

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
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November 18, 2008

Janet Napolitano
Governor

To: The Honorable Janet Napolitano

Herbert R. Guenther
Director

From: Herbert R. Guenther, Co Chair
Governor's Drought Task Force Interagency Coordinating Group

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. R. Guenther".

Re: Recommendation to maintain Drought Emergency Declaration and
the Drought Declaration issued by Executive Order 2007-10

The Governor's Drought Task Force Interagency Coordinating Group (ICG) met on November 4, 2008, to discuss drought conditions throughout Arizona and determine if the State's Drought Emergency Declaration (PCA99006) and Drought Declaration for the State of Arizona issued May 2007 (Executive Order 2007-10) should be continued.

The State Drought Monitoring Technical Committee's annual update showed that 2008 precipitation brought short-term relief from drought conditions in some areas of Arizona. Although above-average precipitation in the White Mountains, Salt River, Phoenix area and the south central deserts filled the State's reservoirs this year, precipitation was near or below average over a large portion of the State. In addition, forecasters are predicting below-average winter precipitation.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department provided their annual updates on rangeland health and impacts to wildlife, which showed the following:

- Many parts of the State are still suffering from long-term precipitation deficits that affect vegetation health, water supplies, and range and pasture conditions.
- Impacts due to long-term drought are resulting in crop losses, irrigation water shortages, water hauling, livestock forage shortages and dry or low producing springs and wells.
- Wildlife habitat is still in poor condition after many years of drought.

Following these updates, the ICG made a unanimous decision to recommend that both drought declarations be kept in place. In addition, the ICG recommends that a press release be issued to raise awareness of long-term drought conditions. In coordination with your office, the Arizona Department of Water Resources will produce a press release.

Thank you for your consideration.