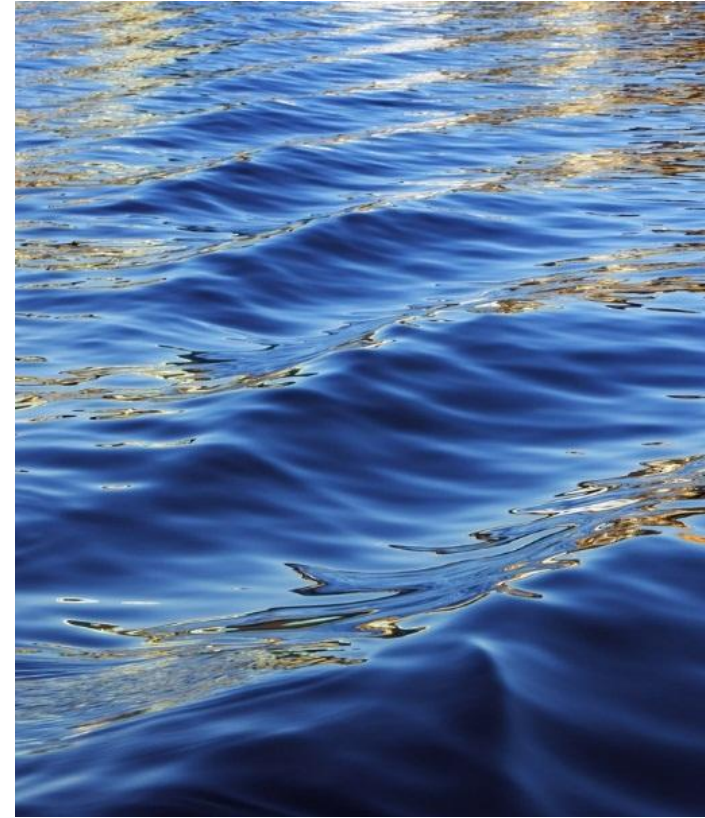




DRWPP

Drought Management Working Group

Update for October 6, 2026 DRWPP Meeting



Working Group Members

Andy Holt

TN Department of Agriculture, Commissioner

Andy.H.Holt@tn.gov

Valerie McCormack

US Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District, Chief, Planning Branch

Valerie.J.McCormack@usace.army.mil

David Money

Duck River Development Agency

david@duckriveragency.org

George Nolan

Southern Environmental Law Center, Director, Tennessee Office

gnolan@selctn.org

Amanda Turk - Chair

Tennessee Valley Authority, Manager of Hydrologic Impacts and Risk Evaluation

akturk@tva.gov

TDEC Staffing Support**April Grippo**

Director, Division of Water Resources

April.Grippo@tn.gov

Peter Murrey

Director, Office of Policy and Planning

J.Peter.Murrey@tn.gov

A Note from Amanda

Commissioner Holt, Valerie, George, David, April, and Peter,

I wanted to express my sincerest gratitude to each of you for your dedication and hard work over the past two years on the Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership. Your candid, open, and collaborative discussions have been invaluable in shaping meaningful recommendations for the Partnership to consider as final guidance to Governor Lee.

I am truly proud of the work we have prepared to present today, and I'm sorry I could not be there in person. I also want to extend my appreciation to TDEC and Commissioner Salyers for the continued support and resources—help that made a task that felt insurmountable just two years ago both achievable and successful.

Lastly, thank you to all fellow members of the Partnership for your collaboration, thoughtful dialogue, and shared commitment to protecting and planning for the future of the Duck River.

With Gratitude,

Amanda Turk

Drought Management Working Group Recommendations

Incorporate Comprehensive Drought Monitoring and Forecasting in the Duck River.

Tennessee should evaluate the need for additional data collection and sharing on the Duck River for more comprehensive drought monitoring, forecasting, and management. Additional data collection could include installing more water gages or water quality monitoring on the Duck River and/or its tributaries as well as partnerships with university or USGS researchers to better understand the interaction between groundwater and surface water in the losing reaches of the Duck River during low flow events by monitoring groundwater or doing specific studies on these losing reaches. TDEC, TVA, and the DRA should also collaborate with non-Partnership agencies such as Tennessee Emergency Management Authority (TEMA), Tennessee Climate Office, and the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) to improve drought forecasting tools and dashboards within the Duck River Watershed.

Drought Management Working Group Recommendations

TDEC Should Establish an Interim Tennessee Water Monitoring and Management Council.

TDEC should appoint a technical advisory committee titled the Interim Tennessee Water Monitoring & Management Council (TWMMC). The TWMMC would be charged with monitoring, coordinating response to drought and flood conditions, and working to advance model policies, utility planning, and public education. The Interim TWMMC would also work with the state to develop a permanent council.

Drought Management Working Group Recommendations

The General Assembly should consider establishing a permanent statewide water monitoring and management council to advise the Governor and Legislature.

Tennessee should consider comparative models both from neighboring states and industry leading examples to create a Tennessee Water Monitoring & Management Council (TNWMMC). To ensure long-term success, the state should determine where a program would best fit for statewide watershed monitoring and management, with full-time staff to support. The TNWMMC would be responsible for identifying water infrastructure needs as well as statewide drought and flood monitoring, designation, coordination, and education mandates. TNWMMC could also support regional or basin-level water planning entities or strategies. The TNWMMC should work closely with impacted stakeholders, and it should be comprised of members from TDEC, TWRA, TEMA, TDA, and the Tennessee Climate Office. The state should coordinate with federal partners such as the National Guard, FEMA, NWS, USGS, USACE, and TVA and representatives from the following stakeholders: public water systems, forestry, agriculture, local government, conservation, and academia.