



# Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership

*Fly Arts Center  
Shelbyville, Tennessee  
November 4, 2025*

# Duck River

Watershed Planning Partnership



Where water,  
community, and  
conservation meet.

# Agenda

**10a Call to Order**

**10:05 Welcome**

**10:10 Chairman's Report**

**10:15 TDEC Update**

**10:30 Drought Management Work**

Draft Recommendations, Discussion & Vote

**11:15p Regionalization Work Group**

Draft Recommendations, Discussion & Vote

**12n Lunch**

**12:30p Conservation, Water Loss Reduction**

**Education & Community Engagement**

Draft Recommendations, Discussion & Vote

**1:30p Next Steps**

- Upcoming Workshops
- Interim Report & Recommendations
- 2026 Calendar

**2p Public Input Period**

**2:30p Adjourn**

**Chuck Yoest, TDEC**

**Chad Graham, Bedford County Mayor**

**Commissioner Salyers**

**April Grippo, TDEC**

**April Grippo, TDEC**

**Randal Braker, DRUC**

**Grace Stranch, Harpeth Conservancy**

**Commissioner Salyers**

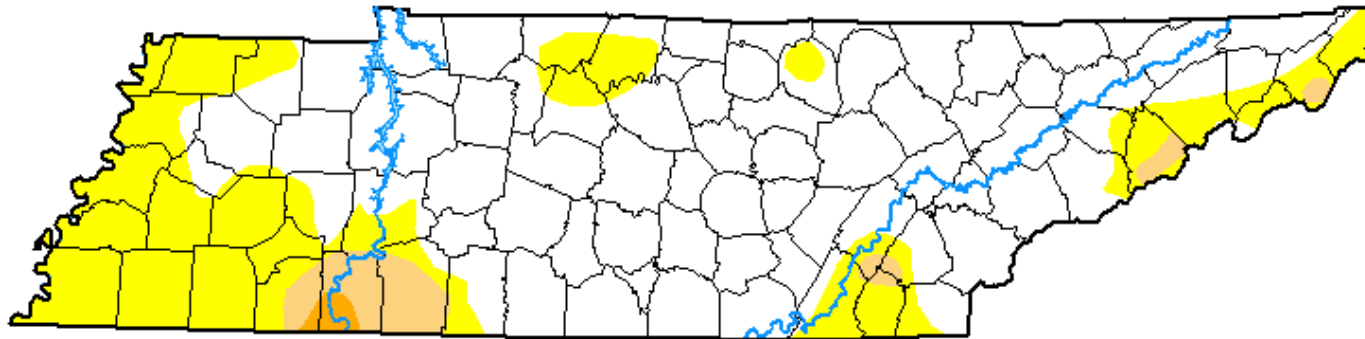
**Chuck Yoest, TDEC**

**Commissioner Salyers**







# Reservoir Alternatives Workshop on 10/27



# TN Drought Monitor – 10/28/25



**Intensity:**

-  None
-  D0 Abnormally Dry
-  D1 Moderate Drought
-  D2 Severe Drought
-  D3 Extreme Drought
-  D4 Exceptional Drought

*The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>*

**Author:**

Brad Pugh  
CPC/NOAA



[droughtmonitor.unl.edu](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

**Today:** Less than 30% of the state is in some condition of drought

**1 Month Ago:** More than 50% the state is in some condition of drought

**6 Months Ago:** No part of the state was in drought conditions

**1 Year Ago:** 90% of the state was in drought conditions

[www.tn.gov/tnwildlandfire/resources/predictive-services/intelligence/drought-monitor.html](http://www.tn.gov/tnwildlandfire/resources/predictive-services/intelligence/drought-monitor.html)

# Partnership Objectives Under EO 108

- 1. Developing comprehensive watershed management recommendations that balance the needs of water users and economic growth against the need to protect the environmental integrity of the Duck River;**
- 2. Advising and providing recommendations to the Governor, the Duck River Agency, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and the Speakers of the Senate and House of Representatives on policies and actions to promote the sustainable use and conservation of water resources in the Duck River Watershed;**
- 3. Identifying opportunities for water system regionalization, drought resilience, habitat conservation, and water loss reduction; and**
- 4. Engaging with local communities, utilities, industries, and conservation organizations to ensure broad participation in watershed planning efforts.**

# DRWPP Working Groups

DRWPP's three (3) Working Groups:

- **Drought Management** – Amanda T.
- **Regionalization** – Randal B.
- **Conservation/Water Loss Reduction/Public Education & Community Engagement** – Grace S.

# Recommendation Consideration

- Each working group chair will briefly present draft recommendations included in the Chair's markup that originated from their working group to the Partnership.
- Following each working group chair's presentation, the Partnership will deliberate and vote on each recommendation presented by the working group chair.
- The Partnership will consider recommendations in the following order:
  - Drought Management
  - Regionalization
  - Conservation, Water Loss, Public Education & Community Engagement
- The Partnership will vote on each recommendation by raising hands.
- A two-thirds majority of Partnership members present and voting is necessary to advance a recommendation for inclusion in the Initial Report.

# Drought Management – Draft Recommendation

## ***Revise the Duck River Regional Drought Management Plan***

- The region should promptly revise and adopt a Regional Drought Management Plan consistent with TDEC’s Guidance for Developing Community Water System Drought Management Plans (2016), or newer guidance.
- The plan should include: a public communication strategy, drought-level-based voluntary and mandatory water use restrictions, river flow and withdrawal monitoring, voluntary conservation commitments and consideration of conservation rates, and management plans.
- The plan should reflect flow conditions in the Duck River and Normandy Reservoir and be developed with input from the DRWPP. A draft should be completed for public comment by December 31, 2026.
- The plan must be reviewed regularly in response to major regulatory or permit changes and updated at least every ten years. Future revisions should strengthen enforcement through local ordinances, expand public input, and include coordinated flow monitoring and reporting by all surface and groundwater users, including voluntary reporting by agricultural users, connected to the Duck River.

# Drought Management – Draft Recommendation

## ***Incorporate Comprehensive Drought Monitoring Analysis in the Duck River***

- **TDEC in collaboration with the DRA** should evaluate the need for additional data collection on the Duck River for more comprehensive drought monitoring and management.
- This could include installing more streamflow gages, groundwater gages, and/or water quality monitoring on the mainstem of the Duck River and/or its tributaries.
- This could also include a partnership 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.
- In addition to supporting long-term drought monitoring, this recommendation would support TDEC's development of a Habitat Conservation Plan.

# Drought Management – Draft Recommendation

## *Develop a Duck River Dashboard*

- Duck River Agency, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should create a website that has all currently known data readily accessible with links to the data sources, including but not limited to Normandy Dam data at TVA, stream gages at USGS, discharge monitoring reporting on EPA ICIS, etc.
- It should also contain a dashboard that provides water use data for all utilities, including withdrawals and returns.
- Once the data need is understood, the Duck River Agency will work with stakeholders to determine where to host this information and will at the very least provide a link to the resource on the Duck River Agency website.

# Drought Management – Draft Recommendation

## ***Create a state-wide Water Monitoring Council***

- **Governor's Office or TDEC to create and invite** a state-wide Water Monitoring Council to monitor, designate, and coordinate responses to drought and flood conditions. The Council should be comprised of members from TDEC, TWRA, TEMA, TDA, and the Tennessee Climate Office.
- The state should coordinate with FEMA, NWS, USGS, USACE, and TVA as well as representatives from public water systems, forestry, agriculture, local government, conservation, and academia.
- The Council should be empowered to:
  - Coordinate with governmental agencies to respond to drought and flood conditions;
  - Draft model ordinances, codes, policies, and other emergency measures for use by municipal governments;
  - Convene monthly or more often to evaluate drought conditions in Tennessee;
  - Work with local municipalities, water utilities, and watershed organizations to develop mandatory water shortage response plans to be implemented during periods of drought; and
  - Provide educational material to the public regarding drought and water conservation best practices as well as flood safety preparation, measures, and responses.

# Drought Management – Draft Recommendation

## ***Update TDEC's rules for drought management plans state-wide***

- TDEC should modify its regulations to require that utilities develop mandatory water shortage response plans to be activated during periods of low river flow or drought.
- TDEC has existing statutory authority both through the ARAP program and through its regulation of public water systems to require such plans.
- The ARAP rules and the rules for public water systems should be amended to clarify and strengthen requirements for drought management state-wide, including the need to reduce water withdrawals and water usage to protect streams.

# Upcoming Events

**Fri., Nov. 7 – TN Nutrient Summit** at TN Tech

**Fri., Nov. 7** – Henry Horton State Park and Friends of Henry Horton will host ~500 fifth graders from Marshall County for the *Duck River Education Day*. The participants will learn about water quality, freshwater mussels, turbidity, and more topics related to the Duck River.

**Wed, Nov. 12** – *TN Water Regulatory Forum* at Fleming Training Center in Murfreesboro

**Wed, Nov. 12** – Henry Horton State Park and the Friends of Henry Horton State Park will host *Duck River Education Day* for ~250 fifth graders from Spring Hill.

**Mon, Dec. 8** – Duck River Development Agency's *Duck River Symposium* at Henry Horton State Park from 9a-3:45p. This year's theme centers on exploring EO 108 through a range of stakeholder perspectives.

# Next Steps

- Incorporate edits and votes from today's meeting into a draft Interim Report & Recommendations (IRR) document to circulate among members next week.
- Distribute draft IRR to members by **Tuesday, 11/11.**
- Schedule virtual meeting with Partnership members on **Friday, 11/14 at 9a** to go over highlights and gain final approval before IRR is submitted on 11/20
- Final IRR submitted on **Thursday, 11/20**

# Touchpoints

## Online Presence

Department of Environment & Conservation

Go to TN.gov

Search Environment

Program Areas • Permitting • Public Participation • About • Contact • Calendar of Events • American Rescue Plan (ARP) • TDEC Newsroom

### Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership

On Nov. 20, 2024, Gov. Lee issued Executive Order 108 about the Duck River – a 284-mile river flowing exclusively within Tennessee and recognized as one of the most aquatically diverse waterways in the nation. As the Duck River is also the drinking water source for more than 250,000 people in nine growing counties south of Nashville, EO 108 established the Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership and provided directives for TDEC, other agencies, and partners acting in the Duck River Watershed. Gov. Lee placed particular emphasis on regional approaches to water supply and the potential of identifying solutions for the Duck River to be a model for statewide water management and other watersheds in Tennessee.

[Executive Order No. 108](#) [Press Release](#) [Video](#)

Duck River Maps Members Meetings Resources Working Groups News Engagement Funding

Next: Aug 14

05-05-2025

03-04-2025

**Thursday, August 14**

TN Farm Bureau Columbia Office

Clyde York Conference Room  
147 Bear Creek Pike  
Columbia, TN 38401

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. CDT

[Agenda](#)

[tn.gov/environment/duckriverpartnership](https://tn.gov/environment/duckriverpartnership)

## Online Community Survey

Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership

Where water, community, and conservation meet.

# COMMUNITY SURVEY

Take the [Duck River Community Survey](https://bit.ly/duckriver) at:

<https://bit.ly/duckriver>

Email at [DuckRiver.Partnership@tn.gov](mailto:DuckRiver.Partnership@tn.gov)

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