

Interagency Drought Workgroup (IDW)
Meeting Minutes

March 2, 2023

Meeting agenda:
<https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/18652>

Drought Conditions Handout:
Not prepared this month

Meeting Video:
https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2023-03-02_IDW_Video.mp4

CT Agency representatives (* - denotes voting member):

DEEP: Kim Czapla, Bill Foreman, Doug Hoskins*
DEMHS: Ken Dumais*
DoAg: Simon Levesque*
DPH: Steve Harkey, Ryan Tetreault
OPM: Rebecca Dahl, Martin Heft*, Bruce Wittchen
PURA: Maria Szul*

Federal Agency representatives:

NWS/NOAA: Britt Westergard
USGS: Tim Sargent

Other participants:

1. Call to order

Martin Heft called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

2. Seating of voting members

Martin Heft confirmed the quorum of agency representatives: DEEP – Doug Hoskins; DEMHS – Ken Dumais; DoAg – Simon Levesque; OPM – Martin Heft; and PURA – Maria Szul. DPH’s Lori Mathieu was not present.

3. Minutes – February 2, 2023

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [2/3/2023](#) meeting minutes and was approved unanimously.

4. Business

a. Post Drought Actions

Bruce Wittchen said that staff from most of the IDW agencies were able to meet since the last IDW meeting and plan to meet monthly. They are looking at the drought stage

criteria and the next meeting is expected to focus on forest and agricultural drought indicators. They will proceed to other criteria in the following meetings

b. Drought Plan

Martin Heft mentioned that he provided the list of priorities needing WPC consideration to them. He provided an overview of the research OPM staff have begun regarding water use restriction ordinances and asked if other agencies have anything to report. Simon Levesque noted that he is looking into how DoAg might obtain drought impact reports from farmers. Doing so would enable DoAg to provide this group with information about the impacts farmers are experiencing on a county-by-county basis. Martin agreed that is a good factor to look at.

c. State Drought Coordinator recommendation

Martin Heft provided an overview of expectations for the state drought coordinator role created in the updated drought plan. He said DEMHS might be the most appropriate agency and noted DEMHS's emergency management roles. Ken Dumais said DEMHS had received Martin's inquiry about this and they think DEEP might be the more appropriate agency for that role, but they have not made a final decision yet. Martin suggested a meeting to discuss that.

d. Review of hydrologic conditions

Britt Westergard said precipitation had been well below normal in February but not in the longer time frames considered in CT's drought plan. She noted that some other states in our area have already experienced some fire weather. Tim Sargent said ground water levels are generally normal across the state.

e. Drought stage recommendations – VOTE

No one made a motion and there was no vote.

f. Next Meeting – April 6th

g. Other Business

There was no other business.

5. Public comment

There were no public comments.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:22.