



Dry ← Wet → Normal ← Wet

### **A Guide to Monitoring your Local Conditions**





REPORTING LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS AT YOUR LOCATION

Welcome to our short tutorial on "Condition Monitoring" This short slide show will help you understand the difference between the varying conditions of your landscape . . . wet, normal, dry and in-between. It will also discuss their impacts. Finally we will show how to file a "condition report" via the CoCoRaHS Website.



## CONDITION MONITORING

To understand the impacts of drought on plants, animals, and people, it is very helpful to monitor conditions regularly, whether the weather is wet or dry. This allows us to see how a drought year differs from a normal year, and we learn how different plants, animals and people respond to the onset, intensification, and recovery of drought.

Regular condition monitoring can also help identify expected seasonal changes versus changes caused by unseasonably wet or dry conditions.

This type of monitoring can also help to identify long-term or cumulative effects of drought.

## CONNECTING WEATHER AND CLIMATE WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

Your knowledge about the local environment and how weather influences it can reveal much more than can be learned from recording daily rainfall alone.





## GUIDANCE ON CHANGING CONDITIONS

Changing conditions - the following slides will talk about seven different, but somewhat similar categories over the range of dry, normal and wet, while giving you guidance on how to distinguish between each category. Local conditions will change from wetter to drier, or drier to wetter, with varying amounts of rain or snowfall, or as seasons change. A lack of rainfall may lead to drier conditions more quickly in warmer summer months. In the case of an extreme event such as a hurricane or tropical storm, conditions may transition more quickly (e.g., moderately dry to severely wet).



## SEVEN CATEGORIES

### MILDLY DRY MODERATELY DRY SEVERELY DRY NEAR NORMAL

## MILDLY WET MODERATELY WET SEVERELY WET



## DRY CONDITIONS MILDLY DRY MODERATELY DRY SEVERELY DRY





# MILDLY DRY

Growth may have slowed for plants, crops or pastures.

Local plants, pastures, or crops may have not fully recovered if conditions are changing from drier to wetter.

Precipitation or water deficits may be present.







# MODERATELY DRY

Plants may be brown due to dry conditions.

Voluntary water use restrictions may be in place.

Water shortages may be present.

water levels may be low.

Streams, reservoirs, or well

Plants, crops, or pastures may be stressed.







Soil is dry.



# SEVERELY DRY

Ponds, lakes, steams and wells may be nearly empty or dry.

Mandatory water restrictions may be in place.



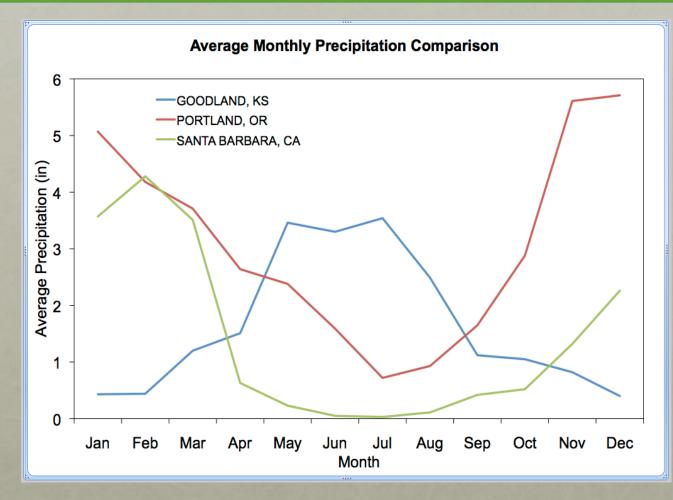
Crop or pasture losses may be experienced.

Water shortages or water emergencies are present or possible.





## IS THIS DROUGHT?



Several regions across the country go through "normal dry periods" each year. This is not considered drought. Drought will look different depending on the location and region of the country.

## NEAR NORMAL CONDITIONS

# NEAR NORMAL

# Observed conditions are expected for this time of year.







## WET CONDITIONS MILDLY WET MODERATELY WET SEVERELY WET







# MILDLY WET

Local plants, crops, or pastures are healthy, recovering from dry conditions or draining from wet conditions.

Soil moisture is above normal.





# MODERATELY WET

Local plants, crops, or pastures are healthy and lush.

Standing water may be present in low areas and ditches.

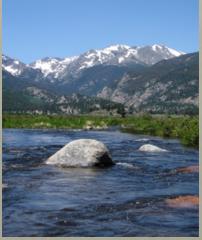
Water bodies may be slightly more full than normal.

The ground is partially saturated with water.



Soil is very damp.







Water bodies are very elevated.

Flooding may be present, leading to plant, crop, or pasture damage. Standing water is severe and abundant.

## Soil is wet.

Ground is completely saturated with water.



## TIME TO FILE A REPORT

### It's very easy to do . . . Just observe, then report!





#### Description Please provide a description of how dry, normal or wet conditions are affecting you your livelihood, your activities, etc. Report Categories Please check at least one report category. If you check a category, please provide supporting information in the description. More information on condition monitoring categories. General Awareness Agriculture Business And Industry Energy Fire Plants And Wildlife Relief Response Society And Public Health Tourism And Recreation Water Supply And Quality Report

Condition Monitoring Report Form

training slide show for more information. \* indicates required field

Moderately

Dry

Condition Scale Bar More information on the scale bar

Mildly

Dry

Condition monitoring reports are submitted on a regular (weekly, biweekly, monthly) basis to share information about the effects of local precipitation on the environment and society. By submitting reports on a regular basis, you create a baseline to see change through time, such as seasonal differences or changes caused by more or less precipitation. Please refer to the Condition Monitoring

Near No

Station Number : SC-RC-51 Station Name : Columbia 6.6 SE

Report Date 4/22/2016 🝨

Severely

Dry

Submit Data

Clear Scale Bar

Moderately

Wet

Submit Data Reset

Mildh

Wet

Reset

Severely

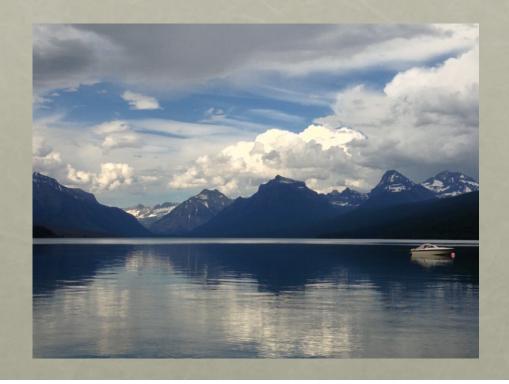
Wet

### Observe

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I FILE A CONDITION MONITORING REPORT?

### **Great Question!**

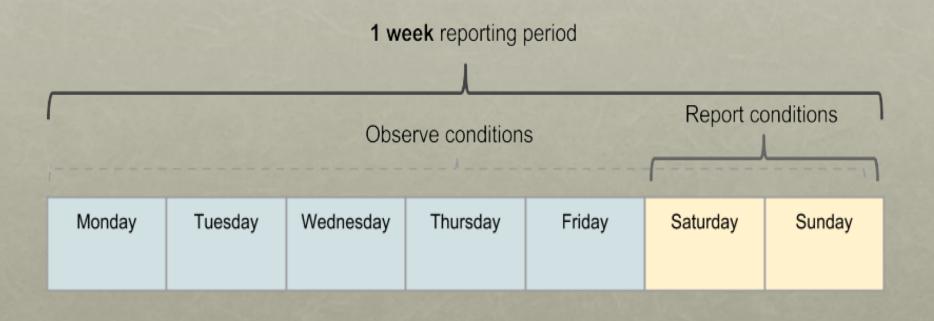
Weekly or as conditions change ... It's up to you, but the more often you report, the better picture we'll get of your landscape's conditions. To be really helpful (see next slide) ...





## A HELPFUL REPORTING SUGGESTION

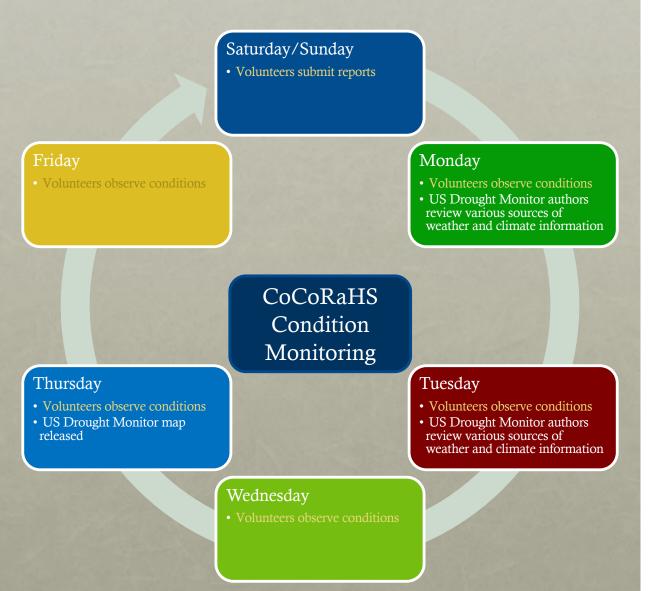
One idea to improve reporting consistency is to ask that you report conditions for a one week reporting period. In doing so you would submit reports on either Saturday or Sunday.



# WHY SUBMIT REPORTS ON SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS ?

 This will ensure that up-todate information is available to US Drought Monitor authors, who review the information at the beginning of week in order to publish the Drought Monitor map on Thursdays.

 Having all observers submit condition monitoring reports on a weekly basis will also make condition reports more reliable and timely, thus more useful in scientific research.



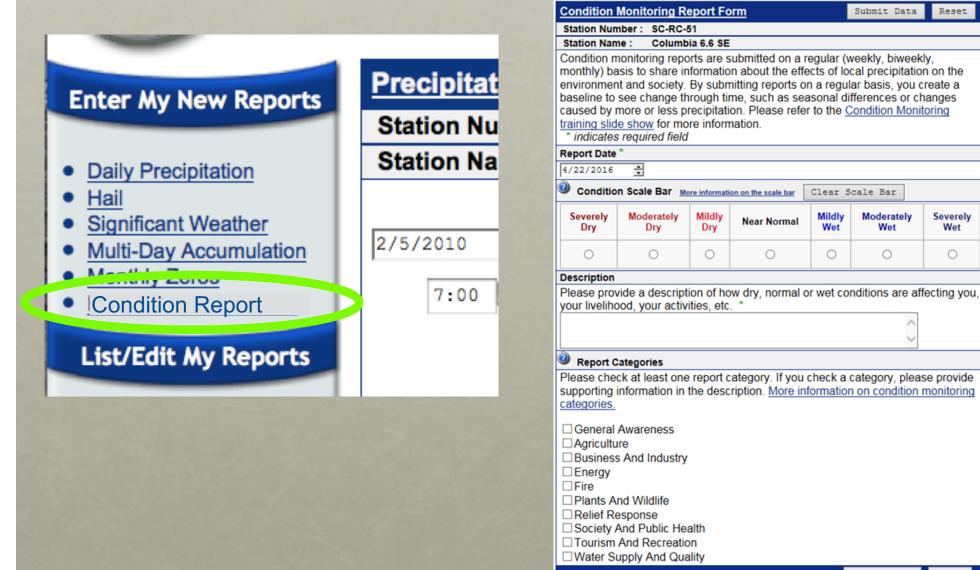
## HOW DO I FILE A "CONDITION MONITORING REPORT" ?

#### First click on "My Data" from the menu at the top of the CoCoRaHS Web page





## CHOOSE "CONDITION REPORT" FROM THE "ENTER MY NEW REPORTS" PANEL



Reset

Wet

0

## CONDITION MONITORING REPORT FORM

Condition	Monitoring R	eport Fo	<u>orm</u>		Submit Data	Reset
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4/22/2016	÷					
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## ENTER REPORT DATE

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Report C	ategories					
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Agriculture

### SELECT FROM THE CONDITION MONITORING SCALE BAR

#### **Condition Monitoring Report Form**

Submit Data Reset

Station Number : SC-RC-51

Station Name : Columbia 6.6 SE

Condition monitoring reports are submitted on a regular (weekly, biweekly, monthly) basis to share information about the effects of local precipitation on the environment and society. By submitting reports on a regular basis, you create a baseline to see change through time, such as seasonal differences or changes caused by more or less precipitation. Please refer to the <u>Condition Monitoring training slide show</u> for more information.

\* indicates required field

#### Report Date \* 4/22/2016 -Condition Scale Bar More information on the scale bar Clear Scale Bar Severely Moderately Moderately Mildly Mildly Severely Near Normal Dry Wet Wet Dry Dry 0 0 0 0 0 Description

Please provide a description of hew dry, normal or wet conditions are affecting you, your livelihood, your activities, etc. \*

#### Report Categories

Please check at least one report category. If you check a category, please provide supporting information in the description. <u>More information on condition monitoring</u> <u>categories</u>.

General Awareness
Agriculture

The condition scale bar is used to provide a standardized form of condition reporting. You can select from one of the seven categories representing a range of dry, wet, or normal conditions.

There is a link to additional guidance to help you select from the different categories.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE RAIN, HAIL & SNOW NETWORK 🕒 🗲 🔚 🎬

"Because every drop counts"

Home | Countries | States | View Data | Maps

My Data | My Account | Admin | Logout

#### Condition Monitoring Scale Bar

#### Main Menu

- Home
- About Us
- Join CoCoRaHS

CoCoRaHS

- Contact Us
- Donate

#### Resources

- FAQ / Help
- Education
- Training Slide-Shows
- Videos
- Drought Impacts
- Evapotranspiration
- Volunteer Coordinators
- Hail Pad Distribution/Drop-off
- Help Needed
- Printable Forms

#### The Catch

- Message of the Day
- Publications
- CoCoRaHS Blog
- Web Groups
- State Newsletters
- Master Gardener Guide
- State Climate Series
- March Madness
- WxTalk Webinars

The Condition Monitoring Scale Bar provides a standardized form of condition reporting to allow for comparison between CoCoRaHS stations and to see change over time. Select the current status of conditions in your area from one of the 7 categories representing a range of dry, normal, or wet conditions. Local conditions will change from wetter to drier, or drier to wetter, with varying amounts of rain or snowfall, or as seasons change. A lack of rainfall may lead to drier conditions more quickly in warmer summer months. In the case of an extreme event such as a hurricane or tropical storm, conditions may transition more quickly (e.g., moderately dry to severely wet).

The guidance below is intended to help you distinguish between the different wet and dry categories. It was developed for an ongoing Drought Early Warning project in North and South Carolina supported by the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS). Varying levels of wetness and dryness in other parts of the country (e.g., the arid Southwest) may not be well represented by the guidance provided below. CoCoRaHS observers outside of the Carolinas are encouraged to utilize the scale bar, selecting categories that best represent conditions in your part of the country. Users who review the reports you submit will also see the location of your CoCoRaHS station and will consider that when assessing the selected category.

Severely	Moderately	Mildly	Near Normal	Mildly	Moderately	Severely
Dry	Dry	Dry		Wet	Wet	Wet

Severely Dry	Moderately Dry	Mildly Dry	Near Normal	Mildly Wet	Moderately Wet	Severely Wet
			•		•	•
Dry Co	onditions		Normal Conditio	ons	Wet Co	onditions
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<ul> <li>for plants, pastures.</li> <li>Precipitation deficits matched the plants crops may recovered if</li> </ul>	ny have slowed crops, or on or water y be present.	exp	served conditions a bected for this time tr.		<ul> <li>Soil moistu normal.</li> <li>Local plant: pastures ar recovering conditions, wet condition</li> </ul>	s, crops, or e healthy, from dry or draining fron
dry condition Plants, cromay be stru- Streams, revealed and the structure Water shown present. Voluntary were strictions everely Dry Soil moistue Crop or para may be exist Ponds, lake wells may or dry. Mandatory may be in present.	y be brown due ons. ps, or pastures essed. esservoirs, or w s may be low. tages may be ater use may be in place ure is absent. stures losses perienced. es, streams, an be nearly empt water restriction place.	ell ty pns			<ul> <li>Standing v present in ditches.</li> <li>Local plan pastures a lush.</li> <li>Water bodie more full th</li> <li>Severely Wet</li> <li>Soil is wet</li> <li>Ground is saturated v and abunc</li> <li>Water bodie elevated.</li> <li>Flooding m</li> </ul>	y damp. d is partially with water. vater may be low areas and ts, crops, or ire healthy and es may be sligh an normal. completely with water. vater is severe lant. ies are very ay be present, olant, crop, or

### Further detail on the seven categories

### WRITE A CONDITION MONITORING DESCRIPTION

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Station Nan	ne : Columb	ia 6.6 SE				
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Agricultu	Awareness ire					

## WRITING DESCRIPTIONS

When writing descriptions you can use the report categories as a guide:



Were there agricultural impacts this week?

Was business and industry affected?

Did you notice any public health impacts?

Was there fire?

General Awareness
Agriculture
Business And Industry
Energy
Fire
Plants And Wildlife
Relief Response
Society And Public Health
Tourism And Recreation
Water Supply And Quality

## OBSERVATION GUIDANCE

### If possible, consistently report from specific locations:







# Report on specific bodies of water

# Report on specific plant life

Report on specific businesses

Please note the differences between your last report and the current conditions.

## DESCRIPTION EXAMPLES



Madison County, NC – March 8, 2015: This has been a week of extremes – from a high of 73° to a low of 18° with a covering of snow and ice. The good news is that *definite signs of spring* are finally appearing. Song sparrows are starting to sing. Crocuses are blooming. And, best of all, *wood frogs have returned to our pond and laid eggs.* This is late. According to my records over 10 years, the average date for wood frogs coming to the pond is February 18.

**Buncombe County, NC – November 30, 2015:** We continue in the all or nothing weather pattern. 6" rain, a week of unseasonably warm and dry, 2" 15 days warm and dry and a quick 2 day cool down, and now 2+ precip again. *In between the rain it has been alarming how quickly the streams and creeks go back to below normal levels.* Birds are emptying the feeders quickly, and I am still seeing snakes, groundhogs and one bear sighting. We ate our thanksgiving dinner on the porch. sunsets and sunrises have been spectacular. *Tourists* are enjoying the warm dry spells for hiking and shopping. *Farmers* are shaking their heads! *Most everyone has a sniffle* - seasonal whiplash

# MORE DESCRIPTION EXAMPLES

Pickens County, SC, April 20-June 10, 2014 – Incipient drought is now occurring in western Pickens County, SC. Except for a 3.14" single day rainfall on May 15, only 2.12" of rain has fallen during a 51 day span from April 20 to June 10. Irrigation has become an increasingly normal activity for both agriculture and (in my case) horticulture. Year to date rainfall at SC-PC-1 is only 20.71" or about 7 inches below normal.

**Rio Grande County, CO, December 17, 2015** – In the last four weeks I have recorded only 0.02" of moisture. Without snow cover, crops started this fall suffer desiccation and vulnerability to winter kill. This coupled with laws preventing supplemental irrigation in winter has me concerned about my perennial and fall seeded crops.

> DRY CONDITIONS

#### WET CONDITIONS

Nash County, NC, February 3, 2016 – Rain total for last week is 2.64. The creek (Flat Rock Branch) is back to normal. The Pond at Rocky Mount Memorial Park is full. Minor flooding last Friday in nearby fields. Minor flash flooding on roads last week. The daffodils are at their peak of flowering, brightening the yard with yellow flowers.

**Richland County, SC, October 31, 2015** – Our station had 19.38" in October, almost 16" of which fell in the first six days. We've had 1.55" during the last five days of the month. Our neighborhood has plenty of springs, but they only appear when it's really wet. The neighborhood has "bled" all month, although only the most persistent springs are still active. We have one French drain that runs when it's really wet and it's still going strong, but it's drawing water from a foot or more under the surface.

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A more detailed look at each category follows in the slides ahead.

LAST STEP: REVIEW THE CATEGORIES AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

## REPORT CATEGORIES

**General Awareness** Fire Energy **Tourism and Recreation** Agriculture **Business and Industry** Water Supply and Quality **Relief Response** Plants and Wildlife Society and Public Health

## GENERAL AWARENESS

**General Awareness-**

The "General Awareness" option provides a box to check when conditions may not have changed or if the other report categories are not appropriate for the content of your report.

## AGRICULTURE

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### 🗆 Agriculture

### Agriculture-

Varying precipitation conditions can effect agriculture, farming, aquaculture, horticulture, forestry and ranching.

Examples of agricultural impacts, including some backyard gardens may include: damage to crop quality; income changes for farmers due to reduced crop yields or abundant yields; reduced productivity of cropland; flooded fields; insect infestation; plant disease; increased/decreased irrigation costs; Changes in productivity of rangeland; forced reduction of foundation stock; closure/limitation of public lands to grazing; and high cost/unavailability of water for livestock, Christmas tree farms, forestry, raising domesticated horses, bees, fish/shellfish and horticulture.

# BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Business And Industry

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#### **Business & Industry-**

Examples of precipitation/drought impacts affecting non-ag businesses, lawn care businesses, sales of recreational vehicles/other recreational gear or plant nurseries, etc.

Examples of precipitation-induced business impacts could include: physical damage due to flooding, reduction/loss of employees, change in sales/business, variation in number of calls for service, early closure/late opening for the season or vice-versa, bankruptcy, permanent store closure and economic impacts.

### ENERGY





#### **Energy-**

Precipitation/drought effects which are associated with power production, electricity rates, energy revenue, and purchase of alternate sources of energy.

Examples include hydropower and non-hydropower production when affected by drought or flood, electricity rates, revenue shortfalls and/or windfall profits and the purchase of electricity when hydropower generation is down. Power outages due to severe weather or extreme events. Physical damage due to flooding.







#### Fire-

These include precipitation/drought effects contributing to forest, range, rural, or urban fires, fire danger, and burning restrictions.

Examples of fire impacts include: Increase of possible fuels during wet season, Enactment/easing of burning restrictions, fireworks ban, increased/decreased fire risk, occurrence of fire (# of acres burned, # of wildfires compared to average, people displaced, etc.), increase/decrease in fire fighting personnel, state of emergency during periods of high fire danger and the closure of roads land due to fire occurrence or risk. Increased potential for flooding and debris/rock/mud slides in and downstream of burn areas.

## PLANTS & WILDLIFE

### Plants And Wildlife

#### Plants & Wildlife-

Wetness/drought effects which are associated with wildlife, fisheries, forests and other fauna.

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Examples include: loss of biodiversity of plants or wildlife; health of trees, shelterbelts, wooded conservation areas; reduction and population of fish and wildlife; Variations of feed and drinking water; In drought conditions greater mortality due to increased contact with agricultural producers, as animals seek food from farms and producers are less tolerant of the intrusion; disease; change in vulnerability to predation (from species concentrated near water); migration and concentration (loss of wildlife in some areas and too many wildlife in other areas); Changes in stress to endangered species; and salinity levels affecting wildlife, wildlife encroaching into urban areas, loss or gain of wetlands.

### RELIEF RESPONSE

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#### Relief Response

#### **Relief, Response, & Restrictions-**

Some precipitation/drought effects associated with disaster declarations, aid programs, requests for disaster declaration or aid due to flood or drought, water restrictions and fire restrictions.

Impacts include: Disaster declarations, aid programs, USDA Secretarial disaster declarations, SBA disaster declarations, government relief and response programs, state-level declarations or "state of emergency", county-level declaration or "state of emergency", requests for declarations or aid, non-profit organization based relief, water restrictions, flood or drought declarations, fire restrictions and declaration of drought watches/warnings.

# SOCIETY & PUBLIC HEALTH

#### Society And Public Health

#### **Society & Public Health-**

Precipitation/drought effects associated with the public and human health.

Examples of precipitation/drought-induced social impacts include: health-related problems, loss of human life (e.g., from heat stress, suicides, floods, drownings); increased respiratory ailments; mosquito and water borne illnesses; increased disease caused by wildlife concentrations; population migrations (rural to urban areas, migrants into the United States); loss of aesthetic values; change in daily activities, elevated stress levels, meetings to discuss flooding or drought, communities creating drought plans and flood mitigation and storm water management strategies, communities opening shelters, cancellation/alteration of events, festivals or holiday traditions, stockpiling water, public service announcements and drought/flood info websites.

# TOURISM & RECREATION

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Tourism And Recreation

#### **Tourism & Recreation-**

Precipitation/drought effects associated with people's recreational activities and tourism.

Examples of tourism and recreation impacts include: public safety threats caused by flooding; water access or navigation problems for recreation; bans on recreational activities; reduced license, permit, or ticket sales (e.g. hunting, fishing, ski lifts, etc.); losses related to curtailed activities (e.g. bird watching, hunting and fishing, boating, etc.); reduced park visitation (trails closed due to flooding); delayed or early opening for ski resorts; increase/decrease in artificial snow generation; and cancellation or postponement of sporting events/tournaments.

# WATER SUPPLY & QUALITY

Water Supply And Quality

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Water Supply & Quality-

Here are some precipitation/drought effects associated with water supply and water quality.

Dry and wet examples include: Dry wells, saturated septic leach fields, water restrictions, changes in water rates (usually drought), easing of water restrictions as conditions get wetter, increase in requests for new well permits, changes in water use, water demand, and water allocation/allotments. Installation/alteration of water pumps or water intakes, changes to allowable water contaminants, water line damage/repairs due to drought stress, drinking water turbidity, change in water color or odor, declaration of drought watches/warnings and mitigation activities. Runoff increasing pollution in lakes and streams.

# WATER SUPPLY & QUALITY

Water Supply And Quality

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Water Supply & Quality-

Here are some precipitation/drought effects associated with water supply and water quality.

Dry and wet examples include: Dry wells, saturated septic leach fields, water restrictions, changes in water rates (usually drought), easing of water restrictions as conditions get wetter, increase in requests for new well permits, changes in water use, water demand, and water allocation/allotments. Installation/alteration of water pumps or water intakes, changes to allowable water contaminants, water line damage/repairs due to drought stress, drinking water turbidity, change in water color or odor, declaration of drought watches/warnings and mitigation activities. Runoff increasing pollution in lakes and streams.

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### FINALLY CLICK ON THE SUBMIT DATA BUTTON TO FILE YOUR REPORT

### WHO WILL USE MY CONDITION REPORTS ?

They will be used by many entities interested in climate and landscape conditions.



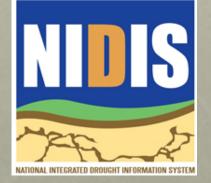


A NOAA RISA TEAM











# CONGRATULATIONS!

### YOU'VE JUST FILED A CONDITION REPORT!



#### IT'S PRETTY SIMPLE AND GETS EASIER THE MORE YOU FILE THEM

# THANKS FOR YOUR CONDTION REPORT!

With all the extra "CoCoRaHS eyes and ears" out there you can make a real difference though condition monitoring! Thanks so much!!





### Thanks to our sponsors







### THE END

### Click on your "back browser" button to return to "Condition Monitoring Reporting Resources"

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