

Lake Agassiz Water Authority Bulletin

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March/April 2008

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Drought Conditions Intensify

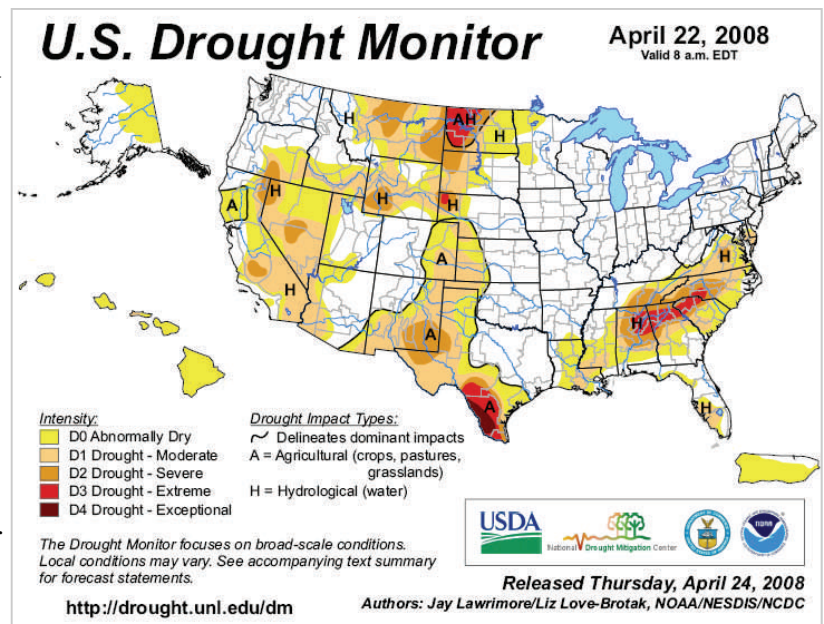
Eastern Cass County is the only area in North Dakota currently dodging the abnormally dry and drought conditions that have intensified over the rest of the state. Statewide precipitation totals for the past six months are the driest on record, according to the State Climate Office. This has created a dire situation for farmers and ranchers, especially in central and western areas, who are very concerned about the lack of precipitation.

The winter of 2007-2008 brought below average temperatures and precipitation for most of the state. The National Weather Service reported that only the Red River Valley had near normal snowfall this winter. Further west at Dickinson, the season's total snowfall was just eight inches, a quarter of the snowfall normally received.

The current U.S. Drought Monitor shows that drought conditions have worsened over the entire western third of the state and the north central area. Almost 50% of the state is classified as experiencing either severe or extreme drought conditions, while abnormally dry conditions cover the rest of the state.

Water supplies for cities and rural areas are being carefully watched because of these drought conditions. The importance of continued development of the Red River Valley Water Supply Project is underscored by these conditions.

Historically, the state's wettest months are May, June and July, which residents in drought-stricken areas hope holds true for 2008.





Lake Agassiz Water Authority

P.O. Box 140
Carrington, ND 58421

Phone: 701-652-3194

Fax: 701-652-3195

www.lakeagassiz.org

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LAWA Update

- At the March Board meeting, the group received three memorandums that were developed by Garrison Diversion. The documents detailed the decision-making and engineering processes for the RRVWSP and compared the alternatives that were studied. This information was prepared in response to concerns raised by former ND Governor Guy. Mike Dwyer, Executive Director of the Water Coalition, provided information on a draft North Dakota state funding plan developed for the ND Water Coalition. The board asked that a rate impact analysis of this plan be provided to them at their next Board meeting. Chair Furness appointed a work group to advise Garrison Diversion as the operational plan for the project is developed.
- On March 17, the State Water Commission voted to approve the cost-share request for project development. The funding will be available once the Record of Decision is issued.
- At the April Board meeting, the group reviewed the rate impacts of the proposed funding plan for the project. The plan includes a \$220 million commitment from the local systems. The board endorsed the plan which included a 1/3 cost share (\$220 million each) from the local, state, and federal funding sources.

Upcoming Meeting

LAWA Board of Directors

May 13, 2008 10:00 AM

Doublewood Inn - Birch Room, Fargo

LAWA Board of Directors

June 10, 2008 10:00 AM

Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo
