

ARIZONA DROUGHT REPORT

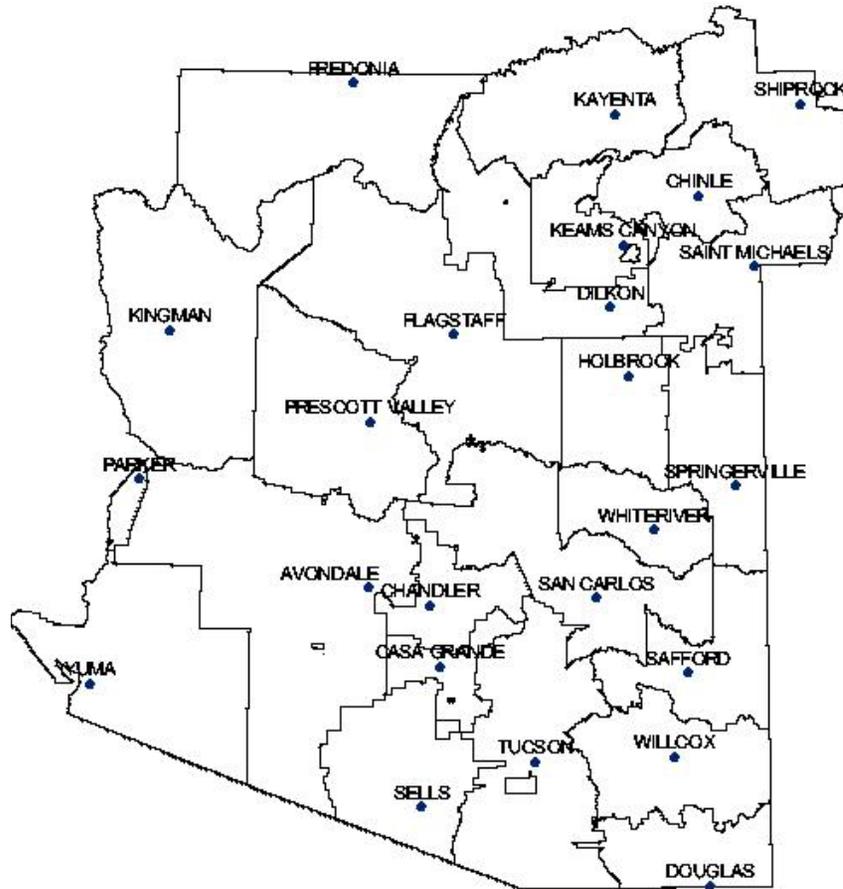
An Update - November 2008

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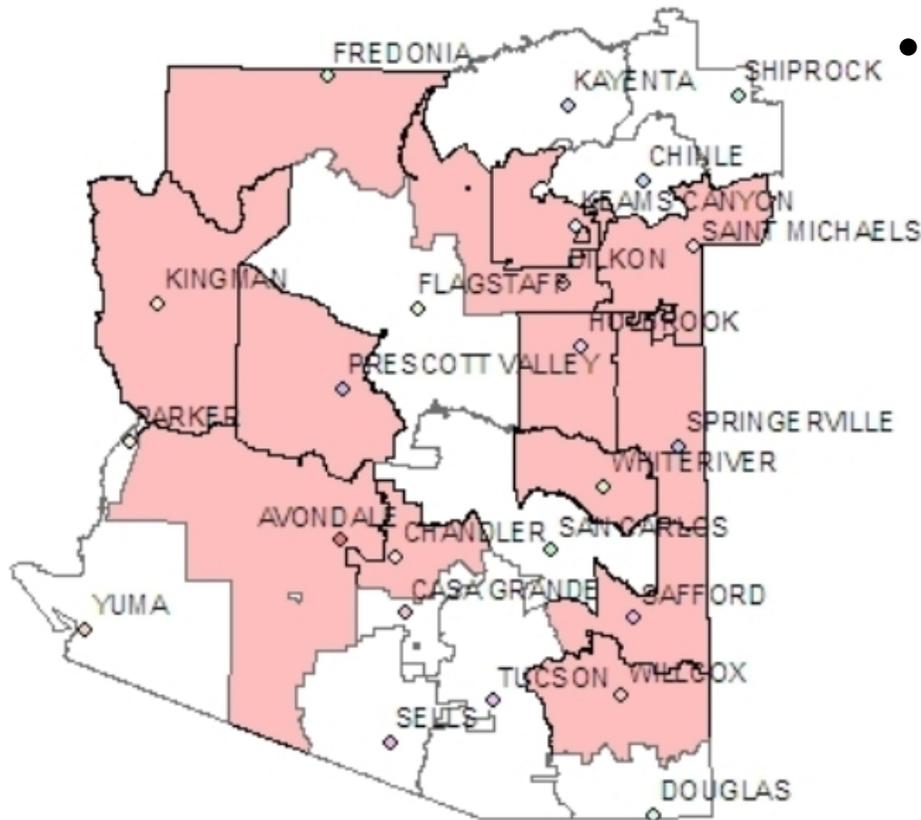


NRCS Field Offices



- NRCS has 24 Field Offices located throughout the state.
- These District Conservationists and staff provide the on-the ground knowledge and data collection.
- A survey was sent to all Field Offices in September 2008 to assess conditions on Arizona's range and croplands following the 2007-2008 precipitation year.

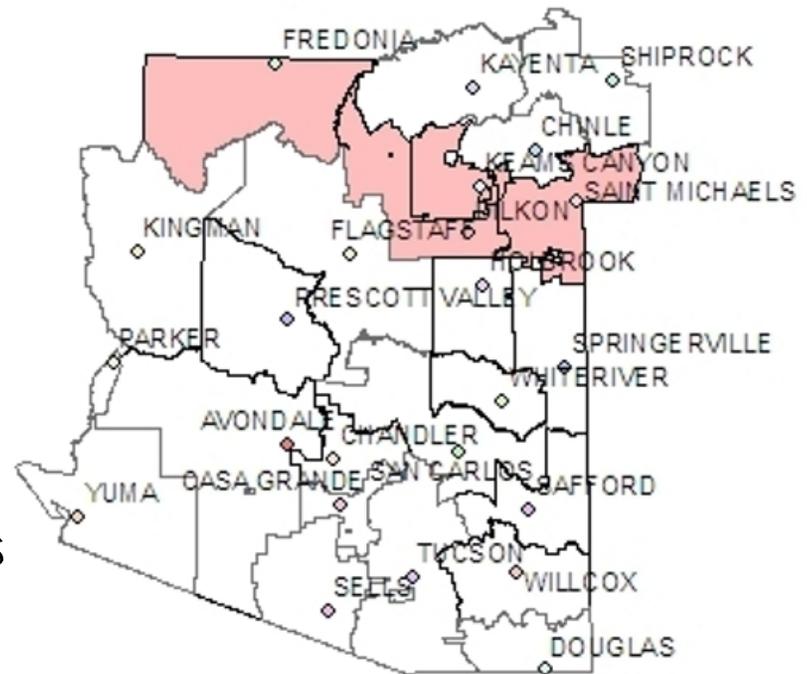
Field Offices Reporting Drought Impact



- Thirteen Field Offices reported drought conditions were observed within the work area.

Drought Affected Dryland Cropland

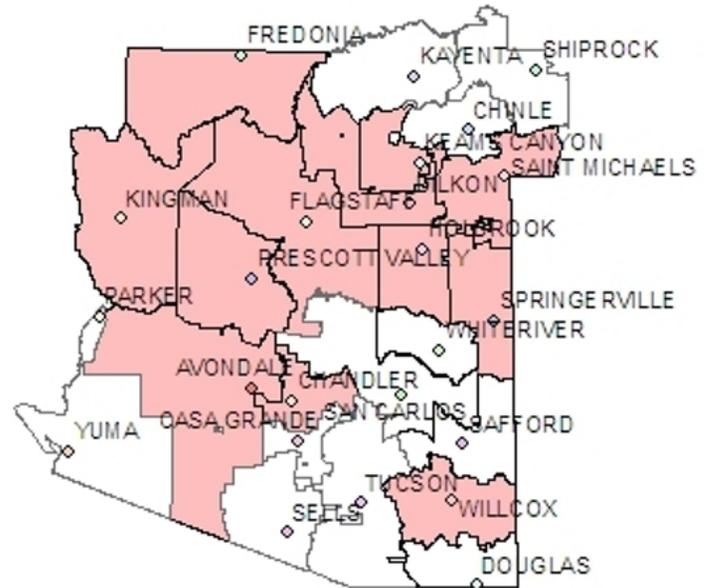
- Four offices (Fredonia, Dilkon, Keams Canyon and St. Michaels) reported there was dryland cropland affected by drought in the work area.
- The average crop loss on affected acreage is 50% which is about the same as last year (48%). Approximately 4000 acres are affected, down from last years 9,000 acres.
- Crops affected include corn and pasture.



Livestock Water

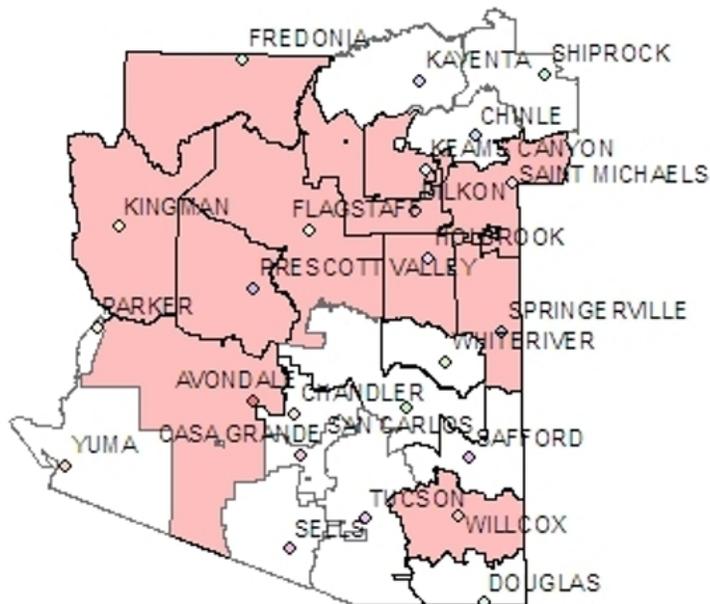
- Twelve field offices reported ranchers are hauling water due to drought conditions.
- The percent of ranchers hauling water in these field offices range from 3% (Willcox) to 95% (Keams Canyon).
- Dirt ponds, water harvesting catchments, springs, and wells are all impacted.

Areas Hauling Water



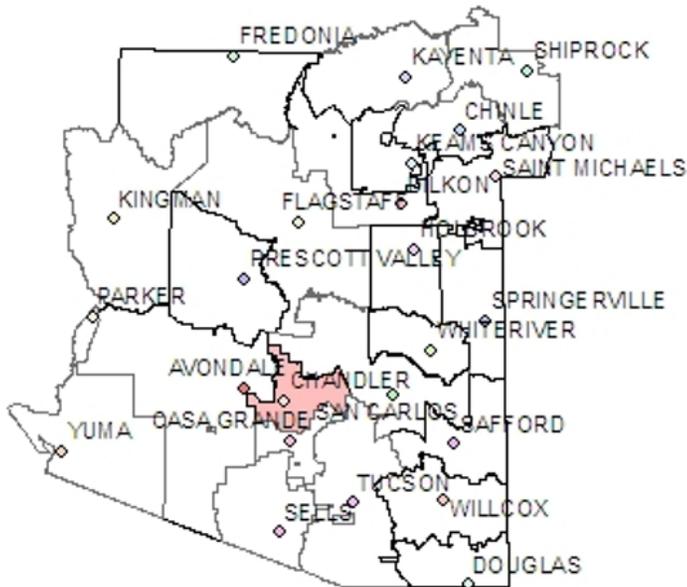
Rangeland Forage Production

Areas reporting livestock forage shortage



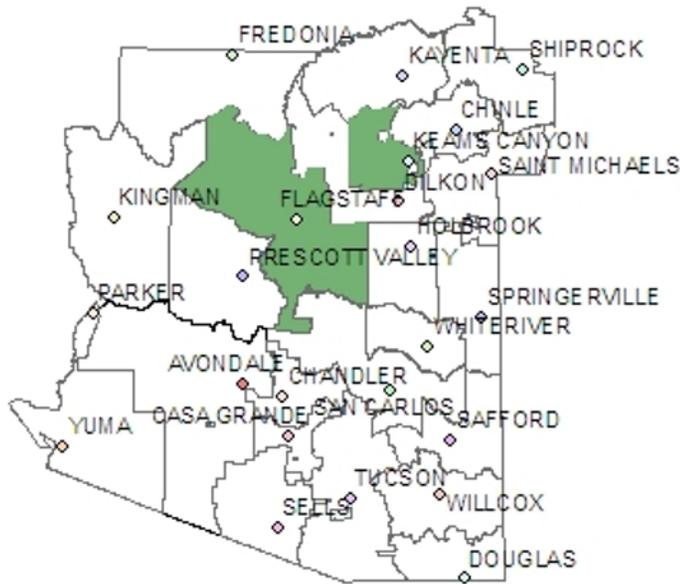
- Ten field offices reported shortages of livestock forage due to drought conditions in the work area.
- Percent of normal spring forage ranged from 10% to 90% in these offices.
- Percent of normal for the entire growing season ranges from 25% to 80%.
- Livestock numbers are 10% to 90% of established carrying capacity in these offices.

Additional Comments of Interest:



- Chandler field office – economic effects of the drought still present (Tonto area) even though the area received one of the wettest calendar years since the 80's. There are springs that dried up in 2002 that are still dry or producing less than half of what they did prior to 2002.

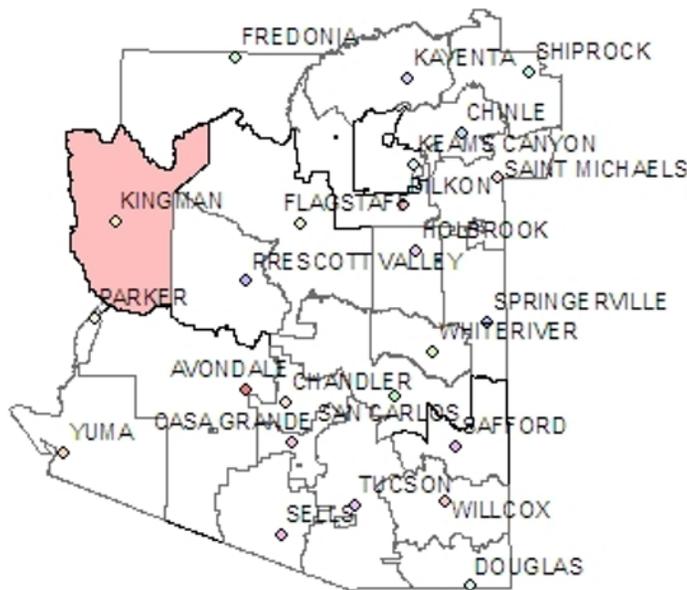
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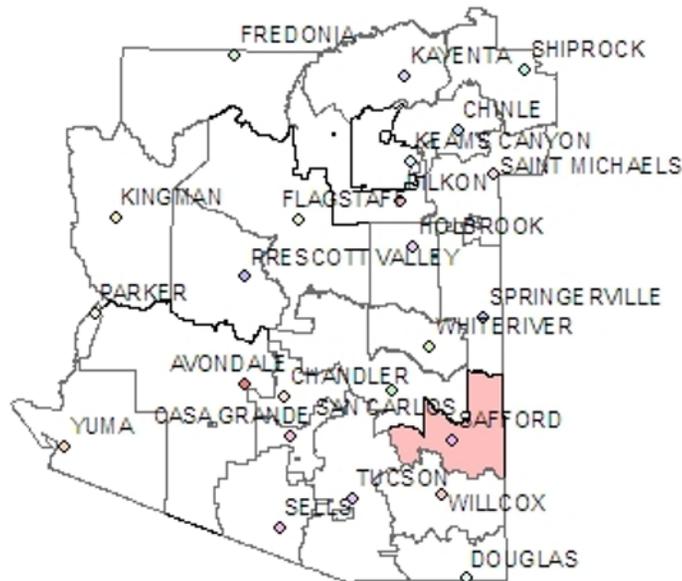
- Flagstaff field office – in general more than normal production. Also more than normal amount of water in stock ponds
- Keams Canyon – It has been an unusually good year, rains were frequent and well distributed, therefore plants were abundant throughout.

Additional Comments of Interest:

- Kingman field office
– Spotty rain this year. MLRA 30 (Mohave Desert) looks very rough this year providing 30% or less of normal year feed.

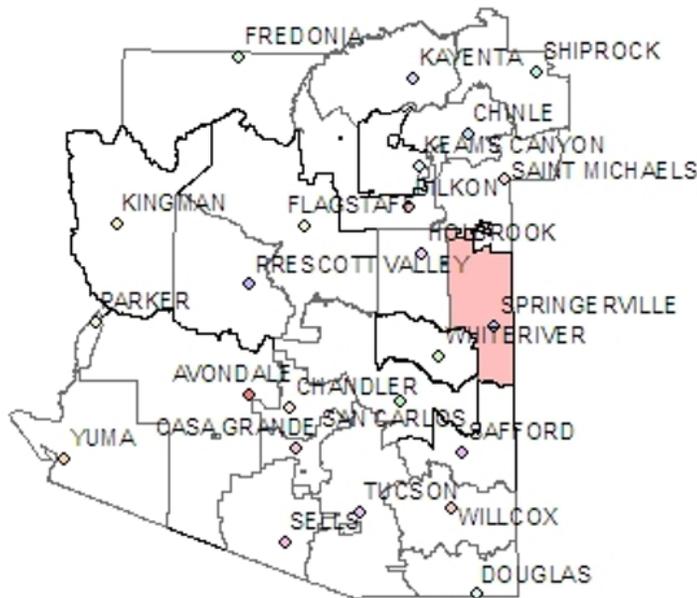


Additional Comments of Interest:



- Safford field office - On cropland the aquifers are still suffering from the previous drought years and there's still been some trouble with wells, even though rainfall and surface water has been good. Heavy summer rains have kept temperatures down, so there's not been cotton crop stress from prolonged high heat, which can result in dropped bolls and reduced yields. So, although there's still some well water shortages, all other factors point to a good yield this year.

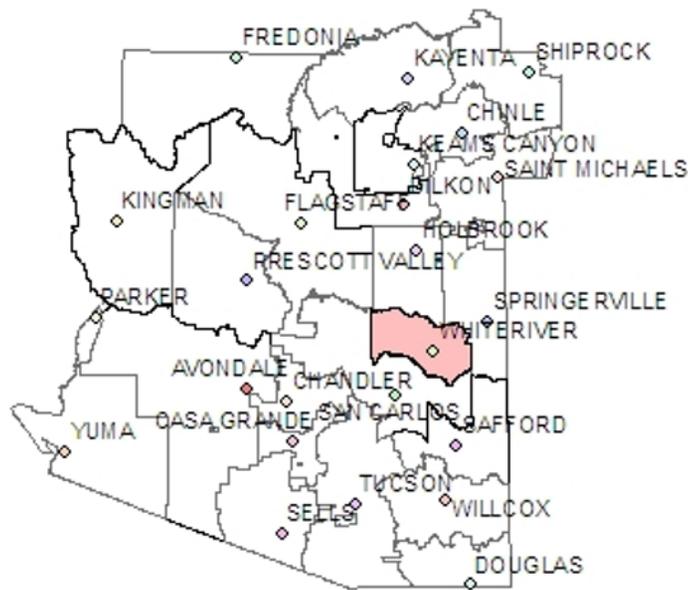
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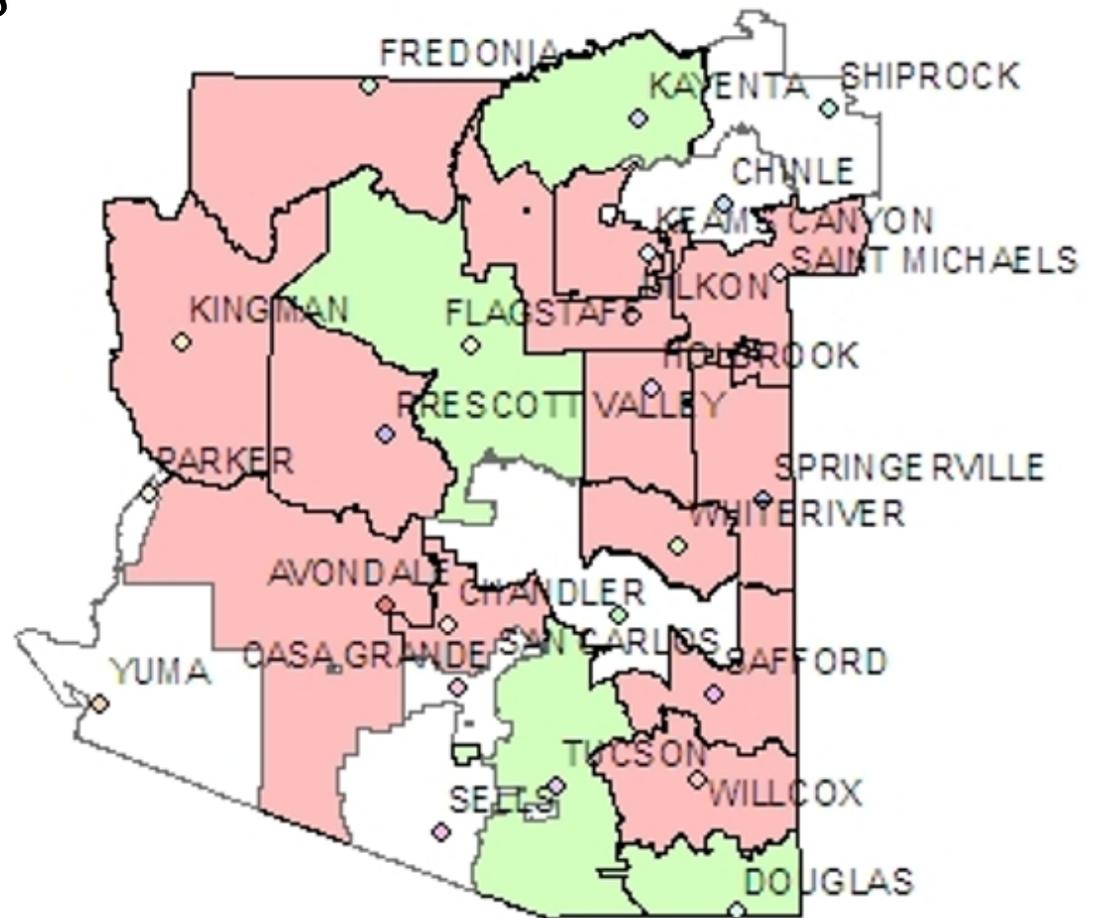
- Springerville field office – Past prolonged drought is still having a negative impact on the FO work area. Past years of below average winter precipitation reduced spring runoff and water production from well and springs are still below pre-drought levels. This year's snow melt was early and shortened the runoff period from the mountain. Summer rains were very spotty. Some areas had enough summer rain to grow decent forage, but did not produce any tank water. Other areas are both short on feed and have no tank water. Many producers have switched from alfalfa to Sudan grass due to unreliable water supplies. Over the last few years tame pasture such as orchard grass, timothy grass, Bromes and wheatgrasses are weak and have lost production due to short irrigation water supply. Many of these pastures are no longer planted and are converting back to weeds and native grasses.

Additional Comments of Interest:

- Whiteriver field office – Between the snow and rain this year, moisture levels have improved, but not enough to be “normal” .



Offices Reporting Normal or Above Versus Those Reporting Drought Conditions



Thank You

