

**Interagency Drought Workgroup (IDW)**  
Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2025

Meeting agenda:  
<https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/27546>

Drought Conditions Handout:  
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/water/drought/2025/250306---idw-handout---february-2025-conditions-report.pdf>

Meeting Video:  
[https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/250306\\_IDW\\_Meeting\\_Recording.mp4](https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/250306_IDW_Meeting_Recording.mp4)

**Members and Agency Staff** | \* - denotes Voting Member | ^ - denotes Drought Coordinator

DEEP: Melissa Fahnestock, Olney Knight, Shalyn Zappulla  
DEMHS: Doug Glowacki\*, Josh Cingranelli, Ken Dumais, Bob Kenny,  
DoAg: None  
DPH: Eric Lindquist\*, Steve Harkey, Ryan Tetreault  
OPM: Martin Heft\*, Rebecca Dahl^, Justine Phillips-Gallucci, Bruce Wittchen  
PURA: Maria Szul\*

**Other State Agency Representatives**

None

**Federal Agency representatives:**

NWS/NOAA: Deanna Marks  
Rob Megnia  
Britt Westergard  
USGS: John Mullaney  
Tim SargentDee-Ann Crozier

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

Martin Heft called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and confirmed the quorum of agency representatives: DoAg – None ; DEEP – None; DEMHS – Doug Glowacki; DPH – Eric Lindquist; OPM – Martin Heft; and PURA – Maria Szul.

**2. Minutes – February 6, 2025**

**A motion was made by Eric Lindquist and seconded by Doug Glowacki to approve the 2/6/2025 meeting minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.**

### 3. State Drought Coordinator Report

Becca Dahl provided a brief overview of conditions, as described in the provided February 2025 Conditions Report.

She shared maps of the U.S. Drought Monitor from the month of February and March 4<sup>th</sup>, indicating consistent drought status since February 4<sup>th</sup>.

She shared precipitation data for the month of February for the one-month and two-month period look-back. She noted wet conditions for February and reiterated dry conditions for January. She also shared slides displaying the longer term rainfall deficit over the last six months.

She shared the Streamflow Summary charts prepared by USGS to demonstrate the change in streamflow conditions to largely below-normal in the month of February.

Becca Dahl shared the drought triggers tables from January and February, noting similar patterns, with streamflow and precipitation conditions shifting towards meeting the Stage 2 Drought Triggers, with five of the six in-season triggers aligning with Stage 2 Drought. **She recommended keeping the entire state in a Stage 2 Drought.** She also made the recommendation to have the IDW consider sending out a press release to remind the public that we are still in a Stage 2 Drought.

Shalyn Zappula asked why the threshold for meeting a drought trigger was 65% instead of something like 51%. Becca Dahl shared that is what the State Drought Plan dictates, Doug Glowacki further elaborated that the trigger was developed in the 1990s, and was based on historic norms.

Ryan Tetrault asked about when VegDRI and Soil Moisture begins to be measured again. Steve Harkey elaborated that VegDRI is based on satellite imagery when leaf-out begins for most plants.

John Mullaney went through some of the slides included in the Drought Conditions Report, showing graphs from streamflow sites that are not impacted by human activity, to demonstrate cumulative flow patterns trending close to the lowest observed streamflow for each of those sites.

Shalyn Zappula asked about the difference between moving into drought stages and moving out of drought stages, and if there are different means to measure these trends. Becca Dahl responded that this is a common discussion and in a typical year, we'd expect recovery moving into a wetter season but that we need to continue to monitor conditions. Doug Glowacki elaborated by sharing that we may have some storm patterns emerging but nothing large on the horizon and that he would agree with the recommendation to stay in Stage 2 Drought.

Martin Heft asked the IDW members to verify their thoughts regarding drought status. All members agreed to remain in Stage 2 Drought based on the data presented.

Martin Heft agreed with the IDW recommending that the Office of the Governor send out a press release stating that Stage 2 conditions have remained. Doug Glowacki and Maria Szul agreed with making this recommendation. Eric Lindquist noted that moving into the spring season, conditions can change rapidly and we are in a vulnerable position. He added that we need to consider public perception given the time of year and recommended waiting on making this recommendation.

Martin Heft noted that he will provide an update on the current status of drought to the Office of the Governor and will work on developing a press release for future use if needed.

#### **4. Business**

Martin Heft brought up the topic of county equivalents and the potential shift of federal partners reporting data based on county equivalents instead of geographic counties, as discussed in previous meetings. There were no further updates.

Doug Glowacki noted that for the Drought Tabletop Exercise, this will not be a part of the EPPI this year but we can explore other avenues for the exercise this year.

Becca Dahl shared about DEMHS' THIRA/SPR report – Ken Dumais elaborated that this is a scenario-based report that happens annually, but this year's report is a full update which is done every 5 years. Incorporating drought as a threat within one of the scenarios was discussed.

Martin Heft mentioned that there is a link within the Agenda for the 2025 US Drought Monitor Forum taking place this April. There are options to attend virtually and Becca Dahl may be attending in-person.

#### **5. Other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **6. Public comment**

There were no public comments.

#### **7. Next Meeting – April 3, 2025**

Martin Heft noted that the next meeting is scheduled to be April 3, 2025 and that staff will continue to monitor conditions, and the group is permitted to call a meeting if needed.

#### **8. Adjourn**

**The meeting adjourned at 1:42 pm, moved by Doug Glowacki and seconded by Eric Lindquist.**