Butte County Board of Supervisors this 26th day of October 2004 by the following vote:

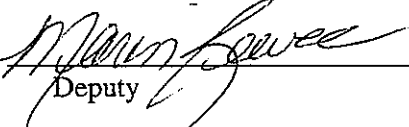
- AYES:** Supervisors Dolan, Houx, Josiassen, Yamaguchi and Chair Beeler
- NOES:** None
- ABSENT:** None
- NOT VOTING:** None



R. J. BEELER, Chair

ATTEST:

PAUL MCINTOSH, Chief Administrative Officer
And Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: 

Deputy

Section 2

Drought Institutions

The Drought Plan provides a systematic institutional setting for Butte County to implement and reduce the impacts of drought-induced water shortages. The plan consists of a monitoring and assessment component and a response and mitigation component. These actions are designed to work within the existing framework of government, pulling together key personnel from private, local, State, and federal sectors. The Drought Plan forms several committees to implement the aforementioned components. The committees include:

- Drought Task Force;
- Interagency Coordination Group; and
- Specialized Working Groups.

2.1 Drought Task Force

An effective drought plan requires an entity that is responsible for instituting actions and reports to the Chief Administrative Officer and the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors will form a Drought Task Force (DTF) and assign the responsibility of leading the Task Force to the Director of the DW&RC. The DW&RC is an established entity with experience in managing such tasks. The DTF will be made up of various Department Directors (or their designee) and others in the County as shown in Table 2-1. The Board of Supervisors can also modify membership as necessary.

Table 2-1
Members of the Butte County Drought Task Force*

Director, Department of Water & Resource Conservation-Chair Emergency Services Officer-Vice Chair Chair, Butte County Water Commission Chair, Butte Basin Water Users Association Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Director, Department of Public Works Director, Division of Environmental Health Agricultural Commissioner Director, UC Cooperative Extension/County Farm Advisor California Department of Forestry/Butte County Fire District Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service President, Butte County Resource Conservation District
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*Others may be added as suggested by the Board of Supervisors

The DTF will monitor hydrologic conditions throughout the water year and report the findings to the Water Commission and the Board of Supervisors annually in non-drought situations, and biannually, quarterly, or monthly as a drought progresses. The DTF will monitor and report the following information:

1. Drought forecasts and climate conditions;
2. Projections based on:
 - a. Snow-pack/precipitation
 - b. Stream flow
 - c. Reservoir levels
 - d. Groundwater levels;
3. Requirements for routine and special reports;
4. Resource information gaps and recommendations to address them;
5. Information needs of the coordination group and working groups (if activated);
and
6. Responses to information needs of the coordination group and working groups (if activated).

2.2 Interagency Coordination Group

A Butte County Drought Interagency Coordination Group (ICG) will be activated in the second phase of a drought emergency. The ICG will assess drought impacts, initiate general actions to respond to impacts, activate specialized working groups as necessary, and serve as the primary liaison with appropriate local, State and federal agencies. The members of the ICG (or their designee) are those shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2
Butte County Drought Interagency Coordination Group*

Chair, Board of Supervisors-Chair
Chief Administrative Officer-Vice Chair
Drought Task Force Members
Butte County Sheriff
President, Butte County Farm Bureau
Executive Director, Butte Environmental Council
California Department of Water Resources
California Department of Fish & Game
Executive Director, Private Industry Council

*Others may be added as suggested by the Board of Supervisors

2.3 Specialized Working Groups

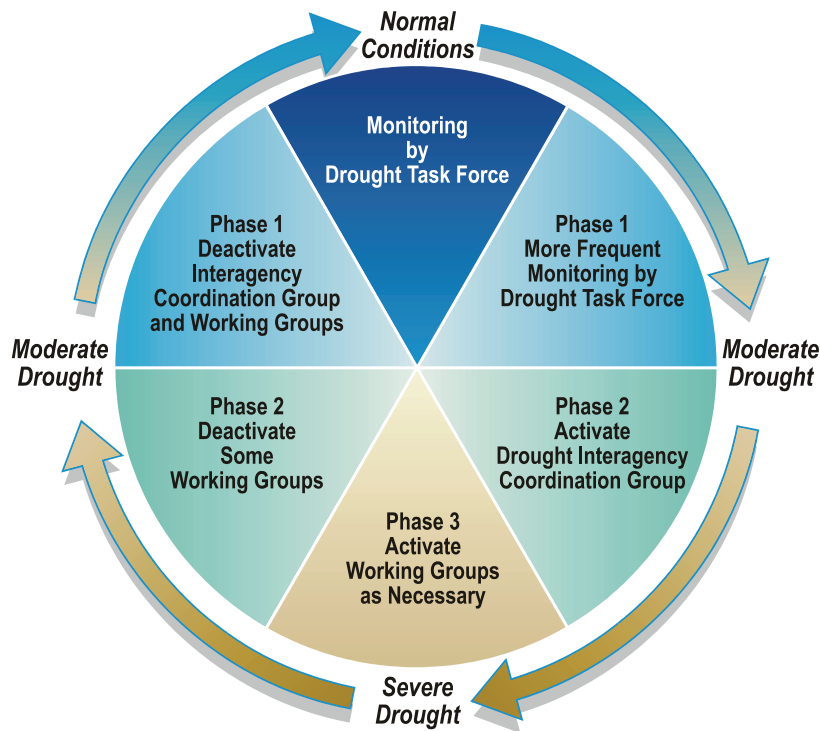
The ICG can also activate specialized working groups as needed to coordinate the assessment of drought impacts, as well as appropriate response and mitigation actions. Such working groups can include, but not be limited to:

- Water Availability;
- Municipal Water;
- Rural Communities;
- Environmental Protection;
- Agricultural Water;
- Tourism;
- Wildlife;
- Economic Impacts;
- Energy Loss;
- Health; and
- Review and Reporting;

The working groups will provide policy recommendation to the ICG for monitoring and assessment needs, and appropriate mitigation and response measures. The recommendations will then be directed to the Board of Supervisors for their approval.

2.4 Institutional Sequence

The general sequence of actions to be carried out will be in accordance with Figure 2-1. The first approximation of drought severity in relation to a 1987-1994 drought scenario is that Phase 1 would occur in years 1-3, Phase 2 in years 4-6, and Phase 3 in years 6 and beyond. Expenses to support activities are subject to normal fiscal constraints of respective agencies. Requests for special funding will be forwarded through the appropriate lead agency, and recommended by the ICG to the Board of Supervisors.



*Adapted from State of Colorado 2001

Figure 2-1
Drought Planning Phases

During all phases of a drought emergency, the DTF will collect data on snow-pack, reservoir levels, stream flow, precipitation, and temperatures. The DTF will meet biannually, quarterly, or monthly depending on the drought phase to share the information, discuss projections, and evaluate drought-related water conditions.

The ICG will be activated based on DTF data and discussions. Activation of the ICG will initiate Phase 2 of the Drought Plan. When activated, the Chair of the ICG will comment on the DTF's data and can then activate any working group as necessary (Phase 3).

The working groups will assess potential drought impacts and the ICG will comment on any observed or potential impacts identified by the working groups. The ICG will then recommend what actions, if any, should be taken to the Board of Supervisors for their approval. The Chair of the ICG, through the Director of the California Office of Emergency Management, will then relay the information to the Office of the Governor.