

OCTOBER 2021



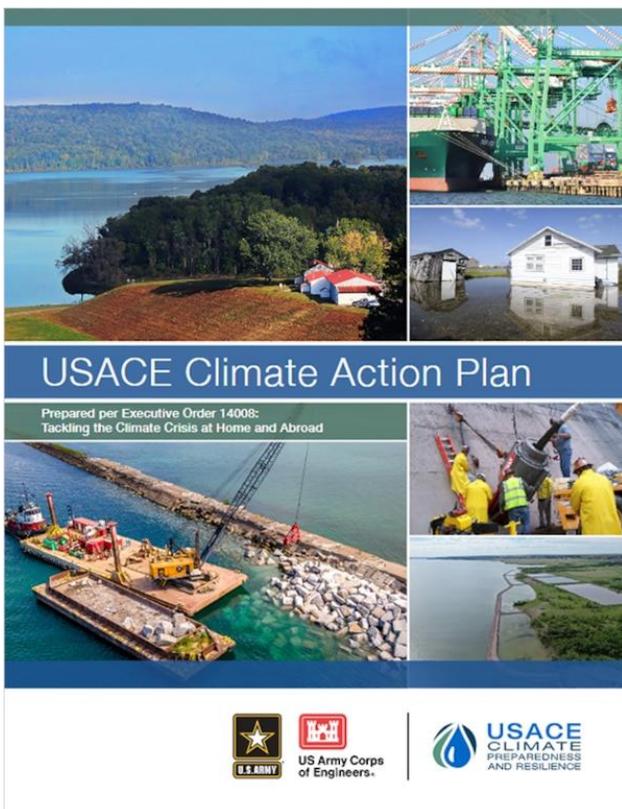
WestFAST News

682 East Vine Street / Suite 7 / Murray, UT 84107 / (801) 685-2555/ www.westernstateswater.org/westfast

Chair – Roger Gorke; Federal Liaison Officer – Heather Hofman

Army Civil Works Releases U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

COE 10/7/21.



USACE Climate Action Plan

Today, as part of President Biden's *whole-of-government* approach to confronting the climate crisis, *Army Civil Works* released its climate **adaptation and resilience** plan for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to ensure its

Civil Works projects and operations adapt and are increasingly resilient to climate change impacts. Federal agencies face a multitude of risks caused by climate change including rising costs to maintain and repair damaged infrastructure from more frequent and extreme weather events, program effectiveness, and health and safety challenges to federal employees who work outside. Taking climate risk management actions now will mitigate disruptions to federal operations, assets and programs, and these actions will create safer worker conditions.

To address these challenges, President Biden prioritized the revitalization of federal agency climate adaptation and resilience planning efforts after a four-year pause. Through this approach, large agencies developed adaptation and resilience plans, called "climate action plans," to address their most significant climate risks and vulnerabilities. The plans address leveraging procurement to drive innovation and increase resilience against supply chain disruptions and are in line with the President's commitment to implementing his [Justice40 Initiative](#). The climate **adaptation and resilience** plans were previously submitted to and reviewed by the National Climate Task Force, White House Council on Environmental Quality's Federal Chief Sustainability Officer and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in response to President Biden's [Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad](#).

As part of these efforts, agencies will embed adaptation and resilience planning and implementation throughout their operations and

programs, and will continually update their adaptation plans. In addition to these plans, President Biden's Build Back Better Agenda and the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal](#) include bold, historic, and transformational investments to strengthen our nation's resilience to climate change and extreme weather events, including upgrading power infrastructure, rebuilding America's roads and bridges, and more.

Today, Army Civil Works, alongside more than 20 major federal agencies, is making available the [USACE climate adaptation and resilience plan](#).

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Climate Action Plan provides actions that demonstrate how the Corps continues to further their efforts to address climate adaptation and resilience in all aspects of Civil Works projects and operations," said Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Jaime A. Pinkham. "This is a vital component of identifying the contribution of the Corps to the Administration's goals for resilient infrastructure and community preparedness."

Highlights from the USACE plan include:

- **Safeguarding Federal investments.** Agencies identified which programs and missions are most at risk from climate change. This first step is critical to ensuring the best use of taxpayer dollars in response to changing climatic conditions. For example, the USACE will perform an initial screening of their existing Civil Works projects for exposure to climate change impacts, based on projections of future climate conditions and project-specific indicator metrics, to prioritize projects for further detailed study.
- **Identifying leadership and accountability.** For the first time, agencies identified senior leadership and created new accountability structures so that adaptation and resilience is led from the top. For example, USACE has identified the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works as the senior point of contact for climate preparedness and resilience, and the Chief of Engineering and Construction, who oversees the Climate Preparedness and Resilience Community of Practice, as the

senior official responsible for executing climate preparedness and resilience.

- **Developing a more resilient supply chain.** Agencies are revamping supply chain policies and operations to create a more climate-resilient system. For example, USACE will continue to integrate projections of future sea-level change into planning navigation projects to ensure waterborne supply chains are prepared for future conditions and investigate partnering with the U.S. Coast Guard to use rapidly deployable channel markers after floods and storms to reduce navigational downtime.
- **Enhancing protections for workers and communities.** The greatest asset to our country and Federal Government is our people. Agencies recognize the need to better support America's workers from the impacts of climate change. For example, USACE will explore new mechanisms for contracting with hotels and other properties to provide safe, comfortable temporary housing for workers responding to emergencies and extreme weather events, which may become more common as the climate continues to change.
- **Building a more equitable future.** Climate change and its impacts may exacerbate existing health and socioeconomic inequities, placing certain populations at particular risk. To tackle this challenge, agencies outlined their actions in support of this Administration's environmental justice objectives. For example, USACE will continue to leverage programs and assets such as the Silver Jackets teams, Floodplain Management Services Program, and district Tribal Liaisons to build the adaptation capacity of disproportionately affected communities and help USACE gain better understanding of their capacity to adapt to climate change.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and Office of Management and Budget seek public input on the agency climate adaptation plans. Members of the public may submit comments via the docket at <https://www.regulations.gov/> (Docket ID: CEQ-2021-0003) until Nov. 6, 2021. CEQ also will hold a virtual convening this fall with national

organizations who have expertise in climate adaptation and resilience or have expressed interest in the agency plans.

All plans are available at:

www.sustainability.gov/adaptation and www.usace.army.mil/corpsclimate/Climate

[Interior Department Releases Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan](#)

DOI 10/7/21.



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

2021

WASHINGTON — Today, as part of President Biden’s whole-of-government approach to confronting the climate crisis, the Department of the Interior released its [climate adaptation and resilience plan](#), which outlines how the Department will use science as the foundation for planning and decision-making related to climate change risks, impacts and vulnerabilities.

"The Interior Department is committed to meeting the Biden-Harris administration's ambitious climate and infrastructure goals," said **Secretary Deb Haaland**. "As the climate crisis disproportionately affects underserved communities, Interior will center environmental justice, build resilient communities and invest in a clean energy future that can create millions of good-paying union jobs,

while protecting the communities, natural and cultural resources on which Americans rely." The Department and its bureaus face a multitude of risks caused by climate change, including rising costs to maintain and repair damaged infrastructure from more frequent and extreme weather events, reduced program effectiveness and health and safety challenges to federal employees. Taking climate risk management actions now will mitigate disruptions to federal operations, assets and programs, and will create safer worker conditions.

As part of these efforts, the Department’s Plan outlines how it will embed adaptation and resilience planning and implementation throughout its operations and programs. The Plan commits the Department to the following major categories of adaptation actions:

1. Promoting Climate-Resilient Lands, Waters and Cultural Resources;
2. Advancing Climate Equity;
3. Transitioning to a Resilient Clean Energy Economy;
4. Supporting Tribal and Insular Community Resilience;
5. Empowering the Next Generation of Conservation and Resilience Workers;
6. Enhancing Climate Literacy; and
7. Bolstering Climate Resilience in the Management of Sites, Facilities and Supply of Products and Services.

The Plan also identifies the institutional approaches the Department will use to tackle the climate crisis, as well as climate-related vulnerabilities to the Department's mission, and strategies to secure climate-ready sites, facilities, products and services. The Department will undertake all of its planning and preparations by engaging with federal agencies, Tribes, Insular areas, Native Hawaiian people, states, local communities and other public and private partners, domestically and abroad.

Today’s actions supplement President Biden’s Build Back Better Agenda and the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal](#), which include bold, historic and transformational investments to strengthen our nation’s resilience to climate change and extreme weather events.

More information about Interior’s work is available on our [addressing the climate crisis](#) webpage.

USDA Invests \$21 Million in Effort to Help Producers Build Drought Resilience

NRCS 10/27/21. NRCS Names 15 New Priority Areas in WaterSMART Initiative



Restored wetland in central Washington

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$21 million as part of the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (NRCS) collaboration with the Department of Interior’s (DOI) WaterSMART Initiative to help farmers and ranchers conserve water and build drought resilience in their communities. These investments complement projects by irrigation districts, water suppliers and other organizations receiving WaterSMART Program funds from the Department of Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation. NRCS works with Reclamation to coordinate investments in the same community for accelerating water conservation and drought resilience and making a bigger impact where it is most needed.

“The consequences of drought have continued to impact farms, ranches and communities across much of the West and other parts of the country,” NRCS Chief Terry Cosby said. “Drought is a complex challenge, and our collaboration on WaterSMART is part of our strategic approach to help producers conserve water and build resilience while also bringing important partners to the table. Bringing as many like-minded individuals and groups as possible to innovate together is our best solution for water management in the West.”

“Reclamation’s collaboration with NRCS maximizes each agency’s investment in tackling

conservation and building drought resiliency in the West,” said DOI Bureau of Reclamation Deputy Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton. “Earlier this year, Reclamation awarded \$42.4 million to 55 WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Projects to support on-the-ground improvements to conserve water and build resilience to drought. Many of the projects announced by NRCS today will complement existing WaterSMART projects, maximizing the benefits of each agency’s conservation programs.”

In fiscal year 2022, NRCS will invest in 15 new priority areas and 25 existing priority areas with continued need, assisting producers and communities in 13 states across the West. NRCS is providing the funding through Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

New WaterSmart Priority Areas

The [15 new priority areas](#) include:

California (Funding amount: \$1,160,000)

- Eastern Municipal Water District Area (Riverside)
- McMullen Area (Fresno)

Idaho (Funding amount: \$3,417,000)

- King Hill Irrigation District (Elmore)
- Preston East Lateral Area (Franklin)
- St. John East Lateral Area (Oneida)
- Twin Falls Service Area (Twin Falls)

Nevada (Funding amount: \$500,000)

- Truckee-Carson Irrigation District (Churchill)

New Mexico (Funding amount: \$470,000)

- Bloomfield Irrigation District (San Juan)
- Fort Sumner Irrigation District (De Baca)

Oklahoma (Funding amount: \$100,000)

- Blue River Watershed District (Johnston)

Utah (Funding amount: \$1,500,000)

- North & South Litz Lateral (Cache)

Washington (Funding amount: \$1,900,000)

- Kittitas Reclamation District (Kittitas)
- Whitestone Reclamation District (Okanogan)

Wyoming (Funding amount: \$780,000)

- Heart Mountain Irrigation District (Park)
- Lovell Irrigation District (Big Horn)

In total, there are 46 active projects for delivering WaterSMART assistance. Visit the [WaterSMART webpage](#) to learn more.

How WaterSMART Works

Private land managers such as farmers and ranchers

can leverage money and resources of irrigation districts, water districts, and other organizations with water delivery authority in their community by coordinating their efforts to conserve and use water more efficiently; increasing the production of renewable energy; mitigating future water conflict in areas at a high risk; and other activities that contribute to water supply sustainability in the Western United States.

Through the WaterSMART Initiative, funds are allocated to targeted areas for eligible participants to enter contracts. Each WaterSMART Initiative project area is carrying out different phases of program delivery at the same time— funding, implementation and evaluation.

NRCS and Reclamation, the nation's largest wholesale water supplier and second largest producer of hydroelectric power, have been coordinating EQIP and WaterSMART investments since 2011, the effort began as a pilot in California . This federal collaboration works to provide states, Tribes, local water management entities, and water users alike with coordinated resources to plan and implement actions which balance water supply and demand through modernizing existing infrastructure, improving agricultural landscapes to conserve water resources and bringing attention to local water conflicts.

More Information

In addition to helping producers build resilience, USDA is also helping drought-impacted producers recover. Other recent actions include:

- [Investing \\$41.8 million through a four-state pilot of the Conservation Incentive Contracts focused on drought practices.](#)
- [Expanding the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program to cover feed transportation costs.](#)
- [Extending deadlines for crop insurance premium and administrative fees, and deferring interest accrual.](#)
- [Streamlining and accelerating losses and issuance of indemnity payments for crop insurance.](#)
- [Investing \\$15 million through a block grant to the Klamath Drought Response Agency to provide payments to producers to reduce irrigation demand.](#)

Drought Coordination

USDA is coordinating with federal agencies, state governments, Tribes, and others to address the impacts of drought. This includes a new interagency working group created in April by the Biden-Harris Administration's National Climate Task Force to address the worsening drought conditions in the West and support farmers. USDA co-chairs the task force with the Department of Interior.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America.

To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.
Contact: FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov

Upcoming Meetings

[2022 WSWC Spring \(198th\) Meetings and Washington Roundtable 4/5-7/21, Crystal City, VA](#)

Other Federal News

USGS 10/1/21. [Modernizing How You Access Water Data | Webinar on Oct 13 | Recording Available](#)

NRCS 10/5/21. [USDA Announces Recipients of Urban Agriculture Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#)

EPA 10/6/21. [EPA announces over \\$15M to the Indian Health Service to improve access to drinking water in Tribal communities](#)

DOI 10/7/21. [Interior Department Announces \\$348 Million for Conservation Projects in Nevada and California](#)

USDA 10/7/21. [USDA Announces Plan to Integrate Climate Adaptation Into its Missions and Programs](#)

EPA 10/14/21. [EPA Announces Action Plan to Address Water-Related Challenges in Indian Country](#)

NOAA 10/14/21. [September 2021 was Earth's 5th warmest on record](#)

DOI 10/21/21. [Biden-Harris Administration Announces Steps to Improve Conditions for Salmon in the Columbia River Basin](#)

COE 10/25/21. [Updated Flood Damage Reduction Analysis Software - HEC-FDA 1.4.3 is Now Available](#)

EPA 10/26/21. [EPA Announces \\$224 Million Water Infrastructure Loan for Climate Resilience in Los Angeles](#)

People

EPA 10/7/21. [EPA Recognizes WaterSense Partners Who Made Water Savings Possible](#)

DOI 10/13/21. [Interior Department Welcomes New Biden-Harris Appointees](#)

BLM 10/27/21. [Tracy Stone-Manning Sworn In as Director of the Bureau of Land Management](#)

USDA 10/28/21. [USDA Appoints New Members to Science and Research Advisory Board](#)

The 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 in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water resources.