

Oregon Water Resources Commission
Work Session
April 5, 2001
Salem

Members

Nancy Leonard
Tyler Hansell
Dan Thorndike
Susie Smith
Jim Nakano
Ron Nelson

Staff

Paul Cleary
Meg Reeves
Sharyl Kammerzell
Tom Byler
Cindy Smith
Fred Lissner
Bob Devyldere
Tom Paul
Barry Norris
Day Marshall
Mary Grainey
Adam Sussman
Doug Parrow
Bernadette Williams
Laura Snedaker
Bob Rice
Dave Jarrett

Others

Scott Ashcom
Stefan Brown
Tom Herrett
Mike Ziolk
Jim Bryant
Kimberley Priestley
Steve Applegate
Roger Ross
M. Wather
Heath M. Lawson
Ed Henricks
Cassie Brittingham
Brad Harper
Rick Kepler
Emily West
Martha O. Pagel
Eric Carlson
David Cassel
Stan Fox
George Taylor
Tom Herrett
Steve Todd
Andy Bryant
Jim West
Ryan Bodily

Written material submitted at this drought workshop is part of the official record and on file at the Oregon Water Resources Department, 158 12th Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97301-4172. Audiotapes of the work session are on file at the same address.

Barry Norris, Technical Services Division Administrator, reviewed the written material which included a surface water supply index map for March 1, 1977, and March 1, 2001; Oregon Revised Statutes relating to emergency water shortage powers and Oregon Administrative Rules relating to

drought mitigation; a summary of the March 16, 2001, meeting of the Oregon Water Availability Committee; a 1999-2001 line chart of the Surface Water Supply Index; and a water conservation information sheet.

Norris explained that the Surface Water Supply Index was created by the Natural Resource Conservation Service and includes streamflow conditions, snowpack, reservoir content, and precipitation in 14 Oregon river basins. In a basin, zero would indicate normal conditions, a plus would indicate wet conditions, and a minus indicates dry conditions. The range covers a five month moving average and goes from a +4.1 to a minus -4.1. He said that when reviewing the Surface Water Supply Index it is important to consider the trend that is being indicated, rather than just the specific number.

Norris said there are several reservoirs in the state that will not fill this year due to the water shortage. Dry conditions have already started and will get worse this summer. The Department is already regulating water use one month earlier than usual.

The first panel discussed current water conditions in the state. Panel members included David Cassel, Oregon Emergency Management; Stan Fox, Natural Resources Conservation Service; George Taylor, State Climatologist; Tom Herret, U.S. Geological Survey; Steve Todd and Andy Bryant, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association; and Mike Ziolko, Oregon Department of Forestry (all members of the Water Availability Committee); and Roger Ross, Army Corps of Engineers.

The second panel included Barry Norris, Oregon Water Resources Department; and David Cassell, Oregon Emergency Management. Cassell talked about the make-up and responsibilities of the Oregon Drought Council and explained the drought declaration process. They discussed federal and state responses to drought and answered questions asked by the Commissioners.

The third panel discussed drought response and mitigation options. Jim West, City of Salem, spoke on municipal plans for drought response and ways individuals can conserve water. Stefan Brown, Public Utility Commission, shared information on irrigation exchange programs. Jim Bryant, Bureau of Reclamation, talked about paying irrigators not to use water for the season.

Tom Paul, Field Services Division Administrator; Dwight French, Water Rights Division Manager, and Dave Jarrett, Enforcement Manager, spoke on the Department's response to low water conditions and drought declaration. Bob Devyldere, Technical Services Division, demonstrated the newly-developed agency drought web site.

Following the panel presentations, the Work Session was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane K. Addicott
Commission Assistant