

### Background

In May 2000, the National Drought Policy Commission (NDPC) presented to the President and Congress a report entitled, *Preparing for Drought In The 21st Century*. In accordance with a recommendation in the final report, an interim National Drought Council (Interim Council) has been established through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by Federal and nonfederal entities. This MOU is to be in effect for five years or until Congress establishes a permanent National Drought Council.

The Interim Council will constitute a partnership dedicated to a more comprehensive, integrated, coordinated approach towards reducing the impacts of drought through better preparedness, monitoring and prediction, risk management, and response to drought emergencies in the United States. The Interim Council will strive to cooperatively plan for and implement measures to coordinate drought programs and respond effectively, efficiently, and in a customer-oriented manner.

### Members

Members of the Interim Council include representatives of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of the Interior, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Small Business Administration, U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Department of Commerce, Environmental Protection Agency, National Governors' Association, Southern Governors' Association, Western Governors' Association,

National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, National Emergency Management Association, urban water interests, rural water interests, the credit community, and and tribes. The Consortium of Regional Climate Services, the National Association of Conservation Districts, and the National Drought Mitigation Center were added through an addendum to the MOU. Additional interested entities may also be added.

As prescribed in the MOU, the Secretary of Agriculture or designee shall serve as Federal co-chair of the Interim Council, with a nonfederal co-chair elected by the nonfederal Interim Council members. Ane D. Deister, representing urban water interests, was elected as the nonfederal co-chair.

### Duties

Specific duties for which the Interim and permanent Council will be responsible were provided in the NDPC's final report. The Interim Council selected the following five objectives to focus on in the year 2001:

- Timely and efficient delivery of existing Federal drought programs;
- Cooperation and participation among Federal, State, local, and tribal interests, and private water systems in Federal drought assistance opportunities by example and through facilitation;
- Development of an array of coordination strategies to provide support for State, local, and tribal drought planning and mitigation measures;

- Continue and enhance the on-going assessment of needs and expectations for drought monitoring, prediction, and research;
- Provide coordinated analyses or responses to inquiries related to the creation of a permanent Council or the execution of National Drought Policy Commission recommendations.

### Additional Information

The Interim Council's web site is located at [www.fsa.usda.gov/indc/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/indc/)

A copy of the NDPC's final report, *Preparing for Drought In The 21st Century*, and other related information is available on the following web site:  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/drought](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/drought)

If you require additional information or would like to provide comment, contact Leona Dittus, Executive Director, at 202-720-3168 or at e-mail [leona.dittus@usda.gov](mailto:leona.dittus@usda.gov)

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