

State Drought Task Force Meeting Summary and Agenda

As the agency that convenes the State Drought Task Force, the DNR provides meeting agendas and meeting summaries as approved by Task Force members.

Media and other interested parties are welcome to attend a brief Q and A with Task Force members from 4 - 4:30 p.m. at the August 5 meeting and at future meetings. This will give interested parties and reporters the opportunity to ask questions. [Use this Webex link](#). Along with your name, please include affiliation such as your media outlet, other group or organization, or interested individual.

Can't access the meeting? Browse to <https://minnesota.webex.com>, enter event number **146 356 8804** and enter the event password "**Drought2021**". The recommended internet browsers are Chrome, Firefox, Microsoft Edge or Safari. If you require special accommodations, please contact DNR Information Officer [Greg Husak](#).

Summary of July 21 meeting:

The Minnesota State Drought Task Force was convened by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on July 21, 2021. The primary purposes of the Task Force are information sharing, coordination and planning. The first Drought Task Force meeting included updates on current drought status, brief summaries from members about their respective organizations' drought-related responses, and planning for future Task Force meetings.

Per the Minnesota Statewide Drought Plan, the Minnesota DNR determines state drought phases and responses based on specific climatological and water data. Task Force members may share information and perspectives regarding these factors, but making phase determinations is not a role of the Task Force.

Task Force member responsibilities:

- Be knowledgeable of your agency/organization's actions in response to drought, and provide that information to the Task Force.
- Inform the Task Force of significant drought response challenges in your agency/organization.
- Coordinate drought responses with other Task Force members as appropriate.

Key topics discussed and actions being taken by Drought Task Force member organizations include:

- Monitoring weather, stream conditions

- Implementing water-reduction plans at utilities
- Educating industries and residents on water conservation methods
- Taking some preparedness/response actions
- Following their water monitoring activities closely and checking gage accuracy.
- Addressing heightened concern and preparations regarding livestock watering, foraging, haying and grazing.
- Monitoring crop conditions and soil moisture closely; some new tools are in place.
- Monitoring drought-related impacts on water quality, such as harmful algal blooms.
- Monitoring and responding to fire danger/wildfires. Many open burning bans are in effect.
- Monitoring potential impacts to buffalo herds and other managed wildlife.
- Communicating closely with local governments on drought preparedness and response.
- Increasing public information about drought, its impacts, things people can do.

State Drought Task Force members and supporting staff (marked with an asterisk) in attendance:

- Katie Smith, Minnesota DNR
- Randall Doneen, Minnesota DNR
- Pat Rivers, Minnesota DNR
- Luigi Romolo, Minnesota DNR
- Paul Lundgren, Minnesota DNR*
- Ann Pierce, Minnesota DNR*
- Mark Hauck, Minnesota DNR*
- Amanda Dirnberger, Minnesota DNR*
- Greg Husak, Minnesota DNR*
- Kim Flanagan, Prairie Island Indian Community
- Deb Dirlam, Lower Sioux Community
- Rick Wahlen, Eden Prairie community water supply manager and liaison to American Water Works Association
- James Fallon, Upper Midwest Water Science Center, USGS
- John Walker, Upper Midwest Water Science Center, USGS*
- Dave Jones, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA
- Dan Loftus, USDA
- Michelle Page, USDA
- Elizabeth Nelsen, USACE
- Teri Alberico, USACE*
- Shawn DeVinny, National Weather Service (substituting for colleague)
- Dan Hawblitzel, NOAA
- Ali Elhassan, Met Council
- Heidi Roop, U of M Climatology
- Mark Seeley, retired U of M Climatology (will be rotating off the team)
- Todd Biewen, MPCA

- Marni Karnowski, MNDOT
- Joe Kelly, DPS
- Jacob Beauregard, DPS*
- Riley Slimmer, DPS*
- Tom Hogan, MDH
- Jeff Berg, MDA
- Lucia Hunt, MDA
- Dave Weirens, BWSR
- Ben Benoit, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
- Keith Karnes, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe*
- Joshua Jones, Red Lake Band of Chippewa
- Dan DeSmet, Upper Sioux Community
- Brian Martinson, Association of MN Counties

The Statewide Drought Task Force will meet every other Thursday at 2 p.m. The next meeting is August 5th. The Task Force will be convened as long as needed while drought conditions persist.

Media and other interested parties are welcome to attend a brief Q and A with Task Force members from 4 - 4:30 p.m., as well as at future meetings. This will give interested parties and reporters the opportunity to ask questions.

Agenda for August 5 meeting:

Time: 2 p.m.

Opening: Katie Smith, DNR Ecological and Water Resources Director

Reminder of State Drought Task Force (DTF) purpose, mission and member roles

Drought Situation Review and Update: Luigi Romolo, State Climatologist

Drought status, stream flow, lake levels, fire danger, and crop report

Agency Actions: Task Force members

Each representative will give a brief update on drought related actions their agency or organization has been taking

Drought Issues Discussion: All

Given growing impacts, what issues are we anticipating that may need additional information?

Other Topics: All

- 1) Clarification of drought phase triggers
- 2) Community Water Supply Plans and Drought Management

Availability for Media/Interested Parties, 4:00-4:30

Meeting summary

Q&A

State Drought Task Force Members

Agency	Name	Position	Email address
MNDNR Ecological and Water Resources	Katie Smith	Division Director	katie.smith@state.mn.us
MNDNR Ecological and Water Resources	Luigi Romolo	State Climatologist	luigi.romolo@state.mn.us
MNDNR Wildlife	Pat Rivers	Deputy Director	pat.rivers@state.mn.us
MNDNR Forestry	William Glesener	Wildfire Operations Supervisor	william.glesener@state.mn.us
Board of Water and Soil Resources	Dave Weirens	Assistant Director	david.weirens@state.mn.us
MN Department of Agriculture	Lucia Hunt	Emergency Response Supervisor, Emergency Response	lucia.hunt@state.mn.us
MN Department of Agriculture	Jeff Berg	Water Policy Specialist	jeffrey.berg@state.mn.us
Department of Health	Tom Hogan	Director, Environmental Health	tom.hogan@state.mn.us
Department of Public Safety	Joe Kelly	Director, Homeland Security	joseph.kelly@state.mn.us
Department of Transportation	Marni Karnowski	Director, Environmental Services	Marni.Karnowski@state.mn.us
Environmental. Quality Board	Katie Pratt	Environmental Quality Board	katie.pratt@state.mn.us
Pollution Control Agency	Todd Biewen	Director, Environmental Analysis and Outcomes	todd.biewen@state.mn.us
University of Minnesota	Heidi Roop	Assistant Professor, Extension Specialist	hroop@umn.edu
Met Council	Ali Elhassan	Water Supply Planning manager	ali.elhassan@metc.state.mn.us
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Daniel Hawblitzel	Science and Operations Office	daniel.hawblitzel@noaa.gov
North Central River Forecast Center	Steve Buan	Hydrologist-in-charge	steve.buan@noaa.gov
US Army Corps of Engineers	Elizabeth Nelsen	Water Management Section Chief	elizabeth.a.nelsen@usace.army.mil
US Department of Agriculture	Michelle Page	Acting Executive Director, MN Farm Service Agency	michelle.page@usda.gov
US Department of Agriculture	Dan Loftus	NASS State Statistician	dan.loftus@usda.gov
US Department of Agriculture	Troy Daniell	State Conservationist, NRCS	troy.daniell@mn.usda.gov

US Geologic Survey	James Fallon	Data Chief, Minnesota portion of Upper Midwest Water Science Center	jfallon@usgs.gov
American Waterworks Association	Rick Wahlen	Chair, Water Utility Council, MN Section	rwahlen@edenprairie.org
Association of Minnesota Counties	Brian Martinson	Natural Resources Policy Analyst	bmartinson@mncounties.org
Hospitality Minnesota	Liz Rammer	President and CEO	liz@hospitalitymn.com
Ojibwe Community	Ben Benoit	Environmental Director	ben.benoit@llojibwe.net
Lower Sioux Community	Deb Dirlam	Environmental Program	deb.dirlam@lowersioux.com
Prairie Island Indian Community	Kim Flanagan	Emergency Management Coordinator	kim.flanagan@piic.org
White Earth Indian Community	Ed Snetsinger	Emergency Management	Ed.Snetsinger@whiteearth-nsn.gov
White Earth Indian Community	Will Bement	Water Resources Manager	Will.Bement@whiteearth-nsn.gov
Upper Sioux Community	Dan Desmet	Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and tribal representative to the AMEM (MN Assoc. of Emergency Managers)	dand@uppersiouxpolice-nsn.gov
Red Lake Band of Chippewa	Joshua Jones	Hydrologist	joshua.jones@redlakenation.org