

Drought Task Force Meeting  
Monday, January 07, 2013  
2-5 pm CDT  
State Emergency Operations Center

**In attendance:**

Terry Woster, SDDPS	Jim Strain, WFS	Cody Knutson, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Jason Bauder, SDDPS-OEM	Jeff Zimprich, NRCS	Dennis Todey, SDSU
Doug Hinkle, SDDPS-FMO	Megan Mercer, SDDPS-OEM	Kristi Turman, SDDPS-OEM
Paul Merriman, SDDPS-FMO	Walt Bones, SDDA	Jon Farris, SDDA
Ann Michelle Daniels, SDSU	Jay Esperance, SDDA-WFS	Aaron Jordan, SDNG
Jamie Crew, SDDA	Steve Hasenohrl, SDDA-WFS	Craig Schaunaman, USDA-FSA
Emmett Keyser, GF&P	Lynn Beck, SDDENR	
Rob Lehmann, SDDA-WFS	Mark Rath, SDDENR	

**Wildfire report:**

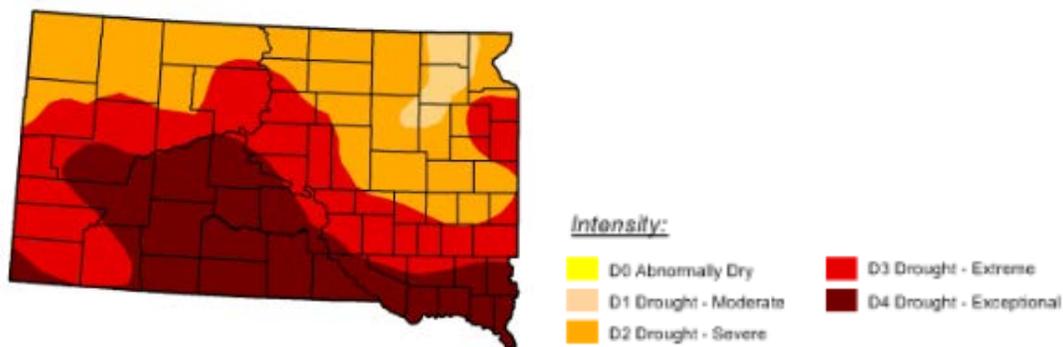
Jim Strain with WFS reported Fall River County (Red Zone area designated by the Governor) had no fire activity in the past 60 days. It was decided to draft and send a letter to the County Board of Commissioners and Fire Coordinator of Fall River County from WFS stating as of December 31, 2012 the Red Zone Designation no longer exists. John Farris will speak to the Governor's Office about this letter and he and Kristi Turman will be copied on the letter.

**Overview of 2012 Drought and Outlook for 2013:**

State Climatologist Dennis Todey reported there is snow statewide with lesser amounts in the west, some in the central and larger amounts in the eastern half. Temperatures for the last month have been running somewhat cooler due to the snow cover. The snow fall has been helpful but has not served as much aid for drought relief.

In the last 30 days the eastern part of the state has seen somewhat above average precipitation amounts, with much of the central and west with a little below average amounts. The 8 to 14 day outlook calls for a cold stretch, increased chances of precipitation, with a chance of it coming in a week to ten days. The January outlook includes chances of slightly above average temperatures, but overall not a big precipitation chance with a half inch or less of liquid. The three month outlook shows a possibility of slightly cooler temps, with no good indications one way or another on what precipitation will do. March through May contains a slight increase in chances of being warmer than average with no strong indications on precipitation.

The US Drought Monitor showed no large scale changes with D1 (moderate) in a small portion of the northeast, D2 (severe) covering the northern and east-central South Dakota, followed with the remainder of the state in D3 to D4 (exceptional).



Small fires have been picked up for the past 30 days in western SD – no major fires.

The critical point in recovery will be this spring. Currently there are no specific indications about what spring will bring one way or the other. There are equal chances for below or above precipitation totals.

**Current SD Drought Plan and New Planning Activities:**

Two handouts from Emergency Management were distributed to those in attendance – Drought Incident Annex and State of South Dakota Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The first one discussed was the Drought Incident Annex which is located in the South Dakota State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP). It was put into the format of our SEOP and situational information from the South Dakota Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan was added to it. A Drought Task Force section was also added.

The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Drought section is currently being updated and is compared to the SEOP with additional information that could go into risk assessment.

These two documents were presented to the group to draw ideas in planning.

Two different tracks will take course in drought planning and they are short term and long term. Short term planning contains the seasons of spring, summer and fall of 2013. These seasons will have emphasis on fire and water shortage issues (which at this time there is not enough information to determine). Long term planning focuses on what information can we gather to understand drought in South Dakota - list and understand resources, find out our water sources and what are some things we can do more long term to mitigate drought impact in the future.

Ann Michelle Daniels from SDSU addressed the group that mental health should be included in the short and long term planning tracks.

**State Drought Planning Basics and Case Studies:**

Cody Knutson, Planning and Social Science Program Leader, National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC), University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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<http://drought.unl.edu>

The National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC), established at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1995, helps people and institutions develop and implement measures to reduce societal vulnerability to drought, stressing preparedness and risk management rather than crisis management.

Cody Knutson of NDMC presented on the background of drought planning and used the drought plans of Nebraska and Colorado as planning method examples. He led his presentation on defining drought planning and the elements used to help make a successful drought plan.

Some of the elements discussed are listed below.

**10 Step Drought Planning Process**

1. Appoint a drought task force
2. State the purpose and objectives of the drought preparedness plan
3. Seek stakeholder participation and resolve conflict
4. Inventory resources and identify groups at risk
5. Prepare/write the drought preparedness plan
6. Identify research needs and fill institutional gaps

7. Integrate science and policy (Legislation)
8. Publicize the drought preparedness plan and build public awareness
9. Develop education programs
10. Evaluate and revise drought preparedness plan

#### Essential Drought Plan Components

- Monitoring and early warning system – assess, communicate and trigger action
- Vulnerability assessment – who are we going to be assisting, who are the targets for these actions
- Mitigation and response actions – who and what is being impacted in the sectors

#### Drought Task Force Activities

- Assess available resources – what do we have to work with?
- Identify short/long term objectives of the plan
- Determine scope of the plan – which sectors to include?
- Organization - leadership, committees, sub-committees and roles
- Public involvement?
- Logistics - how do you get this drought plan process done?
- Approval and write the plan

#### Monitoring and Early Warning Committees

- Establish drought management areas
- Inventory data
- Determine the data needs of primary users
- What is South Dakota's definition of drought?
- Develop a drought monitoring system
- Develop an information delivery system

#### Risk Assessment Committee

- Conduct a drought impact assessment
  - Rank the most pressing impacts
  - Conduct vulnerability assessment – why did impacts occur
  - Identify and prioritize risk management options – what can we do before, during and after drought to prevent
- Example: drought plans for ranchers at the time

#### Writing and Updating Plan

- Draft the plan
- Organize public meetings to explain and gather information
- Distribute and post
- Test plan

#### **Nebraska Drought Plan** – Incomplete grade.

The first drought plan Cody presented was Nebraska's. Nebraska's plan was first written in 1986 and went through revisions in 1990 and 2000. It is mainly a response plan but now is focusing on mitigation. The last revision was performed by the Climate Assessment and Response Committee and focused on drought monitoring and assessing impacts during drought. Nebraska did open the public to the planning process and established what sectors to include in developing subcommittees. Those subcommittees discussed drought impacts, mitigation, and response actions. Drought impacts were ranked to develop potential actions to prevent the impact and to list and track resources and resource needs.

The downfall of Nebraska's Drought plan is even though the Governor's Office approved and signed it, little has been done to enforce the plan. With this example, codified law's pros and cons come into factor. With a plan being written into codified law, enforcement is a given but changes and revisions become a lengthier and possibly difficult process.

**Colorado Drought Plan** – Extreme, comprehensive, state of the art.

The second drought plan presented was the state of Colorado's. This plan was first developed in 1981 and has seen several revisions with the latest in 2010 and 2013. When first created the plan was geared towards response but a revision in 2001 started its direction towards mitigation. It serves as an annex to the state's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and the State Emergency Operations Plan. The plan is prepared by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (Department of Natural Resources) and contracted with AMEC Earth and Environmental. It also complies with Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, Emergency Management Accreditation Program, National Response Framework, and National Incident Management System.

Colorado's drought task force framework begins with the Governor and leads on to the Governor's Disaster Emergency Council. Under the council there is a State Drought Coordinator and that position came from the Department of Natural Resources. After the State Drought Coordinator you will find the Drought Task Force and they included the sectors of Water Availability, Agriculture, Tourism, Energy, Municipal Water, Wildlife, and Wildfire. This task force was responsible for fueling information to AMEC Earth and Environmental in developing the drought plan.

The timeline for Colorado's Drought Plan started with a call for proposals in June of 2009. After a contract was awarded many planning and revision meetings were held until September of 2010 when the plan was presented for final approval.

**Discussion on SD Drought Planning Purpose and Objectives:**

In developing South Dakota's Drought Plan, the goal would be to bring aspects from both Nebraska and Colorado's plans and meet in the middle. Sectors suggested were Agriculture, Fire, Water, Wildlife, Health, and Tourism – Tribal would fit within all these sectors. Within the sectors, stakeholders would need to be identified. A structure for the task force would need to be developed and a monitoring committee would need established. Short and long term objectives would need to be identified as well as action items that need to be worked on. Available resources need to be listed and what can be done with these resources.

The question of needing a drought coordinator or suggesting someone who could fill this role was addressed. This position would take on the lead of initiating and scheduling meetings and having the responsibility that goals would be met.

Public involvement would serve as an aid in identifying what action items need to be addressed. It was suggested that a survey would help narrow and generalize the public's comments. The sectors would be used in developing questions for the surveys, list impacts, and suggest strategies.

Assistance would be needed by a contractor to benefit content, meet deadlines and to overall produce a better product. Currently AMEC Earth and Environmental is working with OEM in completing their Hazard Mitigation Plan. Jason Bauder of OEM is going to investigate the possible option of amending OEM's current contract with Dewberry/AMEC Earth and Environmental to include drought planning. This would also need to be addressed with Legal.

Time Frames:

March 2013 – Short Term

April 2014 – Long term

Ann Michelle Daniels of SDSU shared that mental health needs should be addressed and suggested outlets like a program called Teens as Teachers where teens are trained to educate children on prevention. Literature to identify depression and how to deal with stress as a family due to drought is also available.

**The next Drought Task Force meeting will be held Tuesday, January 22, 2013, from 1:30–4 pm in the State EOC amphitheater. Four items that will be addressed at this meeting are:**

- 1. The possibility of amending OEM's Dewberry/AMEC Earth and Environmental contract and finding the funding to support a contract.**
- 2. Each sector should have a comprehensive list of stakeholders.**

3. **Address short term response actions**
4. **Establish a structure so planning can move forward.**