

Interagency Drought Workgroup (IDW)
Meeting Minutes

December 8, 2022

Meeting agenda:

<https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/13697>

Drought Conditions Handout:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Water/Drought/2022/Handout_2022-12-08.pdf

Meeting Video:

https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2022-12-08_IDW_Video.mp4

CT Agency representatives:

DEEP: Bill Foreman, Doug Hoskins*
DEMHS: Ken Dumais*, Doug Glowacki
DoAg: Simon Levesque*
DPH: Steve Harkey, Lori Mathieu*, Ryan Tetreault
OPM: Martin Heft*, Bruce Wittchen
PURA: Maria Szul*

* - denotes voting member

Federal Agency representatives:

NWS/NOAA: Joseph Dellicarpini, 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 11:32 AM.

2. Seating of voting members

Martin Heft confirmed the quorum of agency representatives: DEEP – Doug Hoskins; DEMHS – Ken Dumais; DoAg – Simon Levesque; and OPM – Martin Heft. PURA’s Maria Szul and DPH’s Lori Mathieu joined later.

3. Minutes – November 7, 2022

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [11/7/2022](#) meeting minutes and was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

4. Business

a. Review of hydrologic conditions

Martin Heft provided an overview of the information included in the [meeting handout](#) and offered state and then federal agencies an opportunity to highlight anything from their reports and John Mullaney noted that most ground water levels and stream flows are on the way up. Martin said the group decided last month to retain Stage 1 for another month and his recommendation this month is to eliminate Stage 1 across the state while continuing to monitor conditions. He invited other thoughts. Steve Harkey said the US Drought Monitor continues to show part of the state as abnormally dry and pointed out that some water systems continue to be in one of their drought stages.

b. Drought stage recommendations

Steve Harkey recommended that Fairfield, Litchfield, New Haven, and Hartford counties remain at Stage 1. Lori Mathieu added that DPH will continue to monitor and share information, whatever this group chooses to do.

There was further discussion of conditions and of the concern that an announcement of the elimination of Stage 1 from any part of the state could undermine conservation efforts still requested by some utilities. It was noted that the drought plan does not require a public announcement regarding Stage 1 and Martin Heft said he can explain the concern to the Governor's office. A motion was made and seconded to eliminate Stage 1 from the four eastern counties but retain it for the listed western counties and the motion was seconded and approved unanimously by roll call vote. Martin repeated that he will encourage the Governor's office to not issue a press release.

c. [Drought Plan](#)

- i. [Priority level review](#)
- ii. Items for Water Planning Council

Martin Heft showed the spreadsheet and recommended the group focus on the WPC assignments shown with yellow font. The group reviewed those assignments and Martine said a listing of WPC tasks should be sent to the WPC. He invited further comments.

Steve Harkey asked if Recommendation 4.12 should also be sent to the [National Integrated Drought Information System](#) (NIDIS) and there was a discussion of work group review of recommendations. A motion was made and seconded to send the list of WPC assignments to the WPC and the motion passed unanimously.

d. 2023 Meeting Schedule regular meeting

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the proposed meeting schedule and the motion was adopted unanimously.

e. Next meeting – January 6, 2023

Martin Heft noted that work will continue on the recommendations identified in the spreadsheet and also mention the upcoming webinar described in an attachment to the agenda:

<https://www.drought.gov/events/drought-assessment-changing-climate-technical-workshop-2023-02-28>

Doug Hoskins pointed out that Eric Lindquist, who has had an important role in the work of this group, has moved from OPM to DPH and will be missed. Martin said he will convey that message.

5. Public comment

There were no public comments.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:13.

DRAFT