

Interagency Drought Workgroup (IDW)
Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2022

Meeting agenda:
<https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/13695>

Drought Conditions Handout:
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Water/Drought/2022/2022-10-06-CT-Drought-Conditions-Report.pdf>

Meeting Video (CT-N):
https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/IDW_video_2022-10-06.mp4

CT Agency representatives:

DEEP: Kim Czapla, Doug Hoskins*
DEMHS: Doug Glowacki*
DoAg: Simon Levesque*
DPH: Steve Harkey, Lori Mathieu*, Ryan Tetreault
OPM: Chris Collibee, Martin Heft*, Eric Lindquist, Bruce Wittchen
PURA: Maria Szul*

* - denotes voting member

Federal Agency representatives:

NWS/NOAA: Rob Megnia, Sylvia Reeves, Britt Westergard
USGS: Dee-Ann McCarthy, John Mullaney, Tim Sargent

Other participants:

John Moritz

1. Call to order

Martin Heft called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

2. Seating of voting members

Martin Heft noted that PURA has designated Marie Szul to be its voting member and Ally Ayotte will be her alternate. He then confirmed the quorum of agency representatives: DEEP – Doug Hoskins; PURA – Maria Szul; DEMHS – Doug Glowacki; DoAg – Simon Levesque; DPH – Lori Mathieu; and OPM – Martin Heft.

3. Minutes – September 8, 2022

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [9/8/2022](#) meeting minutes and was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

4. Business

a. Review of hydrologic conditions

Martin Heft invited any additions to the September data circulated prior to the meeting and noted that Windham and New London Counties are currently classified as Stage 3 and remaining counties are Stage 2.

John Mullaney said ground water has responded inconsistently to recent precipitation but few streams were below normal in September and those were largely regulated streams, like the Farmington River.

Lori Mathieu commented on the limited number of monitoring points limiting this group's ability to make an informed decision. John said there is good coverage for streams, but ground water points are more limited. He highlighted that there are few monitoring wells in bedrock beneath till and noted that many private wells are installed in that. There is less recharge through till.

Rob Megnia said precipitation deficits have been reduced in most of CT. Precipitation is near normal or above normal across most of the state for the last 90 days and there has been a good start for October. Martin Heft invited any further updates and there were none.

b. Drought stage recommendations

Eric Lindquist showed the spreadsheet of Stage 3 criteria. There was a discussion of the weather outlook and also of the pattern of precipitation in recent months resulting in eastern CT no longer being the driest part of the state. The group also discussed the amount of precipitation needed to end the drought, according to the estimate in the [Palmer Drought Index table](#), and how much rain has fallen in the time since that estimate according to the [Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow](#) (CoCoRaHS) network.\

There was a discussion of obligations at different stages, highlighting the very limited obligations for agencies when at Stage 1 and that the drought plan does not call for mandatory water conservation until Stage 4.

Martin Heft requested a recommendation for what the group should do and Doug Glowacki recommended going to Stage 1 statewide. Lori Mathieu recommended it be Stage 2 and Martin Heft agreed, noting that Stage 2 will keep this in the public eye and the group can reconsider this next month.

There was general agreement with a statewide Stage 2 and Steve Harkey pointed out the important of the public message, noting that Stage 2 aligns better with water companies that have called for water use restrictions. A motion was made to go to Stage 2 statewide and the motion was seconded and passed unanimously by roll call vote. Martin will communicate this to the Governor's Office.

c. Drought Plan Update

Martin Heft reminded the group that the WPC approved the updated drought plan and noted that the documents sent in advance of this meeting included options to consider

for the planned next update. Those options will be reconsidered and reprioritized at next month's meeting of this group.

d. Drought plan implementation update

Martin Heft noted the role of agency staff in implementing the drought plan and Eric Lindquist said the drought action team continues communicating but has not met since shortly after going to Stage 3.

e. Next regular meeting – October 6, 2022

Martin Heft said the next meeting will be November 3 unless a special meeting is needed. He also mentioned the upcoming [2022 North American Drought Monitor Forum](#), which he plans to attend. There was a brief discussion of whether the Governor will issue a press release.

5. Public comment

There were no public comments.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:46.

DRAFT