



## LDTAC Meeting #3 Summary

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**Date:** 3 September 2025  
1:30 p.m PST

**Meeting at:** Civic Center, Dana Room  
1290 Tavern Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA  
*and*  
CAO Conference Room - Annex 1  
74 N. School Street, Bridgeport, CA  
*online at*  
<https://monocounty.zoom.us/j/83636052287?pwd=VMS6sqoV4xVlwK0Y9rYptNoNk7cxRf.1>

**Project:** Mono County Drought Resilience Plan

### Subject/Purpose

The purpose of the meeting is to update the Land Development Technical Advisory Committee (LDTAC) on the status of the development of the Mono County Drought Resilience Plan, summarize the findings from the risk assessment, discuss activation triggers for response actions, and outline proposed short-term response actions and long-term response mitigation strategies.

### Attendees:

Jeff Brislawn (WSP USA)	Bridgeport CAO Conference Room
Juliana Prosperi (WSP USA)	Dana Room
Melissa Baum (WSP USA)	Kelly Karl (Mono County)
John Sciacca (WSP USA)	Sean Robison (Mono County)
Erin Bauer (Mono County)	Nick Criss (Mono County)
Brent Calloway (Mono County)	Olya Oegorov (Mono County)
Mono County Community Development Department	

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### 1. Drought Resilience Plan Development Process Update

- The agenda item for the Drought Resilience Task Force (DRTF) meeting on the Drought Resilience Plan (DRP) began at 1:45pm.
- WSP (Juliana) opened the meeting by explaining the purpose of the meeting is to gather feedback from the LDTAC and DRTF on what short-term and long-term actions the Mono County Core Planning Team should consider including in the DRP. Juliana stated today's meeting was the third meeting of a series of three drought resiliency planning meetings. In-person



participants received four handouts prior to the meeting, which included the *Drought Vulnerability Assessment Summary Handout*, *Short-term Response Actions Matrix Handout*, *Long-Term Mitigation Actions Matrix Handout*, and the *Mitigation Action Worksheet Handout*.

- WSP (Juliana) introduced **Slido.com** and explained there are two slido polls into the presentation and workshop materials to gather input and feedback on short-term response and long-term mitigation actions.
- Participants were asked to join the polling exercise at **#MonoDRP**.
- WSP (Juliana) briefly reviewed the DRP development process and pointed out that the Mono County Core Planning Team was about half-way through the planning process and beginning to identify short-term response and long-term mitigation strategies. Next, WSP outlined the two main stakeholder groups: LDTAC (DRTF) and the Stakeholder Group that the County has invited to all LDTAC meetings. The Stakeholder Group consists of SSWS, disadvantaged communities, County agencies, Tribes, and agricultural, business, and environmental groups.
- Engagement activities have included the development of a County DRP Webpage, distribution of media announcements and flyers (i.e., Save the Date flyers), and LDTAC meetings (which are open to the public). Future engagement activities will include a public workshop.
- WSP (Juliana) shared the County DRP Webpage and where stakeholders can go to sign up for email and LDTAC meeting updates.

## 2. Risk and Vulnerability Summary

- WSP (Melissa) summarized the drought and water shortage risk assessment preliminary findings. Highlights included a summary on the 6 SSWS in Mono County and the approximate 861 domestic wells. Many are concentrated in Antelope Valley and Long Valley.
- WSP (Melissa) discussed the physical indicators used when drafting the vulnerability assessment. She stated factors indicated by red “X” marks were considered but found not to be relevant in the analysis, such as sea level rise and subsidence. The remaining 11 indicators included temperature shift, wildfire risk, below average precipitation, multiple dry years, fractured rock area, current wildfire risk, groundwater quality risk, declining groundwater levels, irrigated agriculture, household outages, and shallow domestic wells and SSWS.
- WSP (Melissa) summarized the risk assessment based on state-level datasets and how Mono County compares in terms of drought risk to the rest of the State. There were three other columns that contained scaled information that highlight areas in Mono County at risk locally based on groundwater supply failure, water quality degradation, and wildfire risk. All the



information was organized by planning area to illustrate what areas had the most wells and most risk. Antelope Valley, Long Valley, and Chalfant Valley had the highest concentration of wells with Antelope Valley and Benton Valley with the highest risk (dark red colors). WSP also referred the LDTAC to review the *Drought Vulnerability Summary Handout*.

- WSP (Melissa) explained that once the vulnerabilities are identified, the County could decide if they want to define drought levels, such as normal, dry, moderate, and severe. She explained each level must have clear, measurable triggers to ensure consistency in when actions are taken.
- The next step is identifying immediate or short-term responses when a drought trigger is reached. This can include actions like conservation outreach, water use restrictions, and requesting state aid. The County can then plan for long-term strategies that build resilience over time. This may involve infrastructure improvements, system consolidation, water storage, or diversifying water supply options to reduce reliance on vulnerable sources.

### **3. Activation Triggers For Response Actions**

- WSP (Melissa) shared recommendations and example drought levels (Stages 0-3) and potential triggers that could apply to Mono County. She also shared drought level triggers and suggested trigger criteria, such as snow water equivalent (SWE), streamflow/% of average seasonal flow, reservoir/lake levels, annual precipitation/% of averages, and US Drought Monitor designations.
- The number of drought levels and definitions shared were suggestions, but the Mono County Core Planning Team requested input. Feedback included:
  - Trigger levels seem reasonable and make sense; the County is highly resilient to drought and water shortages.
  - Some triggers could be less stringent; the County is comfortable with 70-90% of mean streamflow/snowpack levels (i.e., SWE).
  - The County could go with fewer levels (3 stages rather than 4 stages)
  - Consider including the percentage of water pumped from groundwater as an indicator (if that data becomes available; currently there is no way to determine the threshold of groundwater levels).
  - Could monitor Mammoth Community Water District's (MCWD) drought stages as a potential benchmark for local conditions.
  - Reservoir/lake levels may be excluded, as they are unrelated to drinking water supply and fluctuate for other reasons.
- Jeff Brislawn (WSP) reminded the group the activation triggers are meant to be recommendations but typically sees them align with the US Drought Monitor designations or water districts or public utility district criteria.



#### 4. Short-Term Response Actions

- WSP (Melissa) reviewed the County's obligations under SB 552 and outlined the limitations of response actions within the jurisdiction authority of the County.
- WSP (Melissa) reminded the LDTAC that while the primary objectives of the DRP are to facilitate structured drought preparedness and support domestic wells and SSWS, there are clear limitations to what it can do. For example, the County isn't a water supplier, so it doesn't operate systems or provide water directly. The County doesn't have an annual budget for supply reliability, and SB 552 doesn't provide additional funding sources. This makes the County dependent on collaboration with local water providers, agencies, and community groups to increase resilience.
- Within these constraints, the County can contribute significantly through the following capacity areas:
  - Monitoring & Tracking drought conditions and water system vulnerabilities.
  - Emergency Response, especially when households or small systems experience acute shortages.
  - Community Outreach to raise awareness and encourage conservation.
  - Partnerships & Coordination with water suppliers, state agencies, and community organizations.
  - Funding & Resources, helping to secure grants and technical assistance.
  - Plans & Ordinances that support long-term resilience through land use and policy tools.
- WSP (Melissa) emphasized the DRP must include
  - Discussion of consolidations of existing water systems and domestic wells.
  - Domestic well mitigation programs.
  - Emergency and interim drinking water solutions.
  - An analysis of the steps needed to implement the plan.
  - Analysis of funding sources at the local, state, and federal level.
- After reviewing the purpose of and examples of short-term response actions (monitoring, emergency potable water supply, planning activities, water conservation, outreach and education), WSP (Jeff) initiated the first Slido poll, "Please provide examples of short-term response actions that you think would be efficient in the county." Feedback received was:



- Unfortunately, there are very few options. Once standard restrictions prove inadequate (no watering landscaping, etc.), the only option is to import water.
- WSP (Jeff) built upon that feedback asking, “What are options for importing water?” Responses received included:
  - Trucking water would require equipment and a source; given geography, importing is challenging. In severe droughts, Mono County might export water to other areas of the state instead.
  - A nearby springs ranch in Benton supplies Crystal Geysers and could be an option.
- Participants noted the County could support increased monitoring wells in the Tri-Valley area and WSP (Jeff) inquired whether existing monitoring wells in this area is an indicator there are water shortage issues (e.g., declining water levels). Mono County (Brent) indicated that US Fish and Wildlife Service installed the monitoring wells in this area. He does not know if the County has a dry well monitoring system.
- Another LDTAC participant asked about strategic snow plowing and insulating areas that need to be recharged.
- WSP (Jeff) expanded on the conversation, asking what options exist if there is a local shortage that affects only a few connections. Feedback received included:
  - County has water tenders for non-potable uses.
  - Potential potable water sources include Crystal Geysers spring.
  - Questions raised on regulating water leaving the County.
  - Other options: well drilling/relocation, temporary tanks, and expedited permits

## 5. Long-Term Mitigation Strategies

- WSP (Jeff) reviewed the purpose of and examples of long-term mitigation actions, which included four main categories of mitigation types: planning projects, alternative supply and water reuse, water efficiency and demand management, and outreach and education.
- Specific example projects included a groundwater well monitoring tracking system, dedicated water filing stations, voluntary water conservation program, and regional groundwater level monitoring communication channel/outreach program.
- WSP (Juliana) introduced the second Slido poll, “Please provide examples of long-term mitigation actions you think would be efficient in the County.” Responses to the poll and the ensuing discussion included:
  - Increasing monitoring wells
  - Recycle runoff, especially runoff into roads etc.,



- Find ways to capture water that once fell as snow & stored itself as snow.
- We have increased monitoring in the Tri-Valley Using the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) Program (tracks seasonal and long-term groundwater elevation trends in groundwater basins), which is a good start, can expand network
- Capturing snowwater; relocate to refill aquifers, insulating blankets to keep longer
  - Challenge: snow is often inaccessible; could be feasible in plowed/managed areas (e.g., parking lots).
- Evaluate feasibility of converting 25-gallon emergency fire water supplies (tanks) for potable use (treatment, code adjustments); how can this non-potable water be used as potable source (treatment).
- Develop emergency interties for unconnected systems (e.g., Crowley, Mountain Meadows Mutual, Hilton Creek Community Service District [CSD]).
- Firefighting needs: Walker lacks hydrants but is near a river—important to assess drought impacts on surface water availability.
- Tourism and population: Increased visitation poses a bigger risk than declining population; group briefly discussed tourism/visitation is high in both winter and summer months when water demand increases.
- Landscaping is the largest water use; discussion on whether reduced usage would increase exploration.
- Domestic wells:
  - Short-term: monitor for contamination.
  - Long-term: ensure access to purification systems and regular testing of high-risk areas
- Promote greywater reuse and rainwater harvesting; County could provide prescriptive designs for graywater use.
- WSP (Jeff) asked about the potential for aquifer recharge projects and Mono County (Brent) stated that there were not such projects but that it was a topic when the Department of Water and Power (DWP) no longer irrigated Long Valley. There are also property right implications. It could be feasible in Hammil Valley where there is a large ranch/single owner.
- Other long-term mitigation strategies discussed included:
  - Flood-managed aquifer recharge opportunities:
    - Hammil Valley alluvial fans (Zach Ranch example: surface rights used for irrigation instead of pumping).
    - Antelope Valley (different surface rights challenges).



- Wildfire Risk during drought and related mitigation projects included:
  - Protect built assets that include or support SSWS or domestic wells.
  - Implement fuels reduction projects near SSWS or domestic wells.
  - Manage tree mortality through hazard tree removal and explore biomass plant options.

## 6. Group Discussion: Mitigation Action Worksheet

- WSP introduced the four handouts distributed to the LDTAC participants at the beginning of the meeting: *Drought Vulnerability Assessment Summary Handout*, *Short-term Response Actions Matrix Handout*, *Long-Term Mitigation Actions Matrix Handout*, and the *Mitigation Action Worksheet Handout*.
- WSP and the Mono County Core Planning Team asked LDTAC participants to spend 20 minutes during the meeting to review the handouts and fill out the worksheet focused on the selection of both short-term response and long-term mitigation actions best suited for Mono County.
- During this time, WSP and the Mono County Core Planning Team collected concurrent input as part of the two slide poll questions and helped facilitate discussions on the feasibility of various short-term and long-term actions.
- At the end of the 20 minute group activity, WSP asked the Mono County staff to collect completed worksheets.
- The Mono County Core Planning Team requested that LDTAC participants that wanted to still work on the worksheet to share the handout materials with their respective departments and return the Mitigation Action Worksheet to WSP and/or Erin Bauer by September 19<sup>th</sup>.

## 7. Schedule & Next Steps

- WSP provided a brief review of the organization of the plan and the remaining chapters that need to be drafted based on today's meeting input.
- The next workshop will be a public workshop held in mid/late October.
- WSP will be drafting the remaining sections of the plan; WSP plans to distribute the Draft Risk and Vulnerability Assessment to the LDTAC and Stakeholder Group by Wednesday September 10<sup>th</sup> for feedback.

## 8. Questions

- There were no additional questions and the meeting adjourned at 3:24 PM.