

Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council (WSWC) and the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.



Membership:

Becky Fulkerson (Chair),
Reclamation rfulkerson@usbr.gov

Roger Gorke, (Vice Chair), EPA
Gorke.roger@epa.gov

Jean Thomas, Forest Service
jathomas02@fs.fed.us

Libby, Washburn, Reclamation
ewashburn@usbr.gov

John D'Antonio, USACE
John.R.D'Antonio@usace.army.mil

Pixie Hamilton, USGS
pahamilt@usgs.gov

Lee Koss, BLM
lkoss@blm.gov

Andrew Hautzinger, FWS
Andrew.Hautzinger@fws.gov

Mike Strobel, NRCS
michael.strobel@por.usda.gov

Roger Pulwarty, NOAA
Roger.pulwarty@noaa.gov

Brad Doorn, NASA
bradley.doorn@nasa.gov

Craig Zamuda, DOE
Craig.Zamuda@Hq.Doe.Gov

Marc Kodack, DOD
marc.d.kodack.civ@mail.mil

Eric Stevens, Federal Liaison
ericstevens@wswc.utah.gov

WestFAST News

September 2013

EPA Report on Connectivity of Streams and Wetlands, and Related CWA Rulemaking Announced

EPA announced the release of a new report, *Connectivity of Streams and Wetlands to Downstream Waters: A Review and Synthesis of the Scientific Evidence (External Review Draft)*. This report is available for public review and comment. Comments received by November 6, 2013, will be considered by the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) review panel during its public peer review meeting later this year. Comments received after November 6 may be considered, but not at the public meeting.

This draft report presents a review and synthesis of relevant peer reviewed scientific literature that will inform an upcoming joint EPA and Army Corps of Engineers rulemaking, intended to enhance protection of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters by clarifying Clean Water Act (CWA) jurisdiction. Specifically, the report is intended clarify CWA jurisdiction, including a description of the factors that influence connectivity and the mechanisms by which connected waters may affect downstream waters.

EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers recently prepared a draft rule to clarify the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act and sent it to the Office of Management and Budget for interagency review.

See this [link](#) for more information.

Alternative Funding and Finance for USACE Civil Works Projects

IWR recently published a report that reviews the issues and summarizes outcomes from a series of Alternative Finance Workshops with USACE Civil Works leadership and outside experts in project finance. The objective of the workshops was to engage USACE senior leaders and external experts in a discussion on USACE funding and finance challenges and to assist the USACE in exploring alternative financing and delivery mechanisms.

The study examined a number of options to increase revenues, leverage existing resources, shift lower priority assets, reduce cost, and deliver projects through alternative means. Key long-term funding strategies identified by workshop participants for further study include revenue enhancement, trust fund dedication, value capture, asset sales, and transfers or disposition. Key financing strategies identified include infrastructure banks, federal loans and credit enhancement, and bonding options. An action plan was developed that identified opportunities for consideration by USACE. These include a Special Experimental Program (SEP) authority, which is a mechanism that has been successfully utilized by the Department of Transportation. Candidate pilot programs or projects were identified for possible application of the various options and strategies being considered.

See the [report](#) for more information.

Reclamation Coordinates Study Effort with Colorado River Basin Tribes

The Bureau of Reclamation recently entered into a collaborative agreement with the Colorado River Basin Tribes Partnership ("Ten Tribes Partnership") to complete a tribally-focused effort to address projected water supply and demand imbalances in the Colorado River Basin.

This is an effort to implement commitments identified in the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study. That study's findings projected significant shortfalls between expected water supplies and demands in the Colorado River Basin in the coming decades. In contrast, this new study effort will focus specifically on issues facing the tribal communities in the basin and their water resources.

The Ten Tribes Partnership, which began in 1992, includes ten tribes: the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe, Cocopah Indian Community, Colorado River Indian Tribes, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Navajo Nation, Quechan Indian Tribe, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe and Ute Tribe of the Uintah, and Ouray Reservation.

See this [link](#) for more information.

Federal News

09/03: Landsat 8 Satellite Sees Rim Fire from Space; see [link](#).

09/04: Global Precipitation Measurement (GPM) and Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM) Applications Workshop; see [link](#).

09/04: Service Extends Comment Period for Gray Wolf Proposals; see [link](#).

09/04: USIBWC Seeks Applicants for Citizens Forum Board in San Diego; see [link](#).

09/04: Product Highlight: How to Find Past Weather Data; see [link](#).

09/04: Experts Team Up on Tsunami Resilience in California; see [link](#).

09/04: Potential Alternative Funding and Finance for USACE Civil Works Missions; see [link](#).

09/05: EPA Launches New Online Mapping Tool for Environmental Impact Statements; see [link](#).

09/09: Forest Service Offers Planning Tools for Your Fall Colors Vacation; see [link](#).

09/09: New Microwave Imager Climate Data Record; see [link](#).

09/10: USDA Awards Funds to Improve Conservation on Agricultural Lands; see [link](#).

09/12: New Maps for Colorado and Minnesota; see [link](#).

09/12: Grants and Additions to the National Wildlife Refuge System Will Conserve More than 150,000 Acres of Bird Habitat; see [link](#).

09/13: USDA and Coca-Cola Partner to Replenish One Billion Liters of Water to Nature; see [link](#).

09/13: Every Drop Counts: Progress Toward a National Water Census; see [link](#).

09/17: NASA Launches Study of New Global Land Imaging System; see [link](#).

09/17: NASA and Homeland Security To Demonstrate Disaster Rescue Tool; see [link](#).

09/18: Reclamation Collaborates with Colorado River Basin Tribes

Partnership in Tribally-Focused Water Study; see [link](#).

09/18: Testimony of Nancy Sutley, Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; see [link](#).

09/19: Energy Department Announces New Investments of Over \$30 Million to Better Protect the Nation's Critical Infrastructure from Cyber Attack; see [link](#).

09/19: Using Information on Ecosystem Goods and Services in Corps Planning; see [link](#).

09/25: Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative Will Connect Millions to Conservation; see [link](#).

09/25: NASA and Homeland Security Test Radar for Locating Disaster Victims; see [link](#).

09/26: Non-Agricultural Discharge Draft Directive and Standard Available for Public Review; see [link](#).

09/27: Operation of Critical Infrastructure to Continue in the Event of a Government Shutdown; see [link](#).

09/27: U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Meet to Discuss Joint Interests; see [link](#).

State News

09/04: Western Governors Advocate State Oversight of Hydraulic Fracturing; see [link](#).

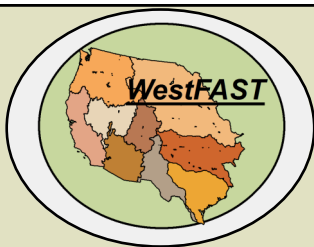
09/11: Western Governors Support Efforts to Create Legislation to Speed the Exchange of State and Federal Lands; see [link](#).

09/12: Executive Director's Notebook: The difference Between Science and Policy; see [link](#).

09/17: WGA News: Economic Development, Energy, Natural Resources and More; see [link](#).

Upcoming WSWC Meetings & Events

- **October 2-4, 2013:** Fall Council Meeting; Deadwood, South Dakota; The Lodge at Deadwood.



WestFAST News is published monthly. To get an Agency Announcement published or to get added to the WestFAST News distribution list contact:

Eric Stevens, WestFAST Federal Liaison

Email: ericstevens@wswc.utah.gov

Phone: 801-685-2555

Check out the WestFAST Web Site: <http://www.westernstateswater.org/westfast>