

## The Importance of Water: Life's Precious Essence

Water, the elixir of life, is an essential component of our existence. It is a fundamental resource that sustains all forms of life on Earth. Indeed, we can live without a house or clothing for months, we can live without food for weeks, but to live without water is measured in terms of days and hours. As the world grows in population from approximately eight billion people today, to an estimated ultimate of 9-10 billion in a few years, this will create a greater strain on our water supplies.<sup>1</sup> One of our most prolific sources of water is atmospheric condensation – rain.

Although, for the most part, people control the growth of human populations, it is the access to water that allows populations to flourish. This has become especially prominent in the last few decades. Droughts can occur slowly over a period of time causing the lack of drinking water and the precipitation that makes possible fervent agriculture. Hazards resulting from the increasing intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, such as abnormally heavy rainfall, prolonged droughts, desertification, environmental degradation, or sea-level rise and cyclones are already causing an average of more than 20 million people worldwide to leave their homes and move to other areas in their countries each year. In the United States the Dust Bowl caused the mass exodus of those that made their living in agriculture. Lack of rain was the cause.

There is no reason to believe that such events could not occur again as a consequence of global weather changes. Ten Mile Creek is affected by droughts and floods the same as everywhere else. Consequently, it is of great value to track and protect the health of this important stream. The Friends of Ten Mile Creek takes this as our mission.

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<sup>1</sup> Cohen, Joel E., *How Many People can The Earth Support?*, W. W. Norton & Co., 1995