

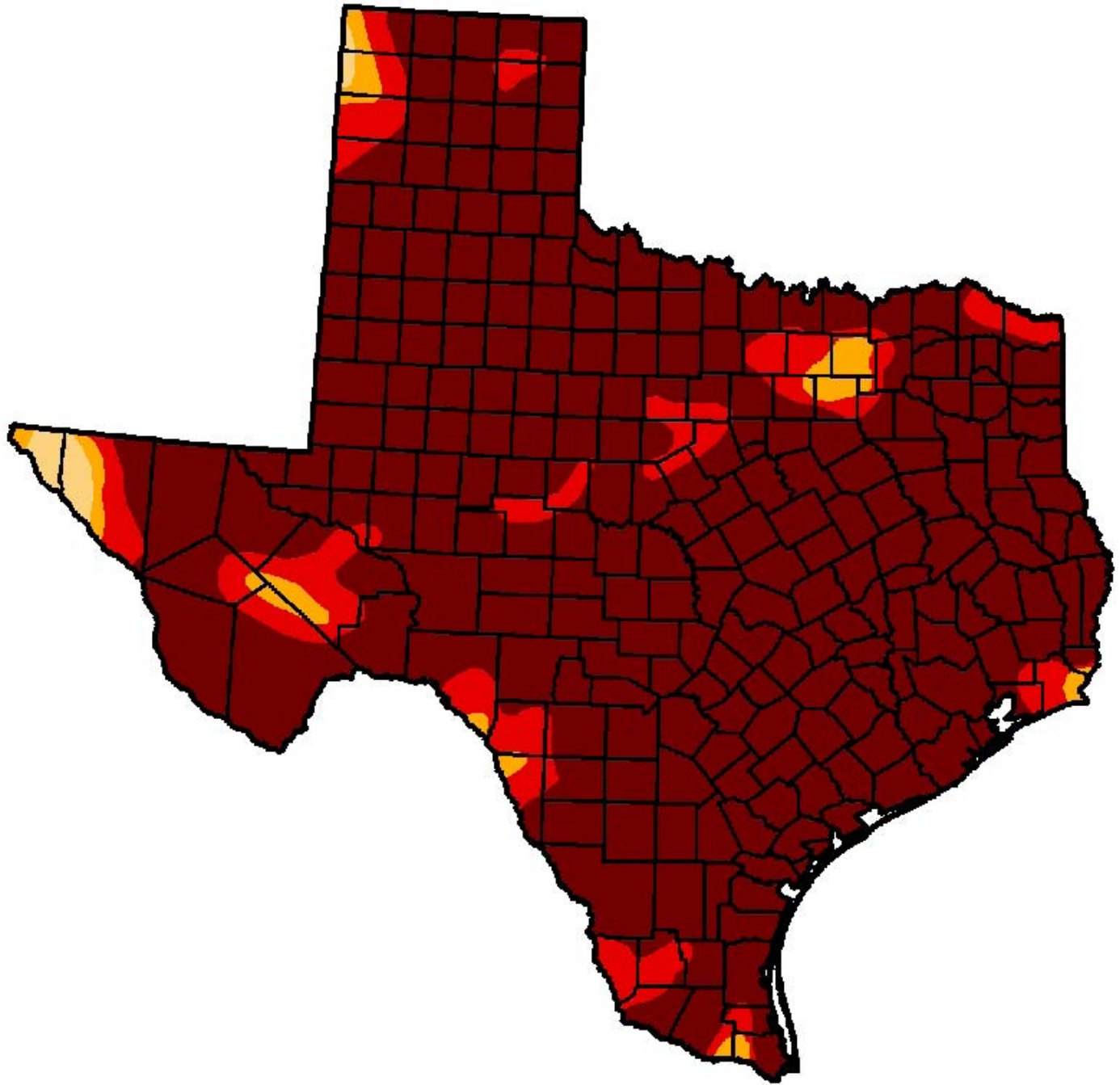


# It Takes a Village: Facilitating Public Input on Drought Management and Conservation Policy

UT CIESS Drought Symposium  
October 14, 2013

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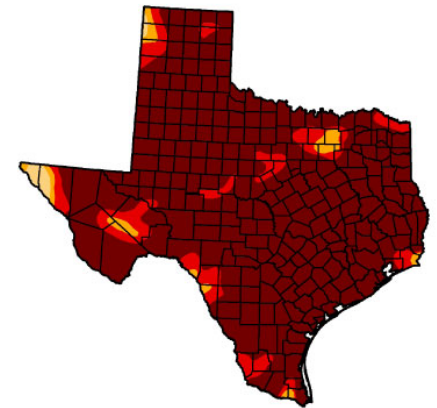
# Exceptional Drought

- Record low inflows to Highland Lakes in 2011
- Once-per-week watering since Sept 2011
- Possible mandatory curtailment by summer 2012
- Stage 3 would virtually eliminate outdoor watering
- Public calls for earlier drought response

## U.S. Drought Monitor Texas

October 4, 2011  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.16	96.99	87.99
Last Week (09/27/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.16	96.65	85.75
3 Months Ago (07/05/2011 map)	2.41	97.59	95.73	94.39	90.21	71.30
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	7.89	92.11	69.43	37.46	9.59	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	99.16	96.65	85.75
One Year Ago (09/28/2010 map)	75.57	24.43	2.43	0.99	0.00	0.00



Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, October 6, 2011

# Green Light for Code Changes

- Projections indicate we may reach trigger for considering Stage 3 restrictions by summer 2012
- Current Stage 3 restrictions written for short-term emergencies
- Customer feedback on effects of Stage 2 restrictions on trees, landscapes and businesses
- Opportunity to clarify code language & implement new code requirements and policies

# Public Input Process

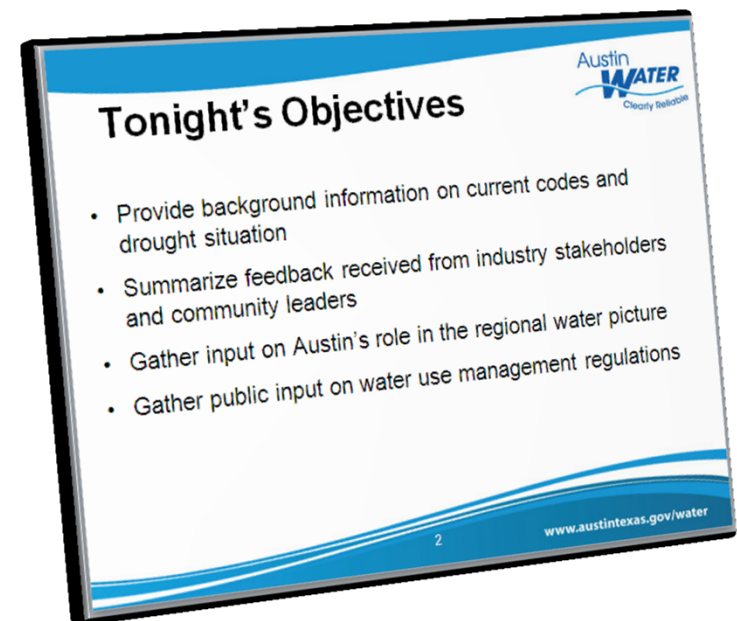
- Conservation staff worked with Public Affairs office and City's Community Engagement consultant
- Multiple avenues for input:
  - Series of 4 workshops from December 2011-March 2012
  - Online forum at [SpeakUpAustin.org](http://SpeakUpAustin.org)
  - Periodic updates to boards and commissions
  - Small group meetings with key stakeholders
- Honest, transparent approach to receiving feedback
  - No draft documents presented at first meeting!

# Spreading the Word

- Identifying stakeholders
  - Opinion leaders
  - Affected industries
- Communication methods
  - Email & e-newsletters
  - Website
  - Free media

# Setting the Stage

- Clear Objectives
- Stay on Topic
- Staff Interaction
- Record Input
- Offer Opportunities for Feedback on Process





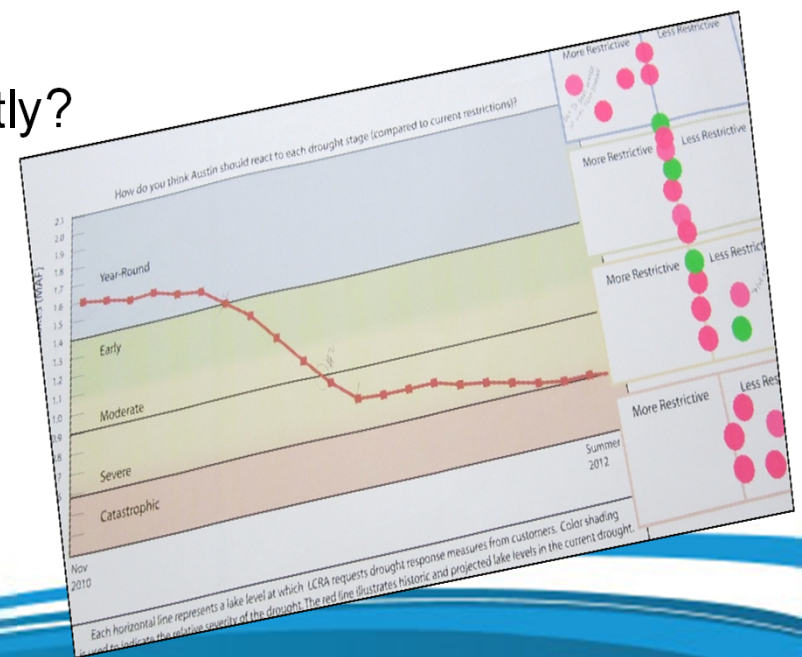
# December Stakeholder Meeting

- 6 table “stations” in large room with 1-2 staff
  - Irrigation restrictions
  - Car Wash requirements
  - Mandatory irrig. evaluations
  - Enforcement policies
  - Regional water issues
  - Non-irrigation regulations
- Color-coded name tags
  - Spend 10-15 min per table
  - Feedback forms available
- Feedback
  - Too loud
  - Not enough time per station



# January Public Workshop

- Opening presentation for background & objectives
  - Participants grouped randomly for table exercises
- Two table exercises – “sticker voting”
  - Should we be more or less restrictive in a certain drought stage than currently?
  - How early should specific activities be restricted?
- Feedback
  - More background information needed
  - Layout & volume improved



## Conservation Measure and Drought Response Regulations

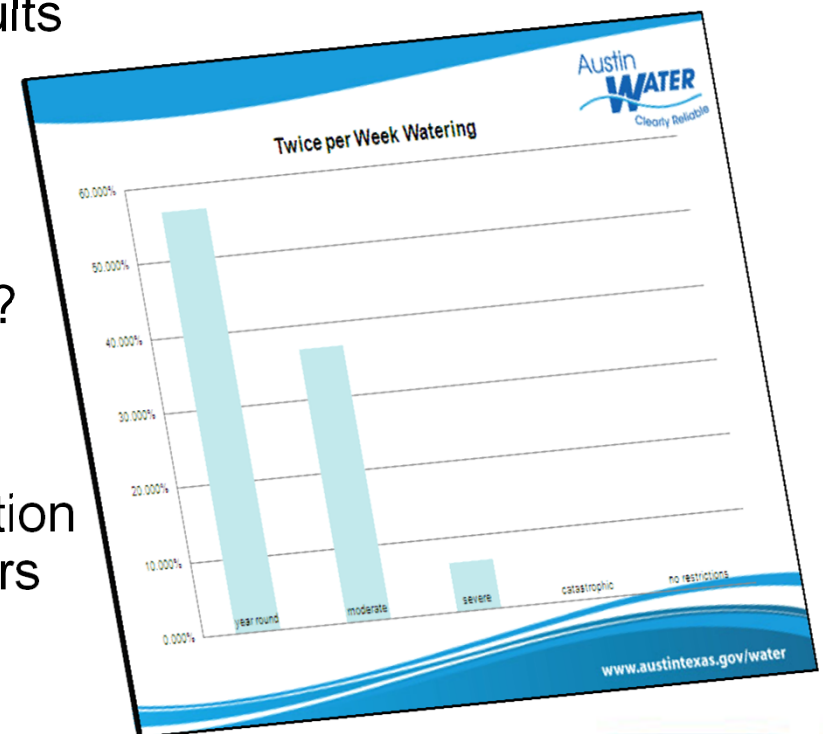
You have been given a list of potential regulations. As a group, discuss each measure and place the regulation in the column where your table believes the restriction should ***NOT*** be enacted. Indicate which customers and irrigation types these restrictions should apply to, and which uses should be exempt from restrictions. You may write in other ideas for measures or exemptions, or modify those you were provided.

	Year Round Conservation	Early Drought Response	Moderate Drought Response	Severe Drought Response	Catastrophic Drought or Emergency	NOT Regulated
<b>Measures Beginning in This Stage:</b>						
<b>Exemptions:</b>						

Once Per Week Watering - Residential	Twice Per Week Watering - Residential	Once Per Week Watering - Commercial/MF
Twice Per Week Watering - Commercial/MF	Once Per Two Weeks Watering - Commercial/MF	Once Per Two Weeks Watering - Residential
Landscape watering prohibited - Residential	Landscape watering prohibited - Commercial/MF	Hand watering during limited hours/days
No midday watering - in-ground spray systems	No midday watering - hose-end sprinklers	No midday watering - drip irrigation or soaker hose
New Landscaping Prohibited	Limitations on golf course watering (with potable water)	Commercial Plant Nursery Watering limited to drip or hand
Commercial Plant Nursery Watering limited to designated days	Ornamental fountains prohibited (all)	Ornamental fountains allowed if recirculating
No filling of swimming/wading pools	Cosmetic Power Washing only if fitted with water recycling unit	Cosmetic power washing/pressure washing prohibited
Foundation Watering limited to soaker hose/drip on designated days	Foundation Watering Prohibited	Charity Car Washes must be held at certified-efficient car Wash
Charity Car Washes prohibited	Commercial car washes prohibited	Commercial car washes operate in limited hours
Commercial car washes must be certified efficient	Home car washing on designated days/times	Home car washing prohibited

# February Public Workshop

- Opening presentation recapping previous meetings
  - Showed graphs depicting voting results
- Table exercises
  - Did we get it right?
  - When should we consider variances?
- Feedback
  - Positive response, good communication between various types of stakeholders





	Conservation Stage	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4 Catastrophic/ Emergency	
<b>Storage</b>	Trigger: Lake Levels above 1.4 MAF	Trigger: Lake Levels 1.4 MAF or as determined by CH0 or RWU Director	Trigger: Lake Level 500,000 ac ft or as determined by CH0	Trigger: Lake Level 500,000 ac ft or as determined by CH0	Trigger: As determined by CH0 or as needed to protect the regional water supply	
<b>Irrigation</b>	Deficit watering (30 hours total/ week)	Deficit watering (20 hours total/ week)	Deficit watering (10 hours total/ week)	Deficit watering (5 hours total/ week)	All outdoor irrigation prohibited (including new landscape & golf course irrigation)	
	No midday watering					
			Golf course watering w/ potable water limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turf greens: Every other day</li> <li>Fairways as DOWUD</li> </ul>			
	Water waste prohibited					
	Facility assessments once per 2 yrs					
	Conservation Stage	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4 Catastrophic/ Emergency	
<b>Recreation</b>	Recreation areas water only as required					
	Commercial public waters eqg aprals (4PM-Midnight)			Comm public waters eqg aprals (4PM-8PM)	Comm public waters prohibited	
<b>Car &amp; Power washing</b>	Commercial carwashes must not effluent					
	Charity car washes only held at certified official car washes					
	Commercial automatic power washing only with a recycle soil					
		Home carwashing as DOWUD & DOWUT	Home carwashing prohibited Charity carwashes prohibited	All automatic power washing must be performed with a recycle soil (Commercial or private)	All carwashing prohibited All automatic powerwashing prohibited	
	Conservation Stage	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4 Catastrophic/ Emergency	
<b>Recreation / Water Use</b>				Splash pads and filling of open prohibited	No filling of pools and ponds All outdoor recreational water use prohibited	
<b>Foundation</b>						
	All residential foundation must be re-insulating				All residential foundation prohibited	
<b>Commercial Plant Watering</b>					Comm plant watering prohibited	
<b>Foundation Watering</b>						
	Commercial plant watering eqg water using drip/ hand watering			Foundation watering allowed only as DOWUD, DOWUT with drip or nother hose	Foundation watering allowed only between 5 am and 8 am as DOWUD with drip or nother hose	

# March Public Workshop

- Opening presentation recapping previous meetings
  - Depicted “final” matrix
  - Showed “You Said, We Did” response & explanations
- Group invited to read narrative code explanation
  - Actual code language pending legal review, boards & commissions
- Panel forum for questions and answers
- Feedback
  - Fewer participants, but still largely positive response

# Benefits of Process

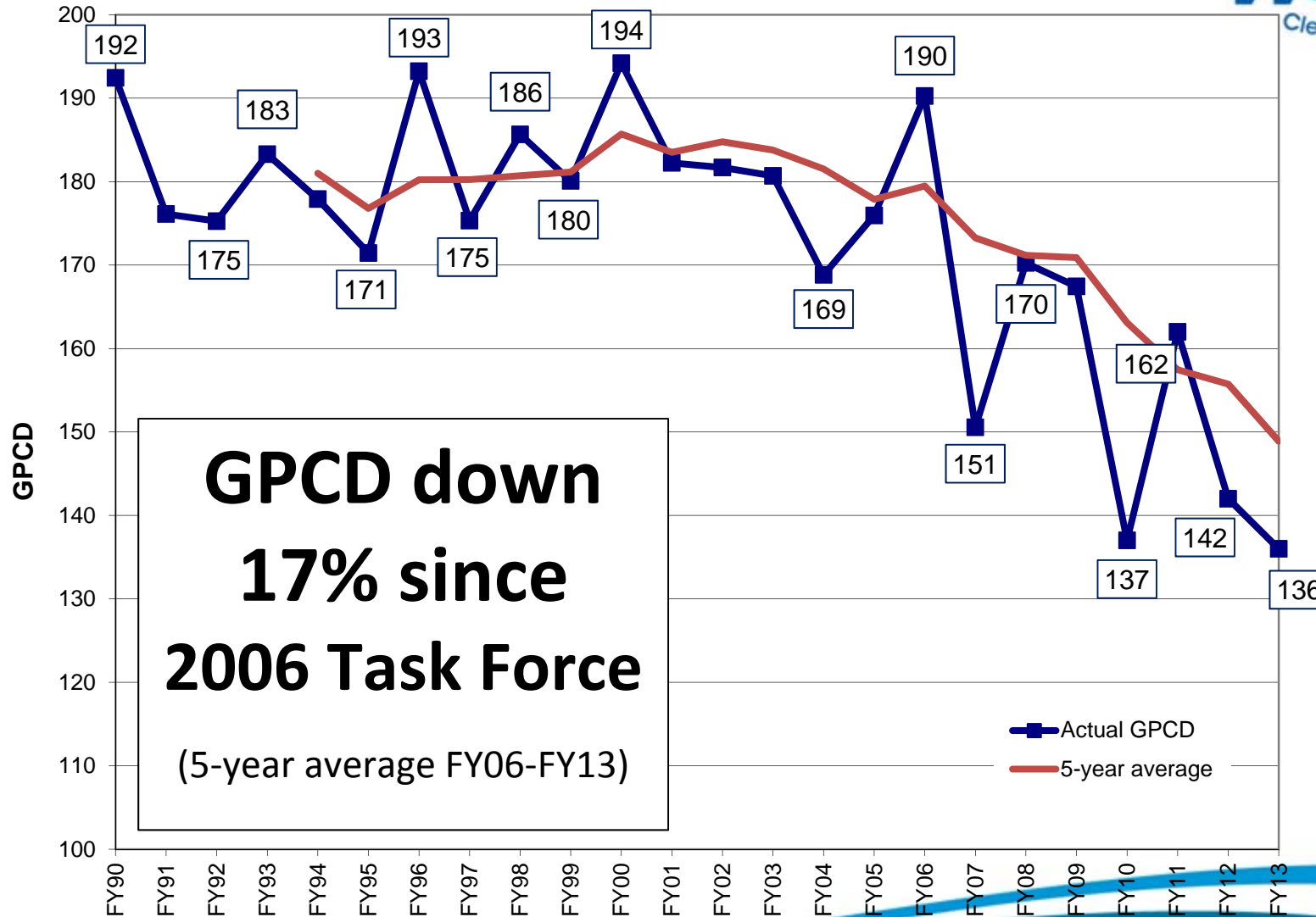
- Able to document adequate stakeholder outreach
- Able to prove public support for certain restrictions
- Industry buy-in to regulations affecting them
- Lasting contacts/advocates among stakeholders
- Improved public perception of utility staff
- Positive comments from stakeholders and Council members about public input process

# Major Code Changes

- Administrative vs. court process for fines
- Conservation Stage: 2x/week watering for all customers
- New Stage 1 drought trigger (2x week/fewer hours)
- Stage 3 modified to reduce hours, not prohibit irrig.
- All car washes must be certified efficient
- Properties over 1 acre must submit irrigation evaluation every 2 years
- Home car washes prohibited in early drought stage



### GPCD from 1990 to 2013



**GPCD down  
17% since  
2006 Task Force**  
(5-year average FY06-FY13)

# Questions?

How many bottles of water could you replace with just \$1.00 worth of Austin's drinking water?



*Answer: About 2,000!*

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