

Cochise County Local Drought Impact Group (LDIG) Meeting Notes 11/3/06

Persons Attending: Anne Aiken-Browning, Cado Daily, Mike Evans, Tedd Haas, Rodney Held, Mary McCool, Kim McReynolds, Carmen Miller, Susan Pater, Richard Searle, Alan Seitz, Stefanie Smallhouse, Jim Vlahovich.

Richard summarized the progress of the larger group and steering committee for this last year.

Statewide Update:

Rodney Held provided an update on progress statewide with the LDIG's. Cochise and Pinal are using similar structures. Santa Cruz is a little different, rather than a steering group they have 2 co-chairs. The initial meeting with Yavapai County, Cooperative Extension and ADWR has occurred and the larger group will start meeting in January. Pima has some existing structure and plan already in place and will integrate the two. Graham, Greenlee and Apache are next to get started. ADWR held a meeting with agency public information officers to help get the word out – keep drought in the forefront; info to be on ADWR website; more comprehensive look at impacts. Question was raised on how that group will work with the state monitoring technical group and the local groups. Rodney said the framework needs to still be set up, need a communication plan. Other groups are following Cochise model; others have the same (hit or miss) attendance; wet summer – attendance down.

Drought Status Recommended Actions:

The group reviewed the recommended actions proposed from the steering group. The group agreed to move the pool covers to the normal level. A couple of items were redundant and agreed to eliminate those. The recommendations were approved with changes.

Outreach Update:

At previous meetings it was agreed that much of this should be coordinated through the Water Wise program since there is already a system in place. Need to work on coordination locally and with public affairs personnel. David McKay with NRCS has suggested that ADWR should work with the RC&D's for grant writing. Need for a half time position that would work more on drought preparedness. Tedd suggested a weekly drought status box in the newspapers, perhaps next to the weather with a tip of the week. See attached recommended requests.

Monitoring Update:

See attached recommended requests.

Drought Response Update:

Change wording from utilities to municipalities and water companies. Discussion on where money would go from water impact fees. Needs to be dealt with in the legislation. Our goal is to reduce water. LDIG's should have some say in where the funds collected would go locally. Legislative process is open for public input.

Discussion on whether counties have the authority already to declare moratoriums. It is not explicit in statute. Only in urban areas; so counties cannot. Need a change in wording. Changed re-zoning to building permits. See attached recommended requests.

Rainlog:

Kim provided an overview of Rainlog and encouraged others to sign up and submit their rainfall data. Kim will send Rodney the rainlog.org flyer and ADWR will print. Let him know what weight paper. Everyone should let Kim know how many copies they would like.

Assessment Project:

Anne Aiken-Browning is conducting an evaluation process of LDIG's. Will be looking at how the group processes issues and strategic decisions, working with Gregg Garfin and Mike Crimmins on this. Anne will be contacting group members and can do this electronically as well as on phone or in person.

Wrap Up

We have achieved much of the goal we set out to do a year ago. We will continue to meet as needed. Workgroups will continue to work. ADWR will send us a copy of the report to the Governor. The group wanted to continue rotating meetings in the future. If others are interested in participating in workgroups, contact the chair of the group.

COCHISE COUNTY LOCAL DROUGHT IMPACT GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

MONITORING WORK GROUP

The goal of the monitoring workgroup is to establish a network of designated volunteer monitors that can collect and input information into a simple, user friendly online reporting system. This information will be utilized by the state technical committee in determining the drought status for more specific analysis of areas impacted by drought and will process the information back to the county and individual users in order for them to take appropriate action.

Overall, the continued recruitment of monitors is needed in order to establish a network of “designated” monitors that provide reliable and accurate information. The improvements to the website are needed in order to establish a user friendly database where the information input can be compiled into a form which can be processed back to the user. The online reporting system is invaluable as a resource to further disseminate information regarding the status of drought stages and appropriate action by individuals as well as communities.

- We strongly support the Arizona Department of Water Resource’s request for funding to further develop an online reporting system.
 - User friendly mapping/location id system with more focused impact areas
 - Ability to summarize area specific and overall data and provide back to reporter/user
 - Rainfall and drought monitoring sites linked
- Request \$5,000 to equip and train monitors.
 - Provide monitoring supplies
 - Training for “designated” monitors

DROUGHT RESPONSE WORKGROUP

The goal of the drought response group is to develop mitigation and response measures that will reduce the impacts of drought. Several of the needs identified by this group include:

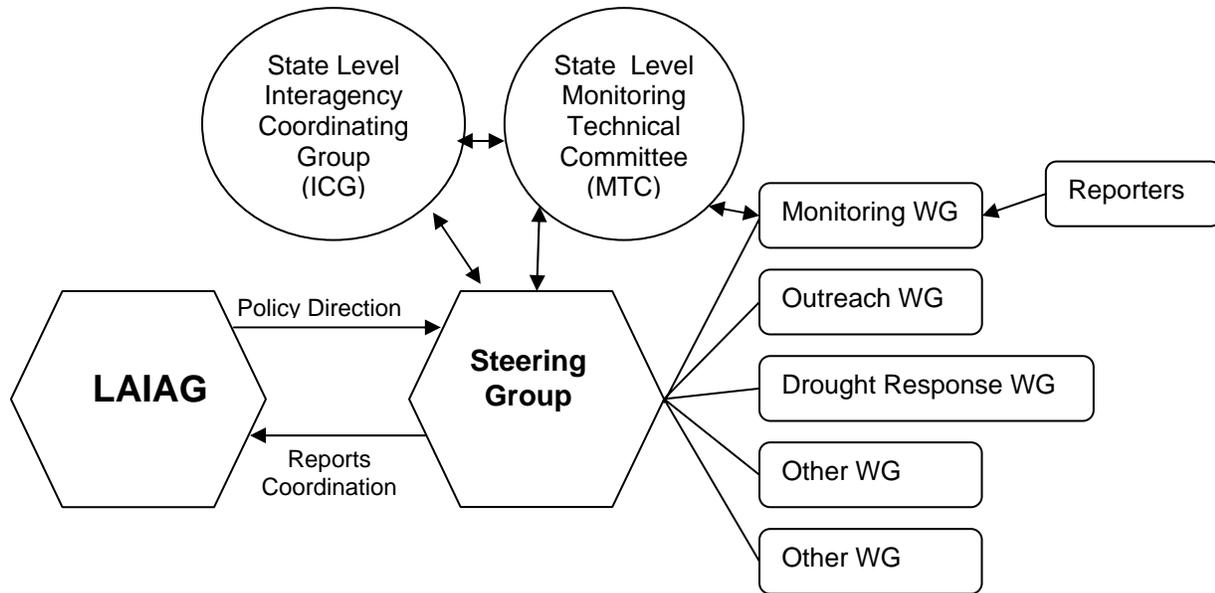
- Legislation allowing municipalities and water companies to charge water impact fees during extreme drought status levels.
- State lobbying and support for federal irrigated ag set aside programs during drought conditions.
- Legislation allowing counties to declare moratoriums on building permits or subdivision approvals based on extreme drought conditions.

OUTREACH/EDUCATION WORKGROUP

The goals of the outreach/education workgroup are: to increase awareness of drought and promote measures to reduce the impact of drought; to disseminate water use and drought educational materials; and, to conduct educational programs in each community county-wide. Wise decision making by all water users is necessary. Workgroup members are being recruited from each community in the county to develop a communication and outreach network. Cochise County currently has a highly successful water conservation program in the Sierra Vista sub-watershed called Water Wise. Our intent is to utilize and enhance existing organizations/programs to develop and deliver drought education rather than develop a new structure or entity.

- § Funds are needed to enhance and focus energies on drought education. It is estimated that approximately \$22,000 would be required to provide some personnel support to existing organizations and to provide educational materials all focused on drought education.

COCHISE COUNTY ORGANIZATIONAL FLOW CHART



Steering Group

Appointed by the Cochise County Board of Supervisors:

Richard Searle – Chair rsearle@co.cochise.az.us

Mike Ortega, Stefanie Smallhouse, Tedd Hass, Alan Seitz, Jaque Zamora, Homer Hansen

Monitoring Working Group

Stephanie Smallhouse – Lead carlink@hughes.net

Mary McCool

Tedd Haas

Drought Response Working Group

Richard Searle – Lead rsearle@co.cochise.az.us

Carl Robie

Carmen Miller

City of Tombstone (?Public Works)

Alan Seitz

Outreach/Education Working Group

Homer Hansen – Lead hhansen@aplomado.com

Mike Ortega

Water Wise Staff

To volunteer from one of the above workgroups please contact the workgroup lead.