



# Meeting Notes

Project: **Washington State Drought Contingency Plan**

Subject: Task Force Meeting

Date: Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Location: Department of Ecology, Bellevue, WA

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Attendees:	Jeff Marti, Ecology	Gregory McKnight, DOH
	Karin Bumbaco, OWSC- UW	Ginny Stern, DOH
	Morgan Mak, EMD	Teresa Scott, DFW
	Jon Culp, WSCC	Andrew Graham (Facilitator), HDR
	Barb Anderson, Ecology	Sarah Pistorese, HDR

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## Handouts

- Agenda
- Assessing Hardship Options
- Map of Texas Water Systems under Water Use Restrictions

## Stakeholder Engagement

- Jeff Marti, Ecology, provided an overview of the different stakeholder engagement efforts for the State Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) update.
  - The Advisory Committee is a group of representatives from different stakeholder sectors, including drinking water systems, agriculture, and tribal/fisheries interests. The Advisory Committee will stay engaged throughout the DCP update process.
  - After brief discussion, the Task Force agreed that Advisory Committee members could sit in on Task Force meetings if desired.
  - The Task Force will also meet with five stakeholder groups: large water systems, small water systems, agriculture, tribes/fisheries, and other local government entities. Jeff said that the other local government entities would include stakeholders such as local emergency management and health jurisdictions. There will be just one meeting with each stakeholder group. These meetings will be an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input on the elements of the updated DCP. Ginny suggested that the Task Force also brief the stakeholder groups (possibly all together in a single session) after the updated DCP has been drafted.
- In addition to the updated DCP, the Task Force may also prepare recommendations for changes to the drought declaration statute. Teresa Scott, DFW, recommended that the Task Force also solicit stakeholder input on any recommendations for changing the statute.

### *Debrief Morning Meeting with Large Water Systems*

- The Task Force agreed that the meeting with the Large Water System Stakeholder Group was helpful to gain perspective on the concerns that large water systems have and their recommendations for the DCP. Key points from the meeting include the following:
  - The large water systems would like an opportunity to provide input on the drought declaration messaging. They would like this process to be formalized as part of the communication strategy in the updated DCP.
  - Seattle, Tacoma, and Everett use a staged approach for responding to water shortages. A similar approach could potentially be applied to the DCP. Sarah Pistorese, HDR Inc., will send the Task Force a summary of the Tacoma, Everett, and Seattle Water Shortage Contingency Plans.
  - Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, and Cascade are willing to provide a summary of their system operations to help inform the drought definition, declaration process, communication strategy, and response measures.
  - Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, and Cascade are also willing to provide a summary of their water supply monitoring and forecasting tools. This could be helpful for evaluating conditions for other water systems.
  - Seattle has established a contingency fund for drought years to cover revenue losses and response measures. The State could consider setting up a similar drought contingency fund to support drought response prior to a declaration.
  - Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, and Cascade are interested in participating in the Water Supply Availability Committee (WSAC) meetings to provide updates on water supply status and potential hardships.
- The Task Force agreed that it would be valuable to have a workshop with Tacoma, Everett, Seattle, and Cascade to learn more about their system operations and water supply monitoring and forecasting tools. Jeff will set up a meeting with the large water utilities in fall 2017 to learn more about their system operations and tools.
- Ginny Stern, DOH, suggested that the Task Force map the chain of action to document how a drought declaration triggers agency response and the resources that become available for stakeholders. It would be helpful to identify what the drought declaration does for each agency and sector. It would also be useful to identify who and what types of projects are eligible to receive drought funding.
- Jeff said that the updated DCP could consider changes to the administrative framework for funding drought response to eliminate bottlenecks where possible. Currently, all drought funding goes through Ecology.

### *Plan for Engaging Small Water Systems*

- Jeff said that he has reached out to small water systems in the State, but has not received much response. Jeff will send Ginny the list of small water system stakeholders so that DOH can help with outreach to these systems. Andrew Graham said he doesn't



expect systems with less than 1,000 connections will have staff with time to participate in a stakeholder meeting. He thinks the stakeholder contact will need to be with systems larger than that; and DOH will just need to rely on their understanding of the really small systems and share that with the Task Force.

- Ginny suggested adding a local health jurisdiction and/or environmental health and safety representative to the Advisory Committee. These entities could provide input on challenges facing small water systems.

#### *Logistics for July Meetings in Yakima*

- The Task Force will tour the Roza Irrigation District on July 26<sup>th</sup> starting around 9:00 a.m.
- The Agricultural Stakeholder Group meeting will be in the morning on July 27<sup>th</sup> at Ecology's Central Regional office in Union Gap. This meeting will likely start at 10:00 a.m. The Task Force will meet in the afternoon after this stakeholder meeting.
- Task Force members should contact Barb Anderson, Ecology, if they would like a conference call-in number set up for this meeting.
- Ecology has reserved two vans to carpool from the Westside to Yakima. Task Force members should contact Barb if they would like to carpool.
- Barb will work with a hotel to set aside a block of rooms for Task Force members who will be staying in Yakima on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Task Force members should then make their own reservations.
- Jeff will send out an email invitation to Task Force members with details about the July meetings in Yakima.

#### *August/September Planning*

- Teresa suggested that the tribal and fishery stakeholder group be split, so that there is one meeting with tribal stakeholders and one meeting with fishery stakeholders. The fishery stakeholder group could include Trout Unlimited. Trout Unlimited and other environmental groups could potentially provide input on fishery mitigation and response actions. Alternatively, Jeff could give a presentation at the next Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) meeting to update environmental and fishery interest groups about the DCP.
- Ginny suggested that the Task Force also engage the organizations active in establishing water trusts. They could provide input on water leasing strategies.
- Jeff agreed to split the tribal and fishery stakeholder group. Jeff will arrange a meeting with tribal stakeholders. This will likely be in September. Jeff will also solicit input from Trout Unlimited and the water trusts.

#### **Review of Action Items from Last Meeting**

- The Task Force reviewed the action items from the May Task Force meeting. Outstanding action items discussed include the following:
  - Task Force members will estimate the number of hours or equivalent full-time employees for their respective agencies used in 2015 for drought response.

- The Task Force agreed that they had no additional edit or comments on the *Strategy for Addressing Required Plan Elements* handout from the last meeting.
- Greg McKnight provided a summary of the Washington Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WA-WARN). WA-WARN allows water and wastewater systems to receive rapid mutual aid and assistance from other systems in an emergency. Utilities that sign the WARN standard agreement are able to share resources with any other systems in Washington that have also signed the agreement. Greg said that a drought declaration is not required to initiate mutual aid. To-date, 89 utilities have signed the WA-WARN agreement. WA-WARN currently only includes water and wastewater utilities, however it could potentially be extended to other entities such as irrigation districts.
- Morgan Mak, EMD, provided a summary of the Washington Intrastate Mutual Aid System (WAMAS) (RCW 38.56). WAMAS provides for mutual assistance for member jurisdictions during an emergency. Morgan will determine if WAMAS could be activated prior to a drought declaration.
- WA-WARN and WAMAS could potentially be incorporated into the updated DCP. For example, activation of WA-WARN or WAMAS could be included under the drought response actions to allow for distribution of emergency water or resources.

### **Status of Plan Development**

- Andrew said that we are “turning the corner” from our organizational phase to the production phase for the DCP. Jeff will author the document, but we will need content from all members of the task force.
- Jeff said that work has been initiated on the drought monitoring and vulnerability assessment elements.

### *Drought Monitoring*

- Karin Bumbaco, OWSC- UW, will be leading the assessment of drought monitoring and forecasting tools. Karin will set up a conference call with Jeff to discuss establishing a drought monitoring and forecasting technical subcommittee.
- Karin provided a summary of the forecasting metrics commonly used. In general, forecasting tools are better able to predict temperature than precipitation. Karin said that it is important to understand which metrics will give you the best prediction.

### *Vulnerability Assessment*

- Jeff presented three options for evaluating vulnerabilities and hardships. These include the following:
  - Option 1: “Top-Down Approach”. This approach would involve the State evaluating past records of hardship and reaching out to entities that may be at risk to determine if a drought declaration is needed (i.e. the State would proactively solicit input from entities).
  - Option 2: “Bottom-Up Approach”. This approach would involve entities that think they may be at risk reaching out to the State to declare a drought based on

existing conditions (i.e. vulnerable entities would petition the State for a declaration).

- Option 3: “Blended Approach”. This approach would be a combination of Options 1 and 2 (i.e. the State would solicit input and entities would also reach out to the State to request a declaration).
- Under all options, entities requesting assistance would need to demonstrate that the risk of hardship exists.
- The Task Force provided the following input on each of these options:

Option 1:

- This approach is similar to the approach used during the 2015 drought.
- This approach would require more State involvement.
- This approach would require compiling a more detailed documentation of historic drought conditions and hardships.
- This approach would likely allow for earlier response.
- A phased approach could potentially be incorporated.

Option 2:

- This approach has commonly been used in Oregon and Idaho and seems to be effective in those states. (However they may have different governmental structures that do not necessarily apply to Washington).
- This approach would put more responsibility on entities.
- This approach may be less practical for smaller entities who have limited resources to gather data and petition the State for a declaration.
- This approach may have a slower response since it relies on incoming information about existing conditions.

Option 3:

- It may be difficult to clearly distinguish between the State’s and other entities’ responsibilities.
- A phased approach could potentially be incorporated.
- Task Force members will consider these options further and provide any additional input to Jeff.
- Jeff suggested that the DCP could use mapping as a tool to monitor drought impacts and identify vulnerable entities. Jeff presented a map of Texas showing the public water supply systems that were affected by drought. A similar tool could be used by Washington to identify vulnerable water systems, irrigation districts, streams, etc. For example, the Washington Department of Agriculture is currently doing an assessment of impacts from the 2015 drought. This will include mapping of irrigation districts that were impacted. Mapping could also be done for fisheries issues like fish stranding or rock dams.
- Jon Culp, WSCC, said that not all impacts are reported or measureable, so this approach may overlook some vulnerable entities.
- Ginny suggested that each agency identify the vulnerabilities they think could be mapped. It’s important to understand the vulnerability is not the same as impact.



- At the next Task Force meeting, the Task Force can discuss if sufficient information is available to make this a valuable tool. Vulnerability maps may need to be developed during future droughts since historical records are not comprehensive.

### Next Steps

- Jeff said that the agendas and meeting notes for all Task Force and Stakeholder Group meetings will be posted on the DCP update website. Jeff will send out the link to this website.

### Action Items

Who	What	By When
Sarah Pistoese	Send the Task Force a summary of the Tacoma, Everett, and Seattle Water Shortage Contingency Plans.	June 30
Jeff Marti	Set up a meeting with the large water utilities in fall 2017 to learn more about their system operations and monitoring/forecasting tools.	July 26
Jeff Marti	Send Ginny the list of small water system stakeholders so that DOH can help with outreach to these systems.	June 30
All	Contact Barb if you would like a conference call-in number set up for the Yakima Stakeholder Group Meeting and Task Force Meeting.	June 30
All	Contact Barb if you would like to carpool to Yakima on July 26 <sup>th</sup>	June 30
Barb Anderson	Arrange with hotels for a block of rooms that Task Force members can reserve for staying in Yakima on the 26 <sup>th</sup> .	June 17
Jeff Marti	Send out an email invitation to Task Force members with details about the July meetings in Yakima. Also invite Kelsey Collins (Ecology) to talk about water leasing.	June 17
Jeff Marti	Arrange a meeting with tribal stakeholders.	July 26
Jeff Marti	Solicit input from Trout Unlimited and the water trusts.	July 26
All	Estimate the number of hours or equivalent full-time employees used in 2015 for drought response.	July 26
Morgan Mak	Determine if WAMAS could be activated prior to a drought declaration.	July 26
Karin Bumbaco	Set up a conference call with Jeff to discuss establishing a drought monitoring and forecasting technical subcommittee.	June 30
All	Consider the vulnerability options further and provide any additional input to Jeff.	July 26
All	Identify vulnerabilities that could be mapped and come to the next Task Force meeting prepared to discuss if sufficient information is available to develop a vulnerability mapping tool.	July 26
Jeff Marti	Send out the link to the DCP website.	June 30