

Interagency Drought Workgroup (IDW)  
Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2023

Meeting agenda:  
<https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/18654>

Drought Conditions Handout:  
See agenda plus [USGS update](#)

Meeting Video:  
[https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/IDW\\_2023-05-04\\_Video.mp4](https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/IDW_2023-05-04_Video.mp4)

**CT Agency representatives** (\* - denotes voting member):

DEEP: Kim Czapla, Bill Foreman, Doug Hoskins\*  
DEMHS: none  
DoAg: Simon Levesque\*, Eileen Periverzov  
DPH: Steve Harkey, Lori Mathieu\*, Ryan Tetreault  
OPM: Rebecca Dahl, Martin Heft\*, Bruce Wittchen  
PURA: Ally Ayotte, Maria Szul\*

**Federal Agency representatives:**

NWS/NOAA: Bill Leatham  
USGS: Dee-Ann McCarthy, John Mullaney, Tim Sargent

**Other participants:**

**1. Call to order & Seating of voting members**

Martin Heft called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm and confirmed the quorum of agency representatives: DEEP – Doug Hoskins; DoAg – Simon Levesque; DPH – Lori Mathieu; OPM – Martin Heft; PURA – Maria Szul. DEMHS was not represented.

**2. Minutes – April 6, 2023**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [4/6/2023](#) meeting minutes and was approved unanimously.

**3. Update: Water Planning Council Vote on State Drought Coordinator**

Martin Heft said the Water Planning Council voted to appoint Becca Dahl Drought Coordinator.

**4. State Drought Coordinator Report**

a. Review of April monthly data and other relevant information

Becca Dahl noted that the data show conditions improving, highlighting the difference between the state's real-time wells, which show all current water levels being normal or above normal, and the periodic wells measured the previous week, many of which were below normal (see [https://newengland.water.usgs.gov/web\\_app/GWW/GWW.html](https://newengland.water.usgs.gov/web_app/GWW/GWW.html)). Becca also mentioned that the [forest fire danger](#) is back down to Low and DEEP's Forestry Division says we are past the spring fire season. She invited further input.

Lori Mathieu said DPH continues to track conditions and Steve Harkey added that next week's reservoir data should better show the impacts of recent precipitation and of increasing outdoor watering demands. He also said the new edition of the [US Drought Monitor](#) shows improvement in CT and mentioned the new [National Integrated Drought Information System website](#).

John Mullaney agreed with the earlier mention of improved ground water levels between late April and now and said this could be the final recharge of ground water and should push the potential for a return to low levels further into the summer.

- b. Vote on drought stage changes if warranted

There was no vote.

## 5. Business

- a. Post-2022 Drought Actions

Martin Heft provided an overview and Becca Dahl mentioned ongoing staff meetings covering this and potential improvements in the drought plan. She added that DPH's Eric Lindquist is at a rapid-onset drought conference and that topic will be discussed when agency staff meet again on 5/18. OPM is working on an initial draft of an after-action report for the 2022 drought and that will also be discussed. Martin asked that Eric update this group about the conference next month.

- b. [Drought Plan](#) Review

This was covered in 5a.

- c. Climate Change: Preparing for Drought in CT Webinar Review

Martin Heft mentioned a recent webinar and said another is scheduled 5/23.

- d. Expanded [CT state page](#) at drought.gov

This was mentioned in 4a.

- e. Other

## 6. Public comment

There were no public comments.

## 7. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 1:19.