Setting the Stage for Improved Drought Management in the United States

by John W. Hess

What are the problems?

What are the challenges?

Why is the Geological Society of America addressing this issue?
What are the Problems?

- Currently about 30% of the US is experiencing moderate to exceptional drought conditions.
- Economic, social and environmental impacts.
What are the problems?

1977 Drought & resulting 24-hour desertification event
Southern California, USA
Prolonged drought episodes have highlighted an increasing vulnerability of all regions in the U.S. to water shortages.

“A nation that destroys its soils, destroys itself.”
– President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Feb. 26, 1937.
Drought threatens the livelihoods of one billion people worldwide.

Zinder, Niger - 2005
Challenges?

- Science
- Education
- Policies and Institutions
- Infrastructure
- Management
What is role of Geological Society of America?

A look to the past:

Long-term geologic history to improve predictions, planning, and management.
Managing Drought and Water Scarcity in Vulnerable Environments

Creating a Roadmap for Change in the United States

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