

# DRIP RECOMMENDATIONS

## SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS (FOR APRIL 26TH DISCUSSION)

April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

# Submitted Recommendations (as of April 3)

## Drought Relevant Data

1. Drought Indicators and Metrics  
(Alvar Escriva-Bou)
2. Program and Info/Tools Evaluation  
(Elea/Ben, on behalf of Saharnaz)

## Drought Preparedness for Domestic Wells

3. SB 552 Language update  
(Justine Massey)
4. Community Based Well Monitoring Program  
(Suzanne Pecci)
5. Roles and Responsibilities  
(Justine M, Sierra R, Tami M, Andrew A)

## Drought Definition and Narrative

6. Drought Definition White Paper  
(Katie Ruby)
7. Communication Program  
(Tim Worley)
8. Drought Case Studies  
(Elea/Ben, on behalf of Saharnaz)

# Submitted Recommendations

## One sentence summaries

### Drought Relevant Data

**1. Drought Indicators and Metrics**

*Identify indicators and metrics to improve drought decisions, actions and resilience (potential “early warning system”).*

**2. Program and Info/Tools Evaluation**

*Evaluate drought related programs, initiatives (and related info/tools) to identify knowledge gaps and uplift existing efforts.*

### Drought Preparedness for Domestic Wells

**3. SB 552 Language Update**

*Make minor amendments to SB 552 to enhance the law’s feasibility and implementation.*

**4. Community-Based Well Monitoring Program**

*Create local community-based well monitoring programs, by providing technical assistance and a funding mechanism, with the goal of fostering education, awareness and developing individual responsibility.*

**5. Roles and Responsibilities**

*Outline roles and responsibilities of various authorities to provide short-term and long-term drinking water solutions for existing domestic wells, and comprehensive planning to limit new development in areas with failing domestic wells until solutions are reached.*

### Drought Definition and Narrative

**6. Drought Definition White Paper**

*Prepare a white paper that documents and describes various definitions of drought, including the resulting impacts.*

**7. Communication Program**

*Create a statewide, symbols-based messaging platform that can be flexibly used by water suppliers to do local adaptation and thus communicate their specific drought and water supply information.*

**8. Drought Case Studies**

*Create a suite of drought related case studies across sectors and geographies of California to highlight the complicated drought realities that diverse communities across the state are facing.*

# April 26<sup>th</sup>: Recommendation discussion

Standardized format for each of the 8 recommendations (20 minutes each)

## Introduce each Recommendation (8 minutes)

1. Intro the idea (4 minutes). Introduce the recommendation idea. Single slide using the submitted Part 0 text
2. Recap previous comments (1 minute). Show 1-2 slides with past DRIP member comments that are relevant/related
3. Ask clarifications (3 minutes). Ask if there are any basic clarifying questions

## Get input from DRIP Collaborative (12 minutes)

4. Open discussion, aligned to Part 1 of Template
  - Scope: How might you refine the overall idea and scope of the recommendation?
  - Impacts: Is there a way to refine this idea so that it increases the positive impact?
  - Parties: Who needs to be involved to execute on this idea?
  - Other initiatives: What are related, ongoing efforts that need to be considered?

## Collect written handouts for other feedback (that we don't have time to discuss live)

# 1. Drought Indicators and Metrics

## DRIP Lead: Alvar Escriva-Bou (UCLA)

### Recommendation Idea

There is a need to develop a practical drought early warning system to inform drought management actions—both proactive mitigation measures and effective emergency responses—to minimize drought impacts.

Our ability to link drought conditions and expected impacts is not sufficiently specific and actionable. Given the complexity of California's water system, it is not straightforward to understand different sectors' potential impacts, and develop drought responses. We also lack useful summary statistics to characterize drought resilience at the highest level (the type of drought metrics that might appear in every DRIP report to show our collective effort in improving our resilience). To do this, we need an improved ability to monitor and integrate that data, working across all levels including local, state, federal and tribal.

This drought early warning system should be adopted as part of a larger narrative and communication plan. How these metrics should be visualized and communicated must be considered, likely as part of a potentially updated online dashboard.

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** Yes, during Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024 virtual meeting. Was originally discussed during 2023 DRIP meetings

**Related recommendations:** Program and Info/Tools Evaluation, Community Well Monitoring Program, Communication Program

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

# 1. Drought Indicators and Metrics

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## 2. Program and Info/Tools Evaluation

**DRIP Lead: Saharnaz, Elea and Ben (OPR)**

### Recommendation Idea

Conduct an evaluation of programs and initiatives relevant to California drought issues, to ensure strategic alignment with existing federal, state or regional efforts, and rapid action to address outstanding questions.

This should include an evaluation of information gaps in drought related tools (e.g., [National Integrated Drought Information System](#)), and may include a summary of relevant monitoring or research already underway to address drought related research questions (e.g., California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment research and data products). Filling these knowledge gaps should be done strategically to uplift and complement existing efforts while leveraging federal efforts such as the NIDIS CA-NV Drought Early Warning System or other experimental drought monitoring tools (e.g. [EDDI](#)) and exploring partnerships with drought technical experts already grappling with drought challenges (State/non-State).

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** Data gaps discussed during Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024 VM and during many of the 2023 DRIP meetings

**Related recommendations:** Drought Indicators and Metrics, Communication Program

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

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# 3. SB552 Language Update

**DRIP Lead: Justine Massey (CWC)**

## Recommendation Idea

The passage and enactment of SB552 in 2021 represented a pivotal advancement in CA drought resilience efforts. We're proposing minor adjustments to enhance the law's feasibility and implementation. The recommended amendments aim to streamline SB552, promoting effective execution by state and local governments in line with the law's original purpose.

Key revisions encompass:

1. Mandating each county to adopt an individual plan.
2. Establishing a five-year plan update deadline, synchronized with relevant updates in the General Plan Safety Element or Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
3. Requiring counties to report task force status and submit plans to the State by specified deadlines.
4. Enforcing State review of plans, following a review approach akin to DWR's for Urban Water Management Plans.
5. Mandating the State to submit a comprehensive implementation report to the legislature every five years, mirroring the approach for UWMPs and AWMPs.
6. Including a directive for the State to appoint a staff as point of contact for county task forces, ensuring active state agency involvement.
7. Commissioning a legislative study, involving counties and representative organizations, to assess existing plans and task forces and understand evolving county needs.

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** SB552 discussed during March 6<sup>th</sup> 2024 virtual meeting and during Oct 2023 DRIP meeting

**Related recommendations:** Community-Based Well Monitoring Program, Roles and Responsibilities

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

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# 4. Community Well Monitoring Program

**DRIP Lead: Suzanne Pecci (Public)**

## Recommendation Idea

This recommendation is to foster the organization of local community-based well monitoring programs with the objective of monitoring domestic wells and gathering well data for inclusion in regional and statewide databases. This would be accomplished by providing technical assistance and a funding mechanism. A key element of this program would be to support domestic well community engagement by fostering education, awareness, and developing responsibility for wise water use at the individual level. Regarding education, it would aim to establish community wide understanding of the following: significance of groundwater levels, water quality, value of well maintenance and repairs, and development of funding sources.

This local effort would be a partnering opportunity between domestic well communities, GSAs, NGOs, other beneficial users, land use agencies and the private development sector. The program may also help develop and implement water policies and actions protective of local domestic well communities water levels and water quality, so that it provides proactive, funded support to domestic well communities throughout the drought lifecycle.

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** Related efforts were previously mentioned during Oct 2023 DRIP meeting, but no DRIP discussion to date

**Related recommendations:** Drought Indicator and Metrics, Roles and Responsibilities

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

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# 5. Roles and Responsibilities

**DRIP Lead: Justine M, Sierra R, Tami M, and Andrew A**

## Recommendation Idea

Domestic wells are considered failing when they lack the supply and/or quality to serve their intended uses. California currently lacks a comprehensive approach to address the urgent drinking water needs of households served by failing domestic wells.

We recommend outlining roles and responsibilities of various authorities to provide short-term and long-term drinking water solutions for existing domestic wells, and comprehensive planning to limit new development in areas with failing domestic wells until solutions are reached. As part of this framework, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and Nitrate Management Zones should fund interim and long-term solutions for domestic wells that have gone dry or are contaminated, or are at risk of going dry due to over extraction. Overall coordination of implementation of long-term solutions should be coordinated by the State Board through the SAFER Program.

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** Roles and Responsibilities discussed during March 6<sup>th</sup> 2024 VM and during Oct 2023 DRIP meeting

**Related recommendations:** SB552 Language Update, Community Based Well Monitoring Program

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

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# 6. Drought Definition White Paper

**DRIP Lead: Katie Ruby (CUWA)**

## Recommendation Idea

Drought can be defined multiple ways, leading to confusion among different stakeholders and the public. Furthermore, the term “drought” can elicit certain reactions that may not be aligned with actual water shortage conditions in a given region or community. This recommendation is for the State to prepare a white paper that documents and describes various definitions of drought in California. The purpose of the white paper is to clarify terminology, including the resulting impacts and response actions associated with different definitions. Recommended content includes:

1. Literature review of existing definitions and their associated use cases.
2. Discussion of impacts that various drought definitions may have on key groups, such as disadvantaged communities, ecological areas, and urban and agricultural sectors.
3. Identification of gaps. Consider whether there is a need to broaden existing definitions to provide a more holistic, integrated view of water availability (e.g., including groundwater and surface water), reflect California’s anticipated hotter/drier future, and improve drought response.

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** White Paper discussed during March 7<sup>th</sup> 2024 virtual meeting and during Oct 2023 DRIP meeting

**Related recommendations:** Drought Indicators and Metrics, Communication Program, Drought Case Studies

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

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# 7. Communication Program

**DRIP Lead: Tim Worley (CalMutuals)**

## Recommendation Idea

Drought or other water supply conditions frequently necessitate a public response, but effective communication has been hindered by differences in appropriate messaging due to geographic and meteorological variations, or the relative diversity of a water supply portfolio or other investments in community resilience. Urban retail water suppliers may also specify differing communication protocols in their water shortage contingency plans, while small water providers or private well owners may receive or communicate information very differently.

To address this complexity and provide accurate information with enough flexibility to allow local adaptation is a challenge that should be tackled by the DRIP Collaborative, in coordination with the Water Commission and using existing communication resources as possible. This proposal recommends creating an understandable, statewide, symbols-based messaging platform suitable for weather reports and social media that counties and/or water suppliers can tier off to provide appropriate water supply information to their audiences.

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** Communication discussed during March 7<sup>th</sup> 2024 VM and nearly all of the 2023 DRIP meetings

**Related recommendations:** Drought Indicators and Metrics, Drought Case Studies

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

# 7. Communication Program

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### Collect written handouts for other feedback (that we don't have time to discuss live)

# 8. Drought Case Studies

## DRIP Lead: Saharnaz, Elea, and Ben (OPR)

### Recommendation Idea

Compile a suite of drought related case studies across sectors and geographies of California to highlight the complicated drought realities that diverse communities across the state are facing. Case studies may focus on drought-specific impacts to natural, built or social systems, including compounding or cascading impacts, or highlight existing approaches to addressing those vulnerabilities. This will help inform DRIP areas of focus and priority actions while capturing nuanced and diverse experiences across sectors and geographies of the state.

This compilation will help guide drought narrative developments by showcasing the range of unique and context-dependent complexities of drought related issues in California, with focus on projections for more frequent and extreme weather events and impacts. Partners should include DRIP members and collaborators representing community perspectives.

**Previously discussed by DRIP:** Sharing diverse case studies has been discussed in nearly all of the 2023 DRIP meetings

**Related recommendations:** Drought Indicators and Metrics, Drought White Paper, Communication Program

**What clarification questions do people have on this recommendation idea?**

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