



Summary Minutes of the Nevada Drought Forum

Meeting of June 11, 2015 9:00 AM

Nevada State Capital, Guinn Room
101 North Carson Street
Carson City, NV

Video Conference
Grant Sawyer Building
555 East Washington Ave., Suite 5100
Las Vegas, NV

Members Present:

Leo Drozdoff, Chairman
John Entsminger, Vice Chair
Dr. Doug Boyle
Justin Huntington
Jason King
Mark Walker
Bill Elliot, in place of James Wright
Lynn Hettrick, in place of Jim Barbee

Members Absent:

SEC Staff Present:

Jerry Snyder, Deputy Attorney General
Misti Gower, Administrative Support

BEGIN SUMMARY MINUTES

1) Call to order and Roll Call: (Discussion) Mr. Drozdoff called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2) Public Comments: (Discussion) Mr. Drozdoff asked for public comment, hearing none, he asked the Forum members to introduce themselves.

A full account of the introductions was captured in the audio recording, available on the Forum's website.

3) Election of Chair & Vice: (Action Item) Mr. Drozdoff asked for discussion on the election.

Jason King, State Engineer of the Nevada Division of Water Resources, moved to nominate Mr. Drozdoff as Chairman. Mr. Drozdoff asked if anyone else was interested in the position, hearing none, he accepted the nomination. Mr. Hettrick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. King moved to nominate Mr. Entsminger Vice Chairman. Mr. Entsminger accepted the nomination. Mr. Walker seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4) Approval of Agenda: (Action Item) Chairman Drozdoff requested comments from the members on the agenda. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Motion: Mr. Hettrick moved to approve the agenda. Vice Chair Entsminger seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5) Drought Forum Member Introductions: (Discussion) Having already made introductions, Chairman Drozdoff asked if there was anything that anyone wanted to add. Hearing none, he moved on to agenda Item 6.

6) Current Drought Status and Forecast: (Discussion) Dr. Douglas Boyles, Nevada State Climatologist, provided a handout ([Attachment 1](#)) explaining the drought conditions across the State. Mr. Boyles stated that all of the State is in drought conditions with 49 percent in extreme drought conditions. Last year had the warmest state average temperatures in recorded history. The warm conditions exasperate the drought. There is an 80 percent chance El Nino will last through the winter of 2015. If this condition continues it will increase the chance for precipitation in Nevada.

Mr. John Entsminger, General Manager of Southern Nevada Water Authority, then provided an update on the Colorado River and Southern Nevada. The Colorado River is the lifeline of the Southwest, providing water to seven different states, Mexico and Baja. This region has to be prepared for the river to produce less water when so much of the economy is based on receiving the water. Nevada has been in drought for four years but the Colorado River has been in drought for 15 years. This has driven down Lake Meads levels by 130 feet. Lake Mead is now three feet away from the first ever shortage declaration by the Secretary of Interior. The Colorado River provides 90 percent of the water for 75 percent of Nevada's population.

Southern Nevada started adopting water conservation early and has reduced the area's water consumption by 40 percent. The net water use off the Colorado River has dropped 33 percent over the last 13 years, even as the population has increased by 25 percent. This has been accomplished by reducing outdoor water use. The Water Smart Landscape Program is the reason for this success.

Because of the dropping water level in Lake Mead construction of a new pumping station was started in 2006. The new intake is located in the river channel allowing water to be pumped from the bottom on the lake. The intake should be operational by the late fall of this year.

Mr. King provided an update on current conditions of groundwater and surface water levels across the State.

Full accounts of the presentations were captured in the audio recording, available on the Forum's website.

7) Review of Executive Order 2015-03: (Action Item) Chairman Drozdoff stated there has been a lot of interest in the Drought Forum throughout the State. Many people have contacted the Governor's Office with a desire to be involved. Chairman Drozdoff felt inter-sector meetings throughout the State as one way to reach the different agency and people.

Mr. Mark Walker, Dean of the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, stated they held several drought workshops. The workshops informed the public but also allowed for people to share their thoughts about the drought. Mr. Walker felt this information could be beneficial to the Forum in understanding what the public and agriculture's concerns are.

Vice Chair Entsminger felt that going out and having inter-sector meetings was the best way to get the information the Forum needs to prepare for the summit in September 2015.

Chairman Drozdoff asked for an update from the Division of Buildings and Grounds on their conservation efforts.

Mr. Gus Nunez, Administrator of the Public Works Division, introduced Tom Federici, Deputy Administrator (Buildings and Grounds) to present the update. Mr. Federici stated that to fulfill the goals of the Drought Forum, they started with an inventory of Building and Grounds properties throughout the State. In regards to landscaping, Buildings and Grounds has always worked at finding the most efficient type of watering

schedule. The inventory also consists of all the plumbing fixtures and what can be done to lower water consumption.

Bill Elliot, Lead Planner at the Division of Emergency Management, talked about his division role in preparing for the report the Forum is responsible in preparing. Mr. Elliot stated that in the yearly risk assessment the agency performs for communities, drought is the number two concern, only second to earthquakes. Because of this, Emergency Management is working with state and federal agencies to evaluate the impact on the communities. These agencies were sent a request to help gather the communities current and planned actions relating to the drought. Emergency Management also does a monthly drought situation report. Currently, their main job is to assess, make sure people are prepared and then be prepared to respond.

Chairman Drozdoff asked about the information being gathered from municipal water providers and governmental agencies. Mr. Elliot stated some of the water providers have yet to reply but they have compiled a good representation for the report. Chairman Drozdoff informed the members that Emergency Management has compiled a draft in regards to current actions of local, state and federal entities. The Executive Order calls for a summary to be complete by June 15, 2015, but perhaps that can be extended until July's meeting.

Motion: Lynn Hettrick moved to extend the June 15, 2015, deadline to July's Forum meeting. John Entsminger seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Forum members shared drought activities within their agency as well as other information. A full account of this agenda item was captured in an audio recording, available on the Forum's website.

Chairman Drozdoff asked if there was any public comment. Ms. Judy Gillmore, Water Conservation Coordinator with Utilities, Inc. addressed the Forum members. Ms. Gillmore stated that they had submitted comments to Emergency Management and hoped to be considered as part of the drought solution and conservation effort.

8) Overview of Nevada Drought Summit: (Action Item) Chairman Drozdoff felt they would be covering agenda items eight and nine together but would try to stay true to the agenda, announcing September 21-23, 2015, as the date for the Nevada Drought Summit. Chairman Drozdoff discussed what the Summit would be, such as hearing from the available sectors. There would be a lot of ideas that would feed into the Summit in advance so that the Summit would be an opportunity to have some focused discussion on drought and its effects on various industries. Chairman Drozdoff asked if there was any interest in putting a draft agenda together for the Summit by using information that has already been gathered and information from the sector meetings. Mr. Walker, Bill Elliot, Justin Huntington and John Entsminger were all willing to be part of a subcommittee to draft an agenda. Because of concerns regarding open meeting law, Chairman Drozdoff decided to talk with the interested parties separately.

Motion: Vice Chair Mr. Entsminger moved to delegate to the Chairman the assignment of coming up with a draft Summit agenda for the July meeting. Mr. King seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

A full account of this agenda item was captured in an audio recording, available on the Forum's website.

9) Overview of Interim Sector Meetings: (Action Item) Chairman Drozdoff suggested the Forum have sector meetings in both Carson City and Las Vegas to meet with entities such as agriculture, municipal water users, tourism and mining.

After much discussion the Forum agreed to have a sector meeting in Las Vegas on July 14, 2015, with the location to be determined. Another sector meeting will be held on August 18, 2015, in the Carson City Reno area at a location that will allow video conferencing to rural Nevada.

Motion: Vice Chair Mr. Entsminger moved to delegate to the Chairman the responsibility of setting the agenda for the July and August meetings. Mr. Huntington seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Forum members discussed different ways to get the information to the interested parties. Questioning the Nevada Drought Forum website and if it was available for individuals to sign up to receive notices. Forum members also agreed to send out electronic notices to from their individual departments.

Mr. Cory Hunt, Senior Analyst at Governor Sandoval's Office, came forward to address the Forum regarding the website. Mr. Hunt stated that website is DroughtNV.gov and at this time you can leave comments but they would be creating a link so that people could sign up for notifications, suggesting the Forum members direct people to go there. The dates for the Summit and sector meeting will be listed on the website and a press release will be released. Also the hashtag is NVDrough for anyone interested in using it.

A full account of this agenda item was captured in an audio recording, available on the Forum's website.

10) Review of Action Items, Future Meetings and Agenda Items: (Discussion) Chairman Drozdoff stated they had covered this item in the previous agenda item, asking for any further discussion on agenda item 10.

Mr. Entsminger asked about meeting after the August meeting to finalize the Summit agenda. It was decided to block out August 26, 2015, in the morning as a tentative meeting time.

There was further discussion on what needs to be addressed at the sector meeting and how to help implement a plan. The full account of this agenda item was captured in an audio recording, available on the Forum's website.

11) Public Comment: (Discussion) Chairman Drozdoff asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to speak.

Mr. Clint Koble, State Director for Farm Services Agency, came forward to address the Forum. Mr. Koble stated that he has worked with Emergency Management and supported the Drought Forum. He also was wondering what the Forums target audience was and if it is farming he could help them with contacts. Also one of the things the Forum should consider is what information will people get from these meetings that they haven't already learned at other drought meetings. If the drought continues into 2016, what can the people expect from the government and what kind of assistance. He would also encourage the Forum to have sector meeting similar to how the Governor's Office had their agriculture meetings. The format created a lot of interaction between the panel and the attending public.

12) Adjournment: (Discussion) Mr. Entsminger made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Hettrick seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 11:37am.