

Arkansas-Louisiana-Mississippi Drought Assessment and Building Early Warning Capacity Virtual Meetings



Part 1: Drought Assessment and Building Early Warning Capacity Meeting

Tuesday, September 29, 2026 from 9 a.m.–12 p.m. Central

Part 2: Synthesis and Prioritization Meeting

Tuesday, October 6, 2026 from 1–2:30 p.m. Central

MEETING GOALS

- Look back at recent drought events in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, and what's ahead for drought in the region.
- Assess the impacts, hurdles, successes, and needs experienced across sectors during recent drought events.
- Identify potential next steps toward improved drought early warning capacity in the region.

AGENDAS

Part 1: Drought Assessment and Building Early Warning Capacity

Tuesday, September 29, 2026 from 9 a.m.–12 p.m. Central

Time (CT)	Topic	Speaker
9:00 a.m.	Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Meeting Overview <i>Moderator: Molly Woloszyn, Regional Drought Information Coordinator Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) & NOAA NIDIS</i>	Veva Deheza , NIDIS Executive Director NOAA Climate Program Office State Partner Opening Remarks: • Tate Wentz, Chief, Water Strategy and Conservation Arkansas Department of Agriculture • Lillie Adams Wiley, Assistant Director Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry • Mike Brown, Professor of Meteorology and Mississippi State Climatologist Mississippi State University
9:15 a.m.	Overview of Drought in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi – <i>including recent drought events + current conditions and outlooks</i>	• B.J. Baule, Regional Climatologist, Southern Regional Climate Center Texas A & M University • Mike Brown, Professor of Meteorology and Mississippi State

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	Q & A	Climatologist Mississippi State University • Kyle Brehe, Applied Research Climatologist Louisiana Office of State Climatology, Louisiana State University • Chris Buonanno, Science and Operations Officer NOAA National Weather Service Little Rock
9:50 a.m.	Interactive Drought Assessment Exercise • How have you been impacted by drought? • What was the biggest information gap you experienced during the drought?	Moderator: Kelsey Eigsti, CIRES/NOAA/NIDIS <i>Miro Board Exercise</i>
10:10 a.m.	Break	
10:15 a.m.	Overview of the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) and Drought Early Warning Systems (DEWS) Q & A	Molly Woloszyn, CIRES/NOAA/NIDIS External Partner Perspectives: • <i>Southeast DEWS</i>: Lee Ellenburg, Alabama State Climatologist, University of Alabama • <i>Midwest DEWS</i>: Aaron Wilson, Ohio State Climatologist, The Ohio State University
10:40 a.m.	Interactive Drought Early Warning Capacity Exercise • What do you need to proactively manage for the next drought?	Moderator: Kelsey Eigsti, CIRES/NOAA/NIDIS <i>Miro Board Exercise</i>
11:00 a.m.	Break	
11:05 a.m.	Small Group Discussions	Facilitated discussions
11:55 a.m.	Wrap-Up and Part 2 Preview	Molly Woloszyn, CIRES/NOAA/NIDIS
12:00 p.m.	Meeting Concludes	

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Part 2: Synthesis and Prioritization

Tuesday, October 6, 2026 from 1–2:30 p.m. Central

Time (CT)	Topic	Speaker
1:00 p.m.	Welcome and Overview of Meeting	Veva Deheza, NOAA/NIDIS
1:05 p.m.	Summary of Part 1 Findings: from Miro Board Exercises and Small Group Discussions	TBD
1:20 p.m.	Interactive Exercise: Identifying Priorities and Next Steps	Molly Woloszyn, CIRES/NOAA/NIDIS
1:50 p.m.	Break	
1:55 p.m.	Small Group Discussions - What do the top results look like for you and your agency? - Who isn't here at these meetings that could be part of the solution to building drought early warning capacity?	Facilitated discussions
2:25 p.m.	Wrap Up and Next Steps	Molly Woloszyn, CIRES/NOAA/NIDIS
2:30 p.m.	Meeting Ends	

Thank you to the following people for their assistance in planning these meetings:

- Jay Grymes and Kyle Brehe, Louisiana State Climatologist
- Lillie Adams Wiley, Louisiana Department of Agriculture
- Mike Brown, Mississippi State Climatologist
- Tate Wentz, Arkansas Department of Agriculture
- Michelle Bufkin Horton, Arkansas Cattlemen's Association
- Zurqani Hamdi, University of Arkansas
- Angie Rodgers, Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee
- Colin Wellenkamp and Brandt Thornton, Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative
- Drew Smith, USACE Mississippi Valley Division
- Matt Wilson, NOAA NWS Lower Mississippi River Forecast Center