## The Drought Interest Group: "Drought characterization using the University of Washington Surface Water Monitor "

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Drought has both natural and social dimensions both of which play a role in their characterization. Therefore the framework for a drought monitoring system should be robust with respect both to hydroclimatological regions (natural dimension) and stakeholders (social dimension). The University of Washington Surface Water Monitor (SWM); an experimental drought monitoring system, combines an array of drought indicators based on a suite of hydrologic variables (e.g. Precipitation, Soil Moisture, Runoff) averaged over time periods from one month to ~ 4 years. It provides daily updates of current drought condition status across the Continental United States. We describe the implementation of SWM and its features, along with the findings of a recent study that evaluated the ability of an SWM-like approach to reconstruct the onset, severity, spatial extent; and recovery of droughts in the state of Washington. Our results suggest that this framework can provide a scientific foundation to characterization and prediction of drought events, and support of drought management decisions.