2011 The New Drought of Record
What did “the state” do about it?

Brenner Brown
Texas Water Development Board

presented at Water Forum II UT, Austin, Texas
October 22, 2012
Cascading Impact of Drought

- Agriculture Crops – most years
- Forest fires – some years
- Livestock Water Supply – some years
- Lower Streamflows – most years
  - Recreation – most years
  - Priority calls – rarely
  - Salinity issues – some years
- Lower Reservoir Levels
  - Evaporation
    - PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY
- Groundwater Availability
  - Soil moisture
    - PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY
Summer of 2011
The Outlier

Record High Temperatures
Significantly Low Rainfall
Records

• Worst one-year drought on record
• Driest period on record
• Hottest period on record
• Statewide reservoir storage lowest since 1978 at <60%
• Ag losses at $5.2 billion
  – 50% cotton crop lost in West Texas
  – Ranchers selling herds
• ~ 4 million acres burned by wildfires
• Rivers with first-time calls on water rights
Texas Division of Emergency Management

• Drought Preparedness Council
  – Rewrite Drought Plan
  – Rewrite Annex A
  – Drought Severity Matrix – County Based Water Availability/Drought Severity Map In Development

• Emergency Drinking Water Task Force

• Joint Information Center

• Statewide preparation/outreach

• Federal Partners
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

• **Weekly Drought Meetings**
  – Increase communication
  – Opportunity for inter agency cooperation

• **Emergency Drinking Water Task Force**
  – High Priority 180 Day List
  – Success List
  – Solving new problems
  – Regional solutions

• **TCEQ Outreach Workshops**
Texas Department of Agriculture

- Provided over 5 million in emergency funding for public water supply
  - Counties need populations lower than 200,000
  - Cities less than 50,000
  - DCP must be in effect at one of its two highest levels
  - 180 days or less remaining
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<th>Funding applications received by the Texas Department of Agriculture</th>
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Texas Water Development Board

- Expedited loan process
- Increased drought response information and analysis in regional water planning guidelines
- TNRIS – developing county based map
- Provide groundwater reports for struggling entities
- Develop surface water maps
Drought Technology Steering Committee

- Texas Water Forum
- Collaboration Agencies and Academia
- DTSC Webinars
- Assisting development of county based map
- Real-time modeling, data and water management