

Memorandum

REPORT TO: City Commission

FROM: Jessica Ahlstrom, Water Conservation Program Manager
Scott Shirley, Interim Director of Public Works
Anna Rosenberry, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Resolution 5315, Declaring a Stage Two Drought, Implementing Stage Two Drought Response Measures and Stage Two drought Surcharges, and Authorizing the Bozeman City Manager to Issue or Rescind Additional Drought Stage Declarations and Drought Surcharges and Implement Additional Drought Response Measures through Administrative Orders

MEETING DATE: July 13, 2021

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Resolution

RECOMMENDATION: I move to approve Resolution 5315, Declaring a Stage Two Drought, Implementing Stage Two Drought Response Measures and Stage Two drought Surcharges, and Authorizing the Bozeman City Manager to Issue or Rescind Additional Drought Stage Declarations and Drought Surcharges and Implement Additional Drought Response Measures through Administrative Orders.

STRATEGIC PLAN: 6.1 Clean Water Supplies: Ensure adequate supplies of clean water for today and tomorrow.

BACKGROUND: *Since the original publication date of this agenda item, drought conditions have changed and the City has, as of Monday, July 12, 2021, surpassed level 2 on the City's drought indicators. As a result, the City Manager now recommends the City Commission adopt a Stage 2 drought declaration during this agenda item on Tuesday, July 13th. As such, the resolution published to the public on Thursday, July 8, 2021 has been replaced with a resolution of the City Commission declaring a stage 2 drought and implementing stage 2 drought restrictions.*

On January 9, 2017 the City Commission approved [Resolution 4728](#), adopting the [City of Bozeman Drought Management Plan \(Plan\)](#). The Plan sets forth a complete framework to monitor and respond to drought events of varying severities in order to protect the health and safety of the community by ensuring reliable water supplies are available for essential uses during times of shortage.

The Plan outlines four drought stages and pursuant response measures. Drought stages increase in severity from stage one to stage four. Corresponding response measures become increasingly restrictive as drought stages increase. Generally, the Plan calls for voluntary water conservation during stage one, time of day and day of week watering restrictions during stage two, a lawn watering ban in stage three, and water rationing in stage four. Drought communications increase in scope and frequency pursuant to the declared drought stage.

Plan implementation relies upon regular monitoring of drought conditions through utilization of the drought monitoring and evaluation tool, which evaluates local data such as reservoir volume, snowpack, and streamflow, as well as regional and national climate indices. The evaluation of these data generate a drought score which provides City staff with the information needed to make recommendations to City Management and the City Commission for drought stage declarations.

The drought monitoring and evaluation tool is currently indicating that Bozeman is at a stage one drought largely due to below normal streamflow and snowpack levels, as well as regional climate indices which indicate that Gallatin County is experiencing severe drought conditions. Notably hot and dry weather conditions in June have led to exceptionally high water demands due to increased outdoor water use throughout the city. As a result, current projections indicate the City may consume 75% of its available water supply in Hyalite Reservoir by the end of the 2021 irrigation season.

The declaration of a stage one drought and implementation of stage one drought response measures includes increasing the scope and frequency of drought awareness and water conservation messaging to the public to encourage voluntary water conservation. No mandatory response measures, such as lawn watering restrictions, are included for this stage one drought declaration. Local print and television media outlets will receive press releases notifying the community of a stage one drought declaration. Stage one drought declaration and response measure messaging will be included on city webpages, social media outlets, newspaper and radio. Examples of outreach messaging are attached to this memo. Messaging will include a call to action asking residents to do their part to conserve water supplies and reference resources highlighting ways to reduce outdoor water use.

The stage one drought declaration will also trigger the imposition of stage one drought surcharge rates pursuant to the adoption of [Resolution 5065](#) in which these rates were established. Drought surcharges for each declared drought stage vary by customer class. Charges would be applied to the volumetric water rate for each customer class. For single family customers, the surcharge rate would change for each water use tier.

Due to the unpredictable and potentially severe nature of drought events, it is important to declare subsequent drought stages and pursuant response measures as soon as the need arises in order to adequately conserve water for essential uses. By approving this Resolution 5315 as presented, the City Commission authorizes the Bozeman City Manager to issue or rescind additional drought stage declarations and implement additional drought response measures through administrative orders, including the imposition of drought surcharge rates.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES: None.

ALTERNATIVES: As suggested by the Commission.

FISCAL EFFECTS: Costs for increased community outreach messaging will come from the Water Conservation Division's operating budget.

Attachments:

[REVISED Resolution 5215 Stage 2 Drought Declaration.docx](#)
[Examples of Drought Outreach Messaging Materials.pdf](#)

Report compiled on: July 1, 2021