



To: Colorado Water Conservation Board
 Attn: Ben Wade
 1313 Sherman St. Room 721
 Denver CO, 80203

From: Mat DeGraaf – Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District

Date: June 8, 2012

RE: The Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District's Drought Management Plan Update –
 PO#12000000079 – 25% Progress Report

The Pagosa Area Water and Sanitations District (PAWSD or the District) is updating its Drought Management Plan in accordance with Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) standards. The following is a synopsis of the work completed thus far, the obstacles encountered, and next steps to be taken. Tasks 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0 are discussed in detail below.

Tasks						TASK COMPLETE (Y/N)
Profile of Existing Water System						Y
Drought Mitigation and Response Planning						Y
Drought Planning and Water Conservation						Y
1.0 Stakeholders, Objectives and Principles						
1.1	Drought Planning Committee					Y
1.2	Objectives of the Drought Management Plan					
	Drought Committee Meeting #1					Y
	Drought Committee Meeting #2					N
2.0 Historical Drought Impact Assessment						
2.1	Historical Assessment of Drought, Available Supplies, and Demands					Y
2.2	Historical Drought Impact, Mitigation and Response Assessment					Y
3.0 Drought Vulnerability Assessment						
3.1	Water Supply Reliability and Drought Management Planning					Y
3.1a	Updated Firm Yield Report					N
3.2	Drought Impact Assessment					N

1.0 Stakeholders, Objectives, and Principles

A drought committee of stakeholders was formed consisting of five PAWSD staff members and one representative from the PAWSD Board of Directors (1.1). It was decided the committee would meet regularly to ensure the progress of the plan remained in keeping with District's principles and priorities. The approved Scope of Work called for only two stakeholder meetings facilitated by Courtney Pepler of AMEC. Instead, there will be 8 drought committee meetings occurring throughout the plan construction process that will be facilitated by AMEC. While the total number of meetings has increased, it is not anticipated that AMEC's overall contribution to the process will increase as well.

The committee has agreed that the Plan Objective should be an overarching statement of intent designed to encompass the spirit of the Plan. The Principles are to serve as individual pillars of support for the Objective (1.2).

PLAN OBJECTIVE – Have in place a drought management plan that thoroughly understands and addresses the needs of the community during times of water supply shortage while systematically enacting efforts to reduce demand so as to maximize current available water supplies.

PRINCIPLES OF SUPPORT-

- *The District's top priority is to ensure essential public water service to the community during any level of drought severity.*
- *Consideration of the actions taken to protect this first commitment will be such that they minimize adverse drought related impacts on public health and safety, economic vitality, and environmental resources.*
- *Provide a comprehensive yet flexible framework to guide PAWSD staff through drought mitigation and monitoring efforts, as well as on pre-scripted procedures to follow for communicating drought severity and implementing the actions required within the various drought stages.*
- *Effective communication of drought awareness, drought conditions, and response information to the community.*
- *Provide an efficient means to monitor and improve the effectiveness of the Plan over time.*
- *Provide sufficient contextual information in the Plan so as to convey the importance of drought preparedness and management to the public and why the actions set forth in this Plan are necessary to reduce drought-related impacts and ensure the health and safety of the community.*

2.0 Historical Drought Impact Assessment

This task proved somewhat difficult due to limited records and staff recollections of the drought of 2002. However, historic data was gathered and compiled showing stream flow, precipitation, and reservoir levels for the years preceding and following 2002 (2.1). Additionally, archived minutes from the PAWSD Board of Director's meetings during this time helped to fill the gaps and provide a clearer picture of the impacts, mitigation efforts, and response to the drought (2.2).

3.0 Drought Vulnerability Assessment

In 2011 the PAWSD Board of Directors enacted policy changes that drastically affected the current water supply reliably and drought vulnerability estimates. Certain water reliability data such as the District's existing water rights, historic source water stream flows, and water plant production records have allowed for water supply reliability efforts to proceed (3.1).

PAWSD has contracted Steve Harris of Harris Water Engineering to update the District's Firm Yield report to reflect the newly established water supply policy (3.1a). This process is taking longer than expected due to numerous variables that must be addressed in turn. It is expected that the final firm yield report will be complete by the end of June, 2012. Task 3.0, specifically subtasks 3.1a and 3.2, will be completed once the updated firm yield has been submitted.

The next steps to be taken involve identifying the drought mitigation and response strategies to be employed by the District, the application of the findings of the updated firm yield report to establish drought stages, trigger points, and response targets, and development of a staged drought response program.

Additional time, resources, and personnel beyond the submitted scope of work have been required for some tasks and are anticipated for tasks to come. PAWSD is tracking the additional work load and will submit a revised scope of work detailing the actual time spent on each task with their final report. It is hoped this will assist future drought management planners in developing an accurate scope of work.

The timeline submitted to CWCB is unrealistic in the date set for submission of the final plan. The timeline states that the 95% progress report will be submitted by August 22, 2012 with the final plan to be submitted 28 days later on September 19, 2012. However, the application also states that *"The review period shall last 60 days from the date at which the draft Plan is made publically available."* Since the draft plan won't be made publically available late August 2012, PAWSD would like to propose that the period for public comment be shortened to 30 days and the new deadline for submission of the final plan be moved to October 3, 2012.

Respectfully,

Mat deGraaf
Water Conservation Coordinator
Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District
970-731-7623
mat@pawsd.org

Estimated Timeline of Progress toward completion of the PAWSD Drought Management Plan

