

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SHERMAN

In the Matter of Declaring a State of)
Drought Emergency in Sherman County) Resolution No. 06-06-2015

IN THE MATTER of declaring a state of drought emergency in Sherman County being before the Sherman County Court on this, the 17th day of June, 2015, and the Court being in regular session for the transaction of County business; and

WHEREAS, Sherman County, Oregon, is facing a drought of significant proportion; and

WHEREAS, the total precipitation for the area is currently below the 110 year average with dim prospects for rains in June, July and August; and

WHEREAS, the calendar year-to-date precipitation is 1.72 inches below average based on an 11.3 inch long term average; and

WHEREAS, the drought will impact Sherman County wheat and barley crops, rangeland pastures and creeks that are dry or going dry earlier than usual; and

WHEREAS, the drought increases fire danger and threatens the ability of household wells to produce water for domestic use.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Court hereby declares a state of drought emergency in Sherman County and requests Governor Brown to declare a state of drought emergency for Sherman County and contact the United States Department of the Interior and the United States Department of Agriculture to issue a Drought Declaration for Sherman County.

APPROVED this 17th day of June, 2015.

ATTEST:

Rita Wilson
Clerk/Deputy Clerk

SHERMAN COUNTY COURT

Gary Thompson
Gary Thompson, Judge

Mike Smith
Mike Smith, Commissioner

Tom McCoy
Tom McCoy, Commissioner



500 COURT STREET
P.O. Box 365

ESTABLISHED
FEBRUARY 25, 1889

June 18, 2015

GARY THOMPSON
JUDGE
565-3416

Governor Kate Brown
160 State Capital
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Office of Emergency Management
Andrew Phelps, Director
P.O. Box 14370
Salem, OR 97309

MIKE SMITH
COMMISSIONER
565-3416

Re: Sherman County Drought Declaration

Dear Governor Brown,

TOM MCCOY
COMMISSIONER
565-3416

The Sherman County Court requests the approval of the attached Emergency Drought Declaration for all of Sherman County under the provisions of ORS 401.165 as a direct result of "Severe and Continuing Drought Conditions" to begin immediately and continue for an unspecified period of time.

JENINE MCDERMID
CLERK
565-3606

Please review the enclosed Declaration of Drought Emergency, Resolution No. 06-06-2015, adopted on June 17, 2015. Also included is a letter of support from the Sherman County Extension Agent Sandy Macnab who provides statistical information for the area with regard to crop year precipitation and the impact on crops as well as our creeks and streams and the significant wildfire threat to the county.

ROSS TURNEY
ASSESSOR
565-3505

MARNENE BENSON
TREASURER

As a result of the severity and magnitude associated with the reduced precipitation, the Sherman County Court has determined the proper and effective response is beyond the capabilities of Sherman County and other affected local governments. Supplementary State and Federal assistance is needed and requested.

We extend in advance our appreciation for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Gary Thompson
Sherman County Judge

Enclosures: Letter - Sandy Macnab, OSU Extension Agent
Drought Emergency Resolution



Extension Service Sherman County

Oregon State University, 66365 Lonerock Road, Moro, OR 97039

T 541-565-3230 | F 541-565-3330 | <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sherman/>

June 16, 2015

Sherman County Court

RE: Drought Designation

Gentlemen,

This letter is to support the calls for obtaining a drought declaration for Sherman County. We were actually ahead of the 110 year average for precipitation until we hit March. Since the first of March we have only received 25% of the expected long term average and this has hit particularly hard, dropping us to 1.72 inches below average. At the end of May we stood at 82% of normal but expectations for drier June, July and August should drop us to 70% or below by the end of the crop year precipitation collections. That is moisture that could be used in growing our 2016 crop.

That is not good in an area that normally expects only 11.3 inches anyway.

Additionally, prospects for rains in June, July and August are dim. Normally, we would expect about .66 inches in June, but we already half way through the month and received less than one-tenth of that.

Sherman County's main source of income, our wheat crop is showing signs of the drought impact. Harvest appears that it will start 2-3 weeks earlier for growers. What once had promise for an excellent crop has now deteriorated into an average to maybe slightly above average crop. The three plus months of drought, combined with higher than average evaporation and recent high temperatures have sucked not only yield but quality out of the plants.

On shallower soils, the crop has burned up and will produce nothing.

The other sign of the drought has been its impact on our creeks and streams. Many small creeks that normally carry water through August and beyond are already dry. These streams have provided water for livestock and wildlife.

Wildfires are expected to be a big threat this year as low air moisture lowers the relative humidity making grasses even more susceptible to fire from both natural and man-caused sources. Indeed one fire has already claimed several hundred acres of steep hillsides and claimed a couple of historical buildings while threatening several other residences. Those burned hillsides will be more susceptible to erosion and the establishment of invasive species weeds

I apologize for sounding like an alarmist but this drought is real and it is here. Any help you can offer will help our citizens cope with the dry conditions.

Sincerely,



Sandy Macnab
OSU Extension Agent
Sherman County