

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.



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WestFAST News

June 2014

WSWC Prepares for Summer Meetings in Helena, Montana

As part of the WSWC's Summer Council Meetings, the WSWC and WestFAST are sponsoring a pre-meeting workshop on Federal Non-Tribal Water Rights Claims, which will be held prior July 15-16 at the Holiday Inn Conference Center Downtown in Helena. The purpose of the workshop is to bring together state and federal officials to discuss ways states and federal agencies can improve the process used to resolve federal non-tribal water rights claims, including the possible development of a clearinghouse of relevant information that states and federal agencies can use when working to address these claims. Participants will specifically address: (1) water issues associated with general stream adjudications; (2) water issues associated with permitted activities on federal land; and (3) ways to accommodate federal water needs within state legal frameworks. This workshop is limited to invited state and federal experts as space is restricted. The workshop will begin at 8:00 AM on Tuesday, July 15, and end at 11:15 AM on Wednesday, July 16.

The other regularly scheduled council meetings will begin immediately following the non-tribal water rights claims workshop at the same location in Helena, Montana on July 16-18, 2014. See the WSWC [website](#) for more information about the meetings in Helena.

Representatives from the Federal Government Speak at WGA Gathering

The Western Governors' Association (WGA) held its annual meeting the week of June 9-11 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The following are some highlights.

On the first day, the WGA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding, renewing and strengthening collaboration on drought and flood preparedness. NOAA Administrator Dr. Kathryn Sullivan and WGA Chairman and Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper signed the MOU.

Interior and EPA provided keynote addresses. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell discussed drought and wildfire. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy gave a luncheon address that focused on her agency's recently proposed regulations on carbon emissions from existing power plants under the Clean Air Act.

Deputy Secretary of the Interior Mike Connor participated in a roundtable discussion on water challenges and opportunities in the West, along with Colorado Conservation Board Director James Eklund and Southern Nevada Water Authority General Manager John Entsminger. They discussed water management strategies in the context of growing demands and the West's unique hydrology. Connor noted Interior's history of working cooperatively with the WGA and WSWC.

The meetings also included a private, live videoconference between the governors and President Obama on wildfire and efforts to improve forest management, including putting an end to "fire borrowing," in which discretionary funding is carved out of federal agency accounts to pay for unanticipated emergency firefighting expenses.

See this [link](#) for the daily meeting summaries.

WSWC Vice Chair Goes Before the House Subcommittee on Water and Power

Pat Tyrrell of Wyoming, who serves as the WSWC Vice Chair, testified before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Water and Power on June 24, 2014.

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

WSWC Leader Moves From State to Federal Position

WSWC Chairman Phil Ward announced that he will be leaving on June 23 to accept a position as the Oregon State Executive Director of USDA's Farm Service Agency. In addition to his WSWC position, Phil has been serving as the Director for the Oregon Department of Water Resources (ODWR). Thank you Phil for your service and leadership!

Federal News

06/02: EPA Proposes First Guidelines to Cut Carbon Pollution from Existing Power Plants/Clean Power Plan Is Flexible Proposal to Ensure a Healthier Environment, Spur Innovation and Strengthen the Economy; see [link](#).

06/02: Statement from Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz on Proposed New EPA Rules for Existing Power Plants; see [link](#).

06/02: Secretary Jewell Statement on EPA Clean Power Plan Proposal; see [link](#).

06/03: Requesting Information to Strengthen Partnerships; see [link](#).

06/04: Product Highlight: Historical Observing Metadata Repository; see [link](#).

06/05: Reclamation in Partnership with Natural Resources Conservation Service Announces \$6.3 Million to Fund Projects for Improved Agricultural Water Use Efficiencies in Drought-Stricken California; see [link](#).

06/05: U.S. Drought Monitor Update for June 3, 2014; see [link](#).

06/06: Reclamation Selects Recipients of \$1.8 Million in CALFED Water Use Efficiency Grants; see [link](#).

06/09: Reclamation Funds Study for Sustainable Water Management in Oregon's Upper Deschutes Basin; see [link](#).

06/09: USDA Releases State by State Impacts of Limited Wildfire Suppression In Recent Years; see [link](#).

06/09: Interior Announces Nearly \$20 Million in WaterSMART Funding for Water and Energy Efficiency Projects and River Basin Studies at Western Governors' Annual Meeting; see [link](#).

06/10: U.S. Drought Monitor Update for June 10, 2014; see [link](#).

06/16: Reservoirs Affect the Movement of Carbon in Large Rivers of the Central and Western United States; see [link](#).

06/16: On the Heels of Historic Presidential Visit to Indian Country, Secretary Jewell Announces Interior Initiatives to Support Tribal-led Economic Development; see [link](#).

06/17: Secretary Jewell Announces \$436.9 Million in PILT Payments to Support Vital Services in Rural Communities; see [link](#).

06/17: U.S. Drought Monitor Update for June 17, 2014; see [link](#).

06/18: Final Forecast Confirms Uneven Water Supply for the West; see [link](#).

06/18: U.S. Forest Service Seeks Public Comment on a Proposed Rule Addressing Ski Area Water Rights on Forest Service Lands; see [link](#).

06/18: USACE IWR-ICIWaRM Director Participates in Ecohydrology Steering Committee Workshop for 8th Phase of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP-VIII); see [link](#).

06/19: New Climate Preparedness and Resilience Community of Practice Established; see [link](#).

06/20: USDA Announces Landmark Commitment to Improve Sage-Grouse Habitat; see [link](#).

06/24: Ivory Homes Agrees to Prevent Hundreds of Thousands of Pounds of Sediment and Contaminated Stormwater Runoff from

Entering Utah Waterways Each Year; see [link](#).

06/24: NOAA, Partners Predict an Average 'Dead Zone' for Gulf of Mexico; Slightly Above-Average Hypoxia in Chesapeake Bay; see [link](#).

06/26: BLM Finalizes Lander Resource Management Plan that Provides for Energy Development, and Protections for Wildlife, Cultural and Natural Resources; see [link](#).

06/27: Federal Wildlife Agencies Finalize Policy to Improve Implementation of Endangered Species Act; see [link](#).

06/27: U.S. Forest Service Announces Support for Community Forests; see [link](#).

06/30: Federal Agency Leaders Meet to Celebrate 20 Years of Native Plant Conservation and Renew MOU Commitment; see [link](#).

State News

06/02: Watch the Video: Western Governors' Association Remains Committed to Policy Work on 30th Anniversary; see [link](#).

06/09: Western Governors, NOAA Sign Agreement to Deliver Drought, Extreme Weather Data to States; see [link](#).

06/09: WGA Annual Meeting Day 1: President Obama, Drought Readiness, Secretary Jewell, MOU with NOAA; see [link](#).

06/10: WGA Annual Meeting Day 2: Governors Meet with EPA Chief on Carbon Emissions Rule, Delve into Water and Energy Issues; see [link](#).

06/11: WGA Annual Meeting Day 3: Governors Elect Nevada's Brian Sandoval Chairman, Oregon's John Kitzhaber Vice Chair for Coming Year; see [link](#).

06/11: Western Governors Approve 6 Resolutions Ranging from Regional Wildfire Resources to State Clean Air Act Authority; see [link](#).

06/17: Interior Makes \$436 Million Payment to Local Governments in PILT Funding for Vital Services; see [link](#).

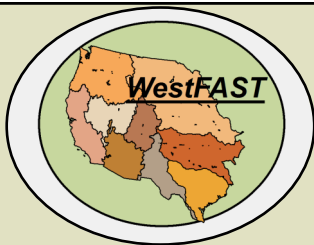
06/19: Western Governors Support Bipartisan Land-Exchange Reform Bill Introduced in the House; see [link](#).

06/20: Nevada Gov. Sandoval Supports USDA Investment in Bi-State Action Plan for Sage-Grouse; see [link](#).

06/30: WGA 2014 Annual Report Highlights Policy Work in Wildlife, Energy, Water, Drought and Wildfires; see [link](#).

Upcoming WSWC Meetings & Events

- **July 14-18, 2014:** [WSWC Summer Council Meeting](#), Helena, Montana (Holiday Inn Downtown).
- **August 25-27, 2014:** [Remote Sensing Applications Workshop](#), Pasadena, California (Sheraton Pasadena Hotel).
- **October 7-10, 2014:** WSWC Fall Council Meeting, Scottsdale, Arizona (Talking Stick Resort).



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

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