



**2021 Washington DC
Roundtable
April 15-16, 2021**

Sessions Held Virtually

Speaker Biographies

Brian Clifford

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

Brian Clifford serves as the EPW Committee's majority deputy staff director. He has been the director of the Senate Western Caucus since 2009 and was a senior advisor to Sen. Barrasso for environment, water and infrastructure issues. He also held several Republican EPW subcommittee staff director roles for Barrasso. Clifford was formerly the legislative director for then-Rep. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), and also worked for former Rep. Elton Gallegly (R-Calif.).

Dr. Don Cline

USGS Associate Director for Water Resources

Dr. Don Cline is the U.S. Geological Survey's Associate Director for Water Resources. Don leads the USGS' research, monitoring, assessment, modeling, and prediction of the nation's water resources. The USGS Water Resources Mission Area (WMA) provides society with the information it needs on water quantity and quality across the Nation. Don oversees the WMA's efforts to advance understanding of the controls over water availability; to better predict changes in water quantity and quality in response to natural and human-induced changes; to anticipate and respond to water-related emergencies and conflicts; and to deliver timely water data, analyses, and decision-support tools seamlessly across the Nation to support water-resource decisions.

Don joined USGS in 2016 following a 19-year career with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service, where he served as the Director of the National Water Center, the Chief of the Hydrology Laboratory, and the Director of the National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center. Don has been in the Senior Executive Service since 2010.

Don has over 20 years of research, development and operational implementation experience in applied and basic hydrologic and cryospheric science, large-scale field experiments, integrated environmental modeling, development and application of airborne and spaceborne observing systems, and applications of geographic information systems.

Don holds a Ph.D., M.S. and B.S. from the Department of Geography at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Mindi Dalton

Program Coordinator, USGS Water Availability and Use Science Program

Mindi Dalton is the Program Coordinator for the USGS Water Availability and Use Science Program (WAUSP). WAUSP supports research and projects that advance the goal of improving our understanding water availability at the National and Regional level as part of the National Water Census. WAUSP works with partners and stakeholders to improve our understanding on increasing demand and competition for limited water resources to ensure adequate water availability for both human and ecological needs now and into the

future. Her USGS career began as a hydrologist at the Georgia Water Science Center and she still resides in Atlanta, GA with her husband Brendan, son Patrick, and dogs Rosie and Pete.

Veva Deheza

NIDIS Executive Director

Veva Deheza is responsible for the implementation of the Public Law that authorized NIDIS in 2006. She supports agency congressional, legislative, and policy priorities to achieve the NIDIS mission, goals, and objectives. Veva is a NOAA/NIDIS co-lead on the National Drought Resilience Partnership (NDRP), an Administration initiative under the President's Climate Action Plan. She serves as the NIDIS liaison for the Western Governors' Association (WGA)/NOAA MOU and the Western States Water Council. She oversees a staff that coordinates all NIDIS regional drought early warning systems around the country, ensuring that regional successes and lessons learned are connected and linked to each other to create an integrated national drought early warning information system.

David G. DeWitt

Director, Climate Prediction Center



DeWitt joined NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) in 2012 as the lead modeler within the Science Plans Branch of the Office of Science and Technology. During his tenure at NWS, he served a detail as the acting deputy director for NCEP's Environmental Modeling Center, and as a project manager for the Sandy Supplemental projects, which will accelerate development of NOAA's foundational numerical guidance for weather prediction. David has provided leadership on several NWS and NOAA cross-line office activities targeted toward improving NOAA's products and services.

Prior to coming to NOAA, DeWitt worked as a research scientist at the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) at Columbia University from 1999-2012. While at IRI, David led a team of scientists in the development of seasonal climate

forecasts and prototype decision supports systems for the application of climate information in the fields of agriculture, health, and water resources.

From 1994-1999, DeWitt worked at the Center for Ocean-Land-Atmosphere Studies developing coupled atmosphere-ocean models for seasonal forecasts and conducting research to better understand short-term climate variability.

DeWitt received his Bachelor of Arts (1989) degree in meteorology from Kean University, and his Masters (1992), and Ph.D. (1994) degrees in meteorology from the University of Maryland, College Park. He has published over 30 peer-reviewed journal articles, and is a leading expert on short-term climate forecasting and diagnostics, and coupled model development. He served as an executive editor of *Climate Dynamics*, and as a member of the World Climate Research Program Working Group on Seasonal to Interannual Prediction.

Mary C. Erickson

Deputy Director, NOAA's National Weather Service



Mary C. Erickson is the deputy director of the National Weather Service, a role she has filled since January 2017. Her primary responsibilities include leading the agency's major change initiatives, ensuring accurate and timely service delivery to key stakeholders, supporting management-labor relations, and building important relationships with America's Weather Industry. She also champions water and inundation programs and directs efforts to improve employee engagement throughout the organization that supports a culture where belonging, inclusion and diversity can thrive.

Ms. Erickson has served in various roles across NOAA for more than 30 years. In her most recent position as the director of the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science -- an office in NOAA's National Ocean Service -- she ensured the timely and effective transition of ecosystem science solutions from research and development to operations and applications. Prior to that, she served as chief of NOAA's Coast Survey Development Laboratory, where she and her team developed ocean technology to support safe and efficient navigation and sustainable, healthy coasts.

Ms. Erickson began her federal career at the National Weather Service, having worked as a research meteorologist for more than 20 years in the Office of Science and Technology. Her early work and publications centered on statistical techniques and model post processing within the Meteorological Development Laboratory. Later, she managed a wide portfolio of science projects, serving as deputy of the cross-NOAA strategic goal team for weather and water.

Ms. Erickson earned a B.S. degree in Meteorology from Pennsylvania State University (1983) and an M.S. degree in Operations Research and Statistics from George Mason University (1990). An avid reader and continual learner, she enjoys serving as a professional mentor to benefit future science leaders. Ms. Erickson is a native of Whitesboro, NY, but she has called Brandywine, MD home for the last 30 years.

Radhika Fox

Office of Water, Environmental Protection Agency



Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Water
[US Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)
Jan 2021 – Present 4 months

CEO
US Water Alliance
2015 - Jan 2021 6 years
San Francisco Bay Area

Director, Policy and Government Affairs
[San Francisco Public Utilities Commission](#)
2011 - 2015 4 years
San Francisco, CA

Director, Federal Policy
[PolicyLink](#)
2000 - 2011 11 years
Oakland, CA

Education

University of California, Berkeley

MA City and Regional Planning

1998 - 2000

Columbia University in the City of New York; BA

1991 – 1995

Sara Gonzalez-Rothi

Senior Director for Water; Council on Environmental Quality



Sara Gonzalez-Rothi, senior director for water at CEQ, was most recently senior counsel on the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, where she worked on policy and oversight for oceans, fisheries, clean energy and other climate issues.

Gonzalez-Rothi previously worked as legislative counsel and Everglades fellow to then-Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), where she helped craft the Restore Act in response to the Deepwater Horizon disaster. She has also worked with the National Wildlife Federation and with the Mississippi River Delta Restoration Coalition.

As the first senior director for water at the Council on Environmental Quality, Gonzalez-Rothi will tackle everything from permitting and infrastructure to environmental justice, climate change, water quality and ocean health. The 36-year-old Florida native, whose mother is Norwegian and a scientist and father is a doctor from Cuba, grew up in Gainesville and earned an undergraduate degree from the University of Florida and a law degree from the University of Miami.

Before joining CEQ, Gonzalez-Rothi was senior counsel on the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, working on policy and oversight for oceans, fisheries, clean energy and other climate issues.

She also worked as legislative counsel and Everglades fellow to then-Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), and helped craft the RESTORE Act in response to the Deepwater Horizon spill to ensure federal fines resulting from the 2010 disaster are sent back to the Gulf Coast to restore its environment and economy.

Gonzalez-Rothi also worked as senior policy specialist on Gulf and coastal restoration with the National Wildlife Federation and as interim policy director for its campaign to restore the Mississippi River Delta.

From 2/25/21 EENews

Stephen Hill

Director of Contingency Operations and Chief, Office of Homeland Security



Mr. Stephen Hill is the Director of Contingency Operations and Chief, Office of Homeland Security, Headquarters, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). His bio is pasted below and attached. I've also attached a copy of his headshot photo.

As Directorate of Contingency Operations, Stephen Hill provides command and control of USACE civil and military contingency operations during disaster incident response and recovery; ensures the readiness of critical teams and equipment; leads the development of contingency doctrine and plans in support of interagency partners and both Combatant and Service Component Commands; oversees execution of current operations and planning for future operations; provides oversight of the command's force protection and physical security program; and monitors intelligence operations that support contingency plans development and execution.

As Chief, Office of Homeland Security, he leads programs and missions in support of the departments of Homeland Security, Defense, and Army. Hill serves as the agency's principal executive to assist federal, state and local emergency management and response organizations in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies or all-hazards disasters to include mitigating risk associated with future events. His portfolio includes programs in flood risk management and critical water resources infrastructure.

Prior to his Senior Executive Service appointment, Hill accumulated over 35 years of combined experience in the federal and private sector. In the private sector, his key duties included serving as program manager for the World Trade Center Construction Program in New York City where he provided comprehensive support to a world-class team responsible for nearly all program wide aspects of an \$18 billion construction program. During that period, he also led the construction response and recovery efforts after Hurricane Sandy. Hill also supported major transportation program efforts in the Middle East and served as the mission director for the Power Field Office during the emergency response for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands after Hurricane Maria.

Hill is a retired U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Officer with more than 25 years of experience in federal contracting, design, construction, operations and maintenance, environmental remediation, and contract management. Key USACE assignments included serving as the Headquarters, USACE chief of staff, and as commander of Pittsburgh District and Gulf Region South in Iraq. He began his USACE career with Seattle District running the KC-135 beddown program at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana, and later as lead for federal environmental restoration projects. Additional assignments provided significant experience managing large construction programs, conducting emergency response operations and leading winning teams in locations around the world, including Japan, Iraq, Germany, Haiti, Kuwait, Egypt, Qatar and multiple locations in the U.S.

Hill is a Fellow with the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), and Silver and Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal recipient from the Army Engineer Association. He is a recipient of the Infantry Association's Order of Saint Maurice and Armor Association's Order of Saint George for significant contributions and service in support of the U.S. Army's Infantry and Armor branches.

He also serves on several private boards to assist with nonprofit engineering and facility management programs and received his previous firm's Global Values Award and President's Award for inspirational leadership, mentorship and program management for his service with industry prior to his Senior Executive Service selection.

Hill is a certified Project Management Professional, has a bachelor's degree from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a Master of Science in Civil Engineering from Purdue University.

Dr. Thomas Graziano

Director, Office of Water Prediction
National Weather Service (NWS)



Dr. Thomas Graziano is the Director of the Office of Water Prediction (OWP), a geographically distributed organization that includes elements in Maryland, Minnesota and Alabama. The OWP collaboratively researches, develops and delivers state-of-the-science national hydrologic analyses, forecast information, data, decision-support services and guidance to support and inform essential emergency services and water management decisions.

Tom has held numerous leadership roles over 30 years of Federal service, most recently serving as the Chief of Staff for the National Weather Service, from November 2013 to January 2016.

Tom began his career in the NWS in 1990 as a visiting professor and liaison for the Cooperative Program for Meteorology Education and Training (COMET) at the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) in Colorado Springs, Co. Tom supported efforts to develop distance learning training of NWS forecasters and led the effort to establish an undergraduate program in meteorology at the USAFA.

In 1993, Tom joined the NWS staff at the Raleigh, NC, Weather Forecast Office as a Research Meteorologist, where he earned a Ph.D. in Atmospheric Science through the University Assignment Program. In 1995 he moved to NWS headquarters in Silver Spring, MD, to serve as the National Quantitative Precipitation Forecasting (QPF) Program Leader and led the national effort to define requirements and address the science and service issues to enhance the end-to-end quantitative precipitation forecast process.

From 2000 to 2013, Tom worked in hydrologic services, most notably as the Chief of the Hydrologic Services Division within the Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services. He was responsible for leading the development of NWS plans, policies, and procedures for hydrologic warning and forecast operations. Tom was also deeply involved in the implementation of the Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service (AHPS), the establishment of the Integrated Water Resources Science and Services (IWRSS)

Consortium with the U.S. Geological Survey, Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the programmatic plans and construction of the National Water Center (NWC).

Tom was awarded a Bronze Medal in 2003 work on flash flood decision assistance, a Bronze Medal in 2001 and a NOAA Administrator's Award in 1999 for his work on the quantitative precipitation forecasting process, and the DOC Energy and Environmental Stewardship in 2015 for the design and construction of the NWC.

In addition to his Ph.D. in Atmospheric Science, Tom earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Meteorology from Northern Illinois University (1981) and a Master of Science degree in Meteorology from Penn State University (1985).

Vicki Lukas

USGS-National Geospatial Program

Vicki Lukas is the Chief of Topographic Data Services in the National Geospatial Program of the USGS, where she oversees the 3D Elevation Program and the National Hydrography Datasets of The National Map. Vicki has over 25 years of experience as a Geographer at the USGS. Past positions include overseeing partnership activities of The National Map and the national network of Liaisons, serving as a mapping liaison in the western U.S., and beginning her career in digital geologic mapping. Vicki serves as the USGS liaison to MAPPS and has been the project lead on multiple mapping coordination initiatives, including the 3DEP Executive Forum, the Alaska Mapping Roundtable and Executive Committee, and the project team of the National States Geographic Information Council and National Association of Counties to develop partnering mechanisms for *The National Map* program.

Dr. Cary Talbot

Division Chief at U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC)



Cary Talbot is Chief of the Flood & Storm Protection Division in the Coastal & Hydraulics Laboratory (CHL), US Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), the research arm of the US Army Corps of Engineers. He supervises the execution of research and development activities in a wide range of coastal, hydraulic, and hydrologic engineering, data collection and analysis applications. He also serves as the Program Manager of the Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) Program, which is assessing the viability of using advanced hydrometeorological forecasting capability and hydrologic and water management tools to operate reservoirs more efficiently for multipurpose benefits.

He holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Civil & Environmental Engineering from Brigham Young University and a PhD in Environmental Engineering from the University of Connecticut. He is a registered Professional Engineer in the state of Mississippi.

Chad Wagner

USGS Program Coordinator, Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program

Chad is the Program Coordinator of the U.S. Geological Survey, Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program (GWSIP). He has been with the USGS since 2000 as a project chief and in various leadership positions, all of which have allowed him to gain a strong understanding and appreciation for the way USGS collects, processes and delivers our streamflow and groundwater information. Chad recently moved into the GWSIP Coordinator role from his position as the Associate Director of the USGS South Atlantic Water Science Center (North Carolina-South Carolina-Georgia), where he provided leadership over a very diverse group of scientists that conduct data collection and research/investigations related to topics such as hydraulic, hydrologic and groundwater modeling, tracking the movement of groundwater contamination, water-availability for human and ecological uses, and groundwater and surface-water quality related to anthropogenic and agricultural activities.

Since 2010, Chad has been involved in USGS Storm Tide Monitoring efforts - from the field deployments, to team coordination and working with FEMA on Mission Assignments. From his early days with the USGS, Chad has also been heavily involved in hydroacoustics and has helped shape the USGS advancements in streamflow measurement techniques since the mid 2000's. Chad holds a Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Civil/Environmental Engineering from the University of Tennessee and is a licensed Professional Engineer.

We thank our generous 2021 Roundtable sponsors!



Insights for Experts

