



**Executive Order 2015-03**

**ORDER ESTABLISHING THE NEVADA DROUGHT FORUM**

**WHEREAS**, the State of Nevada is entering its fourth year of drought and a majority of Nevada counties have been designated by the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture as primary or contiguous natural disaster areas due to extreme or exceptional drought conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, throughout the last four years, many locations in Nevada have received approximately 65% or less of the normal annual precipitation, resulting in a cumulative precipitation deficit of over one year's worth of precipitation; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Climate Prediction Center has forecast in its United States Seasonal Drought Outlook that drought conditions in Nevada will intensify over the coming months; and

**WHEREAS**, as Chairman of the Western Governors' Association (WGA), I created the Western Governors' Drought Forum in order to foster a regional dialogue where states and industry can identify and share case studies and best practices for drought policy, preparedness and management; and

**WHEREAS**, I will release the Western Governors' Drought Forum Final Report that will identify key findings and next steps at the WGA Round Table in late June, 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources; the Nevada Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management; and the Office of the Nevada State Climatologist are active members of the State of Nevada Drought Response Committee and have been continuously monitoring drought conditions throughout the State; and

**WHEREAS**, since the summer of 2014, the State Engineer of the Nevada Division of Water Resources has conducted a public outreach program to provide water-related information to the public and to listen to public concerns, with drought the topic most actively discussed; and

**WHEREAS**, the State Engineer has the authority to make rules, regulations and orders in groundwater basins where he determines additional management is necessary for the essential welfare of the area involved; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief of the Division of Emergency Management has the authority to coordinate activities of all emergency management organizations in the State and to support State and local agencies in developing comprehensive plans to address drought; and

**WHEREAS**, I have activated the State Emergency Operations Center to maintain situational awareness on the impacts of drought across the State; and

**WHEREAS**, the State has collaborated with the Desert Research Institute and the Nevada Climate Office to maintain a website that provides information about current drought conditions, and specific drought recovery resources; and

**WHEREAS**, all Nevadans can play a role in addressing this critical issue through conservation; and

**WHEREAS**, Article V, Section 1 of the Nevada Constitution provides: "The supreme executive power of this State, shall be vested in a Chief Magistrate who shall be Governor of the State of Nevada."

**NOW, THEREFORE**, by the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Nevada, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. The Nevada Drought Forum is hereby established to:
  - a. Build on the activities of the existing Nevada Drought Response Committee;
  - b. Evaluate key findings and next steps identified in the Western Governors' Drought Forum Final Report as they relate to Nevada;
  - c. Meet with relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to, agricultural producers, municipal water suppliers, the industrial sector, recreation interests, Tribal Nations, and members of the general public; and
  - d. Determine, with input from stakeholders and the public, the elements of a final report to the Governor.
2. The Nevada Drought Forum shall be comprised of the following appointees:
  - a. The Director of the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources;
  - b. The Director of the Nevada Department of Agriculture;
  - c. The State Engineer of the Nevada Division of Water Resources;
  - d. The Chief of the Nevada Division of Emergency Management;
  - e. The Nevada State Climatologist;
  - f. The Dean of the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension;
  - g. A representative of the Desert Research Institute;
  - h. A representative of the Southern Nevada Water Authority; and
  - i. Any other members whom the Governor deems necessary.
3. The Nevada Department of Administration, Division of Buildings and Grounds shall conduct a water audit of all State facilities and common areas to identify leaks or excessive water usage, and to evaluate all possible conservation efforts including replacement of old fixtures that consume excessive water.
4. All State agencies shall endeavor to implement practicable water conservation strategies in and around State facilities.
5. All local governments and private citizens are urged to conserve water and to conduct water audits in consultation with local water authorities.
6. All State agencies with responsibilities associated to drought and drought conditions shall provide a summary of current actions and related authorities to the Nevada Drought Forum by May 15, 2015.
7. Municipal water providers and agencies of the federal government are requested to provide a summary of current and planned actions related to the drought and drought conditions to the Nevada Drought Forum by May 15, 2015.
8. The Nevada Drought Forum shall prepare a Nevada Summary of Current Actions of local, State and federal entities by June 15, 2015.
9. The Nevada Drought Forum shall receive the WGA Drought Forum Final Report when it is released.
10. The Nevada Drought Forum shall, by July 1, 2015, provide interested stakeholders the work of the WGA Drought Forum, the Nevada Summary of Current Actions, an outline of possible topics and objectives for stakeholder discussions, and issue an additional call for specific information.
11. By the end of August 2015, interested stakeholders may provide to the Nevada Drought Forum a summary of current actions and challenges relevant to the final WGA drought recommendations, together with any other specific information sought by the Nevada Drought Forum.

12. The Nevada Drought Forum shall convene a multi-day stakeholder Drought Summit in September 2015.
13. The Nevada Drought Forum shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Governor on or before November 1, 2015.
14. The Nevada Drought Forum shall prepare a bi-weekly statewide drought summary with current drought impacts and key information for the public until such time that the summary is no longer warranted.
15. Any State agency or entity, including the Nevada Center of Excellence for Innovations and Solutions in Water Resources, through the Governor's Office of Economic Development, may be called upon by the Nevada Drought Forum to provide assistance.
16. The Nevada Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, shall provide administrative support for the Nevada Drought Forum.
17. Activities of the Nevada Drought Forum shall be subject to the requirements of the Nevada Open Meeting Law pursuant to NRS Chapter 241.
18. All records documenting activities of the Nevada Drought Forum shall be retained and transferred to the Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records for retention in accordance with State policy.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Nevada to be affixed at the State Capitol in Carson City, this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April, in the year two thousand fifteen.

  
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Governor of the State of Nevada

By the Governor:

  
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Secretary of State

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Deputy Secretary of State