

Flash Drought Workshop Breakout #2

Goals of Scenario exercise:

- Better understand actions and communications during the rapid onset and intensification of drought timeframe (not focusing on more prolonged and extreme drought), to enhance regional awareness and coordination.

For each scenario:

- Describe your role and/actions/decisions:
 - Jobs
 - Pains
 - Gains
- Identify communication needs (what to communicate, to whom, from whom, who do you coordinate with on communication, etc.)
- Identify key sources of available information to inform those communications

Discussion questions after the exercise

- What did we learn from this exercise?
- At what point do you think these scenarios are flash drought? When is a flash drought not a flash drought anymore (when does the event shift in your mind from a short/sharp event and when do you consider this as a potentially prolonged drought event)?
- When does using the term 'flash drought' make sense and when doesn't it?
- Do we have appropriate guidance on communications around flash drought? If not, what will that require?

General Scenario: [Images](#)

- Antecedent conditions: Average precipitation through winter. Cool & wet-ish (60th percentile rainfall) spring.
- **Scenario 1: End of July**
 - USDM: D0 (abnormally dry) first showed up in the region in mid-July
 - Temperatures and Ppt: Early- to mid-summer experienced higher than normal temperatures, below normal precipitation,
 - Impacts Observed: Some below-normal streamflow rates; loss in soil moisture
 - Forecast/Outlook: The seasonal outlook for summer shows equal chances of above or below normal temperatures and precipitation
- **Scenario 2: Early August**
 - USDM: D0 (abnormally dry) to D1 (moderate) drought is present over most of the region. D1 was just introduced in some parts at the last USDM update.
 - Temperatures and Ppt: Temperatures are typical for the first week of August. A few isolated thunderstorms brought patchy rain to the region, most places missed out and have not had rain in two weeks.
 - Impacts Observed: Streamflow rates continue to be below-normal
 - Forecast/Outlook: August 1st. A record-setting heatwave is forecast (8-10 day window) for your region!
- **Scenario 3: Mid to Late August**
 - USDM: From the first week of August to the second week, D1 expanded to cover most of the region. From the second week to the third week D2 was introduced in the region.
 - Temperatures and Ppt: August 8-20 heat wave. Daily maximum temperatures are above the previous record every day from August 8th through 20th. ET rates are around triple the long-term average average. No precipitation.
 - Impacts Observed: High fire danger on windier days.
 - Forecast/Outlook: Seasonal forecast for September through November is released on the third Thursday in August. It shows increased odds of low precipitation and high temperatures for the season.
- **Wrap-up:**
 - Fall temperature forecast verifies as being very much above normal, but not a new record. Precipitation was a little below the long-term average. What are you thinking about for winter?