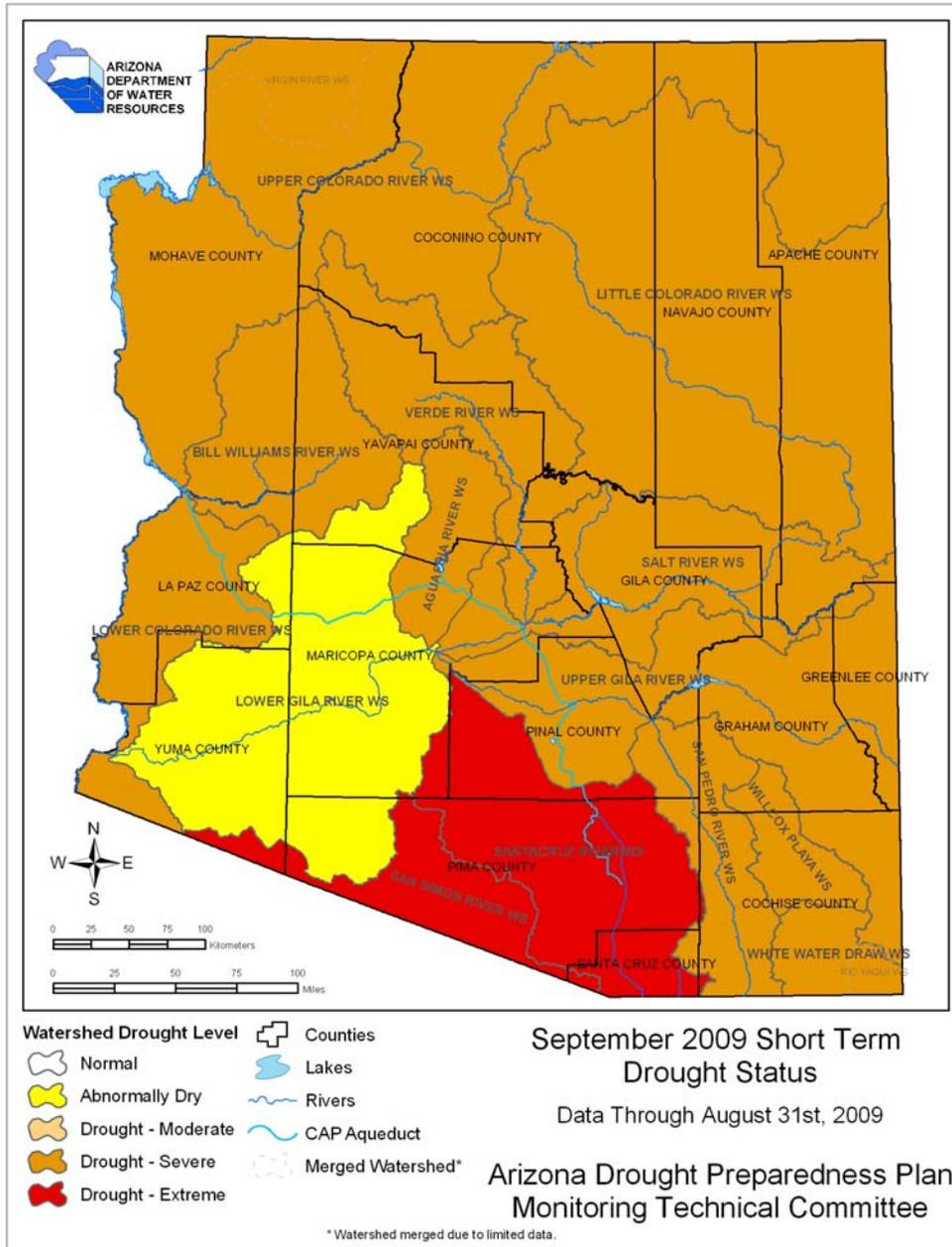


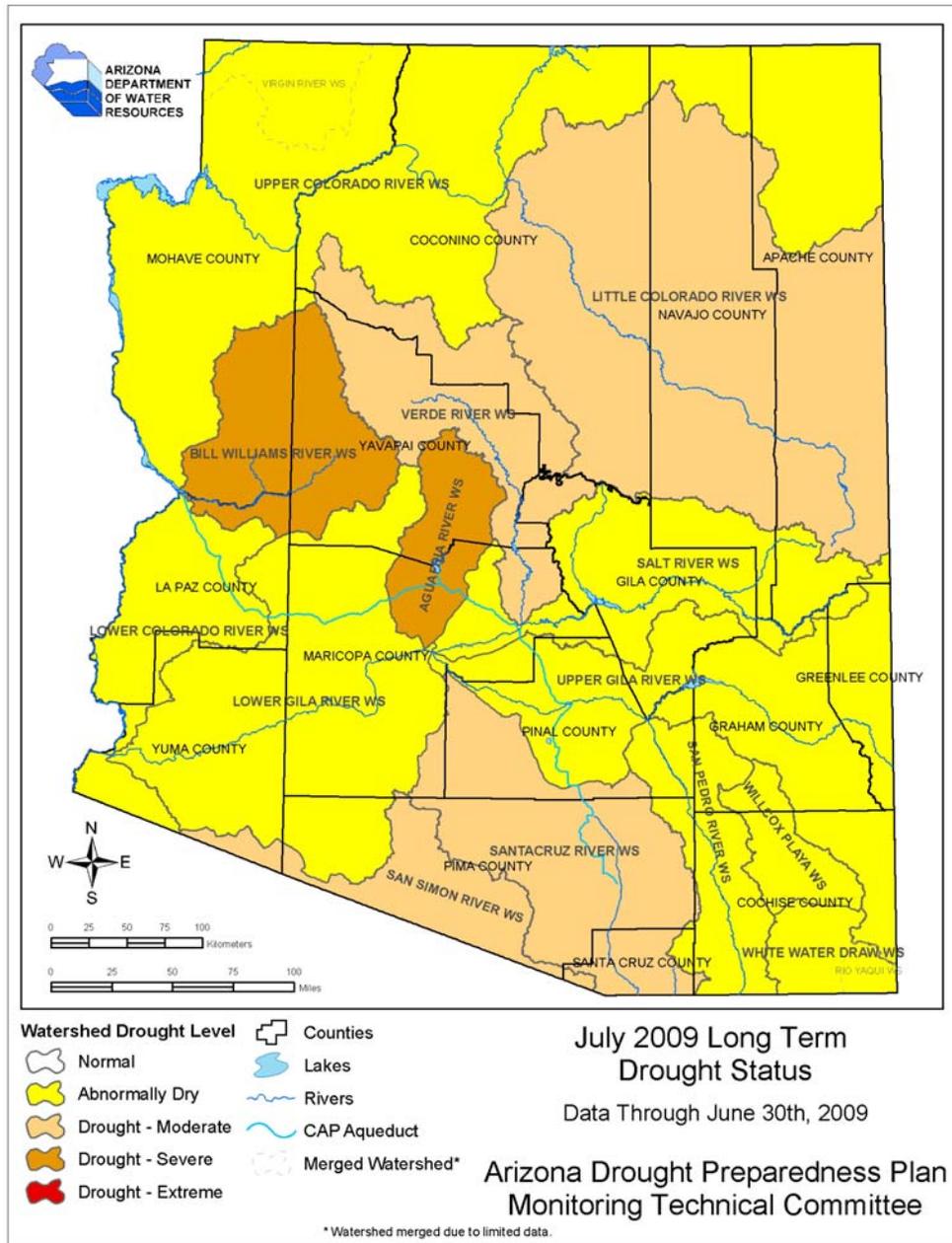
Drought Status Update

September 2009



Short-term Drought Status Update

The exceptionally low monsoon season precipitation totals (tenth driest monsoon on record since the late 1800s), coupled with a dry winter and spring, have caused drought conditions to worsen and become more widespread. September's short-term update demonstrates a rapid onset of short-term drought conditions. The majority of Arizona's watersheds dropped two categories, an unprecedented number (12), two watersheds dropped by one category and only one remained unchanged. With no improvements throughout the state, Arizona has 11 watersheds in severe drought, three watersheds in extreme drought, and one watershed in abnormally dry drought. The lack of summer rain has stressed vegetation, left stockponds empty, and increased fire danger. With substantial deficits accumulated during the summer months, Arizona will need extensive precipitation through the upcoming fall and winter season to improve these deteriorating conditions. If long term forecasts are correct, hopefully the current El Nino will bring a wetter than normal winter and provide some relief.



Long-term Drought Status

The long-term drought status map will be updated next month with data through September 30th, 2009. The map above includes data from the last four years, through June 2009.

Watersheds in Arizona have experienced significantly drier than average conditions over the last six months to four years. The cumulative effect of the dry periods requires consecutive wetter than average years to recover from the drought. Groundwater aquifers are very slow to recharge, compared to surface reservoirs, so the full reservoirs within the state of Arizona are not good indicators that the drought is easing. Water conservation is important even when we are not experiencing drought conditions. Practicing a low water use lifestyle is a way each citizen can help ensure a long-term, sufficient water supply.

