

On October 12, members and staff of the Water Subcabinet, Interstate Council on Water Policy (ICWP), National Water Supply Association (NWSA), and Western States Water Council (WSWC) met virtually via Zoom. Following an in-person meeting in April in Washington, D.C., ICWP, NWSA and WSWC asked for more opportunities for informal state-federal dialogue on various water resources issues. Participating were: Tanya Trujillo, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science; Gloria Montano Green, Deputy Undersecretary for Farm Production, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Robin Colosimo, Director for Policy and Legislation, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works); Zach Shafer, Senior Advisor, Office of Water, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Brad Doorn, Water Resources Program Manager, National Atmospheric and Space Administration (NASA); Ed Clark, Director, National Water Center, and Elizabeth Ossowski, National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) Affiliate, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); Dave Raff, Chief Engineer, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; and others.

Communication, coordination and engagement were discussed, including how to keep states informed and involved. State called for consultation and collaboration up-front, before federal policy and program discussions are made. Federal agencies some time lead, and at other times should support states' efforts. There should be a focus on both short and longer-term "wins," as well as achieving sustained solutions and research with the end-user in mind. It was suggested that the subcabinet be expanded to include other agencies with water-related capabilities, programs and responsibilities, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), NASA and the U.S. Forest Service. Water subcabinet members "wear many hats," and there is a substantial amount of coordination that goes on outside the subcabinet meetings. Another state request was regarding the subcabinet's ability and authority to act as a catalyst to bring federal water programs and activities. WestFAST is one forum for coordination, and a WestFAST paper on collaboration with states was referenced and shared.

Drought response was raised as an example. Several federal and state agencies are involved in enhanced water conservation and data observations and monitoring activities, in the Colorado River Basin, along with other public and private foundation initiatives. The Internet of Water Coalition and open data initiatives were mentioned and the WSWC's Water Data Exchange (WaDE). Green suggested river basins may be an appropriate model for scaling efforts. Trujillo noted the \$4B recently allotted for drought relief, and related opportunities. She also shared a brief paper with links documenting the Biden-Harris Administration's drought resources identified by the Drought Resilience Interagency Working Group. For a copy contact the Council's office.

Also, WestFAST was involved in a collaborative effort under the National Drought Resiliency Partnership (NDRP) in a pilot program near Altus, Oklahoma to support development and implementation of the Southwest Oklahoma Water Supply Action Plan, coordinating federal, state and local resources and authorities. The NDRP and related efforts continue. Resilience in the face of extreme events, both droughts, storms and floods was emphasized.

The WSWC was represented by: Chair Jen Verleger, North Dakota; Ayesha Vohra, Arizona; Matt Unruh, Kansas, Jay Weiner, Montana; Mike Hamman, New Mexico; Renee Spooner, Utah; and Chris Brown, Bradon Gebhart, and Jennifer Zygmunt, Wyoming.