

Meeting Summary

Plumas County Drought Resilience Plan

Public Meeting #2: Overview of Plumas County Drought Resilience Plan & Short-Term Response Actions

Date/Time: December 5, 2024 / 6:00-7:30 pm
Place: Almanor Recreation Center
451 Meadowbrook Loop, Chester, CA 96020
Zoom Meeting

Meeting Purpose: Share updates on revisions to the Plumas County Drought Resilience Plan (DRP) risk assessment based on feedback received from Public Meeting #1 and provide an overview of the role of short-term actions and their implementation.

Public Outreach Conducted

The County conducted the following outreach prior to this public meeting:

- Posted information on DRP webpage on the County's website and posted public meeting notice information
- Shared information with contacts on the Interested Parties listserv
- Shared information with state small water systems contacts in the County
- Sent public notices through the County News Flash System - News and Public Notice listserv
- Posted notices in the Plumas County Courthouse lobby bulletin board
- Shared the public notice in the Plumas Sun local newspaper
- Posted on the County Emergency Services Facebook Page
- Shared with Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District
- Shared the announcement with Plumas Corporation

Notes: The following are notes and comments obtained during the meeting:

Overview of Plumas County Drought Resilience Plan & the County Drought Task Force

- The County's DRP and Drought Task Force follow Senate Bill 552 legislation
 - The County is responsible for establishing a Drought Task Force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems (SSWS) and domestic wells within the country's jurisdiction
 - The County will develop a DRP which includes potential drought and water shortage risks and proposed short-term actions and long-term strategies to help the County respond to future water shortages.
- The Plumas County Drought Task Force members include:
 - Rob Thorman, Drought Task Force Facilitator, Director, Department of Public Works
 - Rob Robinette, Director, Department of Environmental Health
 - Lori Pini, Manager, Office of Environmental Services
 - Willo Viera, Agricultural Commissioner
- The Drought Task Force is responsible for implementing the Communications & Engagement Framework. The Communications & Engagement Framework is intended to:
 - Define the roles and responsibilities of Plumas County Public Works Department, the Task Force, and Interested Parties in the development of the DRP

- Define the method(s) and schedule for informing and engaging Interested Parties about the development and adoption of the DRP

Evaluating Water Shortage Risks: Revised Risk Assessment

The facilitator reviewed risk assessment results and revisions made based on feedback from Public Meeting #1, including:

- Adjust "Dixie Valley" region vulnerability list to also include "seasonal population."
- Adjust "Bucks Lake/La Porte" region to include Meadow Valley, which also experiences seasonal dry wells.
- Adjust "Feather River Canyon from including Greenville to Quincy" region to include Tobin.
- Add mention of unhoused population around Quincy area.
- Add Cromberg/Sloat as region with water shortage vulnerability.

| Group | Regions with Water Shortage Vulnerability and Domestic Wells/SSWSs | Vulnerability Drivers | Social Vulnerability |
|-------|--|---|----------------------|
| A | Lake Davis and Southwest of Portola (Iron Horse) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water quality and water supply issues• Dry well susceptibility in fractured rock area• Wildfire hazard | Medium/High |
| B | Warner Valley and East of Lake Almanor | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wildfire hazard• Fractured rock area• Multiple dry years | Low/Medium |
| C | Dixie Valley and Frenchman Lake | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water supply – no surface water supply• Wildfire risk• Dry well susceptibility in fractured rock areas• Lacking key infrastructure (e.g., electricity/power)• Seasonal population | Medium |
| D | Bucks Lake/La Porte/Meadow Valley | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dry well susceptibility in fractured rock area• Seasonal population (small population in the winter, larger population in the summer) | Low/Medium |
| E | Feather River Canyon from Greenville to Quincy, Tobin | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wildfire hazard• Fractured rock area• Multiple dry years• Water quality and water supply issues• Unhoused population | Medium/High |
| F | Cromberg/Sloat | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High density of domestic wells• High concentration of SSWSs and LSWSs• Multiple dry years• Wildfire hazard | Medium |

The facilitator followed up on questions received during Public Meeting #1 regarding the Water Quality Indicator maps presented and provided clarification that the indicator displays projected water quality risk based on nearby wells at similar depth.

Overview of Short-Term Response Actions

The facilitator provided an overview of short-term response actions, including proposed water shortage stages and associated triggers/indicators, and draft response actions.

The Task Force will evaluate the following indicators and determine whether stages and corresponding short-term response actions should be initiated:

- Groundwater Sustainability Agency-Reported Groundwater Level decline
- Dry well reports
- Consecutive dry years
- Local or State Emergency Proclamation or declaration due to wildfire, earthquake, contamination, landslide, or other natural disaster

A community member additionally suggested that water quality data be considered as an additional trigger to determine water shortage stages.

Emergency Water Supplies

- The group noted that bottled water has a short life span and cannot be kept in storage long-term.
- It was suggested that the County could consider using tractor trailer rigs and designate them specifically in the case of a water shortage event and haul the water to distribution centers at fire stations.
- The group expressed interest in trying to identify who donated water during the Dixie Fire.
- The County noted that in previous droughts the region experienced curtailment restrictions by the State to provide water supplies to other parts of the state. This increased conservation efforts locally.

Mutual Aid Agreements

- A community member noted that fire districts may be stressed due to high demands associated with population changes. It was also noted that many fire districts rely on volunteers, who may be tapped during water shortage events.
- The group highlighted the importance of setting up agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to deploy these actions in advance of a water shortage event. In particular, it was noted that establishing MOUs with large water providers is a high priority to determine the financial and legal agreements in advance of water shortage events.

Emergency Distribution Plan

- The group suggested communication protocols to utilize during an emergency:
 - Sandwich boards outside local grocery stores
 - Plumas Sun newspaper
 - Susanville JDX radio station and Quincy radio station
 - Emergency radio channels maintained by local fire departments during emergencies
 - Information posted at the US Post Office
- Emergency Distribution Locations
 - The group discussed potentially adding a focus region in the eastern end of the County, near Sierra Valley, but it was noted that Group C Dixie Valley and Frenchman Lake extends into the Sierra Valley.

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| Group | Regions with Water Shortage Vulnerability and Domestic Wells/SSWSs | Potential Emergency Water Supplies Types Available | Distribution Locations | Organizations Required for Distribution |
|-------|--|---|---|--|
| A | Lake Davis and Southwest of Portola (Iron Horse) | Bottled water distribution, Hauled water from City of Portola* | East Plumas Rural, Beckwourth Peak, and Graeagle Fire Protection Districts | Fire Protection District, County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross |
| B | Warner Valley and East of Lake Almanor | Bottled water distribution | Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District, Chester Public Utilities District | Fire Protection District, Public Utilities District, County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross |
| C | Dixie Valley and Frenchman Lake | Bottled water distribution | Frenchman Lake Work Center or Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District | Frenchman Lake Work Center, Fire Protection District, County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross |
| D | Bucks Lake/La Porte/Meadow Valley | Bottled water distribution, Hauled water from Town of La Porte or La Porte Pines County Club* | Bucks Lake and Meadow Valley Fire Protection District, La Porte General Store | Fire Protection District, County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross, La Porte General Store |
| E | Feather River Canyon from Greenville to Quincy, Tobin | Bottled water distribution | Quincy, Meadow Valley, Indian Valley Fire Protection District, US Forest Service campgrounds (e.g., Caribou Canyon) | Fire Protection District, County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross, US Forest Service |
| F | Cromberg/Sloat | Bottled water distribution | Long Valley, Greenhorn Creek, and Plumas Eureka Fire Protection Districts | Fire Protection District, County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross |

* County currently does not currently have access to licensed water hauler. Licensed water hauling would need to be in place to provide hauled water.

Next Steps & How to Get Involved

- [Join the email listserv](#) to receive email updates on the Plumas County DRP!
- Attend an upcoming public meeting
 - **Meeting 3 – Winter 2024/25:** The third meeting will review the County's draft long-term mitigation strategies to help reduce the risk of impacts from future droughts or water shortages
 - **Meeting 4 – Winter/Spring 2025:** The final meeting will include a presentation of the Draft Plumas County DRP including plan implementation considerations