



Drought Update: Drought Resilience Interagency and Partners Collaborative
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Agenda Item at a Glance

- Droughts occur regularly in California when there is not enough water for all the people, plants and animals, farms, or businesses that need water.
- The Drought Resilience Interagency Partnership Collaborative, called “DRIP Collaborative,” is a group of people who are working together to lessen the damage caused by droughts in California. The DRIP Collaborative is run by the Department of Water Resources, called “DWR.”
- This is an informational item, important to those who want to know what the State is doing to prepare for droughts in California.
- At this meeting, staff from DWR will present information to the Commission. Tribes and the public will have an opportunity to make comments to the Commission before the Commission discusses this agenda item.

Introduction

In September 2021, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill No. 552 (SB 552) ([Water Code Section 10609.80 \(b\)\(1&2\)](#)) requiring that the Department of Water Resources (DWR), in coordination with other participating state agencies, such as the State Water Resources Control Board, establish a standing interagency drought and water shortage task force. The standing task force is charged with facilitating proactive planning and coordination, both for predrought planning and post-drought emergency response. It consists of various representatives, including representatives from local governments, state agencies, community-based organizations, nonprofit technical assistance providers, the public, and experts in land use planning, water resiliency, and water infrastructure.

In 2023, the task force was formed as the Drought Resilience Interagency Partnership Collaborative, or DRIP Collaborative. The DRIP Collaborative is comprised of eight State agencies and 18 volunteer non-state agencies to collectively share diverse experiences and knowledge from different water sectors and across regions of the state. The DRIP Collaborative collectively considers and develops recommendations to plan and prepare for droughts and water shortage conditions that affect the variety of water users across the state. The DRIP Collaborative holds public meetings under Baley-Keene Open Meeting Act requirements and

employs best practices to be transparent about its business and the process of developing recommendations

This agenda item will provide an overview of the DRIP Collaborative, its work and recommendations.

Background

With climate change, modeling projects an increased probability of extreme weather conditions such as drought. Historically, the State has established task forces in response to drought and water shortage conditions. Previous task forces identified and coordinated response actions to address impacts that were local, regional, and, at times, statewide. These task forces have been instrumental in guiding implementation of response actions, but once drought and water shortage conditions were alleviated, they were disbanded. Establishing these interim task forces requires significant effort: to identify appropriate and knowledgeable membership, to logistically organize a task force, and to establish working relationships takes a considerable amount of time and capacity. With the likelihood of more frequent and more extreme droughts occurring in California's future, there is a need to establish a durable drought task force that stands prepared to address droughts and water shortages from the state, regional, and local perspective. The DRIP Collaborative works to address that need, allowing the State to prepare and plan for, as well as implement actions to address impacts from, drought and water shortage conditions.

In January of 2024, the Commission released a white paper entitled [Potential State Strategies for Protecting Communities and Fish and Wildlife in the Event of Drought](#). This work supports Water Resilience Portfolio Action 26.3 and came at the request of the Secretaries for Food and Agriculture, Environmental Protection, and Natural Resources. The white paper describes a set of strategies that agency decision makers can draw on when considering future policies and financial investments. These strategies are:

1. Scale Up Groundwater Recharge
2. Conduct Watershed-level Planning to Reduce Drought Impacts to Ecosystems
3. Better Position Communities to Prepare for and Respond to Drought Emergencies
4. Support Improved Coordination, Information, and Communication in Drought and Non-drought Years

The DRIP Collaborative is advancing drought strategies similar to those included in the Commission's drought white paper. During the process of drafting the white paper, Commission staff worked with the DRIP Collaborative to seek their feedback on the Commission's paper. As a result, the white paper reflects and has influenced some of the priorities of the DRIP Collaborative, which are aligned with the Commission's drought strategies.

This agenda item advances Goal Three of the Commission's [Strategic Plan](#), which calls on the Commission to utilize its public forum to explore pressing water management issues. Objective

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3.3 tasks the Commission with tracking efforts related to the Commission's previously issued white paper on drought strategies and using the Commission's public forum to daylight State progress on the topics by inviting briefings and public input.

Meeting Overview

At the June meeting, Anthony Navasero, PE, Drought Coordinator with the Executive Division of DWR, will present information about the DRIP Collaborative. The Commission will hear public comment and have an opportunity to ask questions of the presenter to help the Commission and the public understand and evaluate the progress being made.

This is an informational item.

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