



Informational Memorandum: Ok-09-001

To: All Reinsured Companies
All Risk Management Agency Field Offices
All other Interested Parties

From: Barry Dodson, Director /s/ 5/1/09

Subject: 2009 Regional Irrigation Assessment

Attachment: Oklahoma City Region Irrigation Assessment for the 2009 Crop Year

As required by FCIC-25010 - Section 6, Paragraph 40, part E., Regional Irrigation Assessments, the following information reflects conditions as of April 15, 2009. Conditions could improve before the actual planting and acreage reporting dates in any of the areas identified in this report. Most Texas and New Mexico spring crop acreage reports occur from July 1 – July 30.

Conchas Reservoir: (Quay County New Mexico) –

Conchas Reservoir will **remain** on our list of areas suspect of water shortages for the 2009 crop year. Crops for which insurance is provided within the 41,000 acre crop land district include barley, corn, cotton, grain sorghum and wheat.

Last year due to the lack of any appreciable mountain snow pack on the side of the mountain that would flow down the Canadian and the absence of any winter or spring recharge, the Conservancy has not made an initial allocation for this crop year. In order to allow for a full water allocation of 18 inches, at the current delivery efficiency rate of 30% the water elevation would have to be at 4,191 ft. (159,094 ac. ft.). The water elevation in the Reservoir as of April 30, 2009, was 4,162.8 ft. (85,791 ac. ft.). The water elevation is at the elevation in which there is not enough head pressure in the reservoir to push the water the distance required to reach the delivery points within the water district and at this time water is not available for irrigation.

I. Current assessment:

The amount of water available this year is less than last year at this time. The lack of any appreciable mountain snow pack that would flow down the Canadian and the absence of any winter or spring recharge has caused the district to not make an initial allocation for the current crop year. At this time they are not expecting to be able to release any water for the remainder of the crop year. Significant amounts of precipitation would have to be received for an allocation to be considered. The Conservancy continues to meet monthly to re-evaluate the water situation and will notify water users accordingly. The Corps of



Engineers web-site for monitoring water levels in the Lake is:
<http://www.spa.usace.army.mil/wc/htmlrpts/CorpsResSum.htm>

Elephant Butte Reservoir: (New Mexico - Dona Ana County; Texas - El Paso and Hudspeth Counties) - Elephant Butte Reservoir provides water for irrigation districts in Dona Ana County, New Mexico and the adjoining counties of El Paso and Hudspeth in Texas. The principal source of water for Elephant Butte Reservoir comes from snow-pack runoff from the southern Rocky Mountains in Colorado and New Mexico. Winter snow-pack normally occurs from November – January. Reservoir recharge from runoff occurs from March – May. A normal run-off would contribute about 937,000 acre-feet of water annually and it is usually the first of June before any of that runoff reaches Elephant Butte Reservoir.

Dona Ana County New Mexico:

I. Current Assessment:

The Elephant Butte and Caballo reservoirs currently contain about 666,480 ac. ft. of water as of March 1, 2009 compared to 481,920 ac. ft. on the same date last year. The snowpack at the end of April continues to remain about average. Without a major late season snowfall, this year will end up as only average following its promising start. A 2 acre foot per water righted acre allotment was announced on January 14, 2009. The Board will know by the June board meeting if there could be another increase in the allotment. Primary crops grown within the region include chilies, corn, cotton, grain sorghum, pecans and wheat.

El Paso County Texas:

The El Paso County Water District provides irrigation to approximately 69,000 acres in El Paso County's. Crops grown within the district include cotton, grain sorghum, onions, and pecans. The districts normal allotment from Elephant Butte is around 376,000 acre-feet with a normal allocation of 48 acre-inches.

Current Assessment: The district's water allocation for 2009 is a full allocation (4ft. per acre) and it matches that which as was allocated in 2008 except that the full allocation last year came towards the end of the irrigation season. With the new operation agreement that was signed last year, conserved water from last year was carried over to this year, which allowed a full allocation to be made at the beginning of the irrigation season. Based on the anticipation of a full allotment, the El Paso County Water Improvement **District #1 is being removed from the watch list for 2009.**

Red Bluff Reservoir: (Reeves, Pecos, and Ward Counties, Texas) –

Red Bluff Reservoir was **removed** from our list of areas suspect of water shortages for the 2007 crop year.

Crops being grown within the district include barley, oats, wheat, cotton, grain sorghum, grapes, onions, and pecans. As of April 20, 2009, the reservoir had about 77,861 acre-feet at an elevation of 2,812.9 feet above sea level and represented 26.88 % of capacity.

Due to the reservoir being currently at 26.88 % of capacity and concerns about the high salinity content of the water, acreage irrigated from the Red Bluff reservoir returns to the watch list for the 2009 crop year.

Hudspeth County Conservation and Reclamation District #1: (Hudspeth County, Texas)

The district is located in the bottomlands of the Rio Grande Valley and extends from El Paso County – Hudspeth County line to Fort Quitman, Texas. The primary crop grown is cotton. The district has a total of 20,176 acres within its boundaries. The district is a “run of the river” project. There is no major storage facility available to the district so it must rely upon return flow and operational waste from the Rio Grande Project and diversion from the Rio Grande, which is erratic. The district holds a permit to divert 27,000 acre feet from the Rio Grande. However, water in the river is generally not available during the times of need, so the district relies primarily on drainage water from the American Canal in El Paso County. Due to the unpredictable nature of the district’s water source, the Hudspeth County Conservation and Reclamation District #1 is placed on the watch list for 2009.

Lake Altus Lugart Irrigation District: (Jackson County, Oklahoma) –

Currently the Lake is at 70% of normal capacity of 120,468 acre-feet in storage, and increasing daily. It is felt this amount should meet the needs of their producers. The major crops in the area include, but are not limited to, corn, cotton, peanuts, soybeans and wheat.