

APRIL 2021



# WestFAST News

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Chair – Patrick Lambert; Federal Liaison Officer – Heather Hofman

## [Reclamation releases technical reports and interactive web tool supporting the 2021 SECURE Water Act Report](#)

*Climate change impacts assessed on water supplies in 17 western states*

**BOR 4/5/21.**



**WASHINGTON** — The Bureau of Reclamation today released final technical reports supporting the Water Reliability in the West - 2021 SECURE Water Act Report. Reclamation's 2021 West-Wide Climate and Hydrology Assessment and seven individual basin reports provide detailed information on climate change impacts and adaptation strategies to increase water supply reliability in the West. A new [2021 SECURE Report Web Portal](#) is also available to provide a

user-friendly, web-based format for delivery of information in the reports.

"Western water supply and delivery systems are affected by changing hydrologic conditions and competing demands," **Deputy Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton** said. "These reports highlight Reclamation's effort to use the best-available science to meet its mission while also collaborating with its water and power customers, states and local agencies, and tribes to address critical western water management issues."

The 2021 West-Wide Assessment provides estimates of changes in temperature, precipitation, snowpack, and streamflow across the West using consistent methodology, similar to previous SECURE Water Act Reports. For this report, additional drought analyses based on paleohydrology (using tree rings) was performed.

These results will enable water managers to compare the frequency and severity of droughts that occurred several hundred years ago to projections of future droughts and develop water management strategies in time to take action.

The West-Wide Assessment finds that temperatures are expected to increase across the West while precipitation changes are variable. With warmer temperatures, more precipitation will fall as rain and snow will melt sooner, reducing snowpack in the future that can impact streamflow timing. These key findings on future climate and hydrology are consistent with the conclusions of the 2016 SECURE Water Act Report.

The seven basin reports analyze climate change impacts to water resources within each basin. Each report also identifies Reclamation's collaborative actions to increase water and power delivery reliability since the last SECURE Water Act Report in 2016, including science and research, planning, infrastructure sustainability, efficient hydropower production and on-the-ground activities to meet irrigation needs and water needed for municipalities, power, Tribes and the environment. These basin reports also describe some of the innovative approaches underway locally to address vulnerabilities.

Reclamation is collaborating with its customers, stakeholders, and other partners to develop appropriate mitigation strategies to increased risks of drought and changes to precipitation, runoff, and increased temperatures. These strategies include:

- Supporting reliable water deliveries through construction activities and water management improvements, as well as diversifying supplies through water reuse and ground and surface water conjunctive use.
- Improving hydropower generation capability, flexibility, and reliability through new advanced decision support tools to maximize the amount of power produced with available water supplies and new technologies to keep hydropower plants operating.
- Maintaining healthy ecosystems and protecting federally listed fish, wildlife, plants, and designated critical habitat affected by Reclamation facilities through a range of programs and activities.
- Addressing drought risks by proactively building resilience as the severity, duration, and frequency of drought increases.
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The SECURE Water Act Report released today is available at [www.usbr.gov/climate](http://www.usbr.gov/climate).

[SECURE Water Report](#)

[Colorado River Basin Fact Sheet](#)

[Columbia River Basin Fact Sheet](#)

[Klamath River Basin Fact Sheet](#)

[Missouri River Basin Fact Sheet](#)

[Rio Grande Basin Fact Sheet](#)

[Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins Fact Sheet](#)

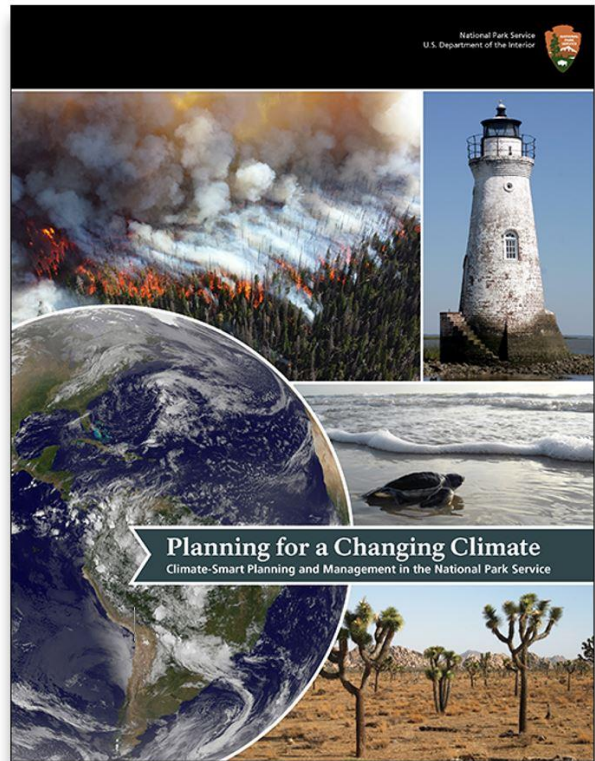
[Truckee and Carson Rivers Basin](#)

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## [Preparing Parks for Change: New guidance to aid planning for a changing climate](#)

NPS 4/22/21.



WASHINGTON — The National Park Service (NPS) has published a guide to help park managers address the effects of climate change in plans and decisions that best preserve and protect park resources and landscapes for their enjoyment today and for future generations. [Planning for a Changing Climate](#) helps managers consider possible risks and impacts associated with climate change to make informed decisions to better protect parks in the future.

“From Alaska to the Caribbean, warming temperatures affect all of the parks in our national park system,” said Shawn Bengé, Deputy Director of the NPS. “Some parks are already adapting to novel conditions such as rising sea levels, storm surge, extreme fire events and drought.

This guide shares some of those stories, and provides a framework for how parks can plan for change. Plans and decisions that account for the effects of climate change will support wise infrastructure investments and help park managers better protect park resources.”

*Planning for a Changing Climate* promotes two key ideas for future park planning: adoption of forward-looking goals that consider future climatic conditions, and development of strategies that can succeed under a variety of future environmental conditions.

The new guide is the latest product from a collaboration with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). “A rapidly changing climate threatens to undermine decades of conservation work in our national parks,” said Dr. Bruce Stein, the NWF chief scientist and a coauthor of the guide. “Adopting climate-smart conservation measures will be key to safeguarding wildlife and other park resources in a warming and increasingly uncertain future.”

Cat Hawkins Hoffman leads the National Park Service Climate Change Response Program and is a coauthor. “Over the past decade,” she said, “we’ve learned a lot from parks that piloted and tested key concepts which helped inform the guidance we offer in *Planning for a Changing Climate*.”

As examples, Hawkins Hoffman cited Acadia National Park’s [use of projected climate impacts](#) to guide the rehabilitation of the park’s [historic carriage roads](#) and Denali National Park and Preserve’s use of climate scenarios to inform development of their [winter recreation plan](#). “[Big Bend National Park](#) is investing in water infrastructure based on local climate projections,” she said. “Each of these experiences give us valuable insight into how to better integrate climate change considerations into park planning.”

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## [EPA Announces \\$6.5 Billion in New Funding for Water Infrastructure Projects](#)

*WIFIA funds to revitalize water infrastructure, create jobs while prioritizing progress on equity, climate, lead*

**EPA 4/27/2021**

**WASHINGTON** — Today, at an address to water associations, utilities, and their workers to mark Water Week, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Michael S. Regan announced the 2021 notice of funding availability under the agency’s Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program and state infrastructure financing authority WIFIA (SWIFIA) program. These lending programs accelerate investment in critical water infrastructure through innovative and flexible financing that can support a wide range of projects in both large and small communities.

“EPA’s \$6.5 billion in water infrastructure funding will provide more than \$13 billion in water infrastructure projects while creating more than 40,000 jobs,” said **EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. “Today’s announcement illustrates the multiple benefits of investing in water infrastructure—better public health and environmental protection, job creation, and economic development. These benefits would be taken to new heights under President Biden’s American Jobs Plan.”

EPA’s WIFIA loan program has become one of the most effective tools used to upgrade our nation’s infrastructure. To date, EPA’s 49 WIFIA loans are providing over \$9.3 billion in credit assistance to help finance nearly \$20 billion for water infrastructure while creating approximately 49,000 jobs and saving ratepayers over \$4 billion. This round of WIFIA funding will provide up to \$5.5 billion to support \$11 billion in water infrastructure projects and prioritizes five areas:

- Supporting economically stressed communities.
- Protecting water infrastructure against the impacts of climate change.
- Reducing exposure to lead and addressing emerging contaminants.
- Updating aging infrastructure.

- Implementing new or innovative approaches including cybersecurity and green infrastructure.

EPA is also announcing funding under [SWIFIA](#). This program, which was authorized by Congress as part of the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2018, offers low-interest loans to state water infrastructure programs that then help finance needed water infrastructure projects in local communities. This round of funding will provide SWIFIA borrowers up to \$1 billion to support \$2 billion in water infrastructure projects.

EPA will evaluate proposed projects described in the letters of interest using WIFIA's statutory and regulatory criteria as described in the notice of funding availability. Through this competitive process, EPA will select projects that it intends to fund and invite them to apply. EPA will accept letters of interest from prospective WIFIA borrowers until July 23, 2021. EPA will accept letters of interest from state water infrastructure programs until June 25, 2021.

For more information about WIFIA and this funding announcement, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wifia>.

### Background

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the WIFIA program is a federal loan and guarantee program at EPA that aims to accelerate investment in the nation's water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental loans for regionally and nationally significant projects. The 2021 notice of funding availability builds upon the existing active pipeline of WIFIA projects, which includes 76 projects in 25 states.

WIFIA credit assistance can be used for a wide range of projects, including:

- Drinking water treatment and distribution projects.
- Wastewater conveyance and treatment projects.
- Nonpoint source pollution management program.
- Management, reduction, treatment, or recapture of stormwater.
- National estuary program projects.

- Enhanced energy efficiency projects at drinking water and wastewater facilities.
- Desalination, aquifer recharge, alternative water supply, and water recycling projects.

Drought prevention, reduction, or mitigation projects

Contact Information:

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## Upcoming Meetings

WSWC Summer 2021 (196th) Meeting

<https://westernstateswater.org/events/wswc-summer-2021-meetings/>

2021 Symposium on the Settlement of Indian Reserved Water Rights Claims

<https://westernstateswater.org/events/2021-symposium-on-the-settlement-of-indian-reserved-water-rights-claims/>

## Other Federal News

BOR 4/1/21. [Reclamation awards \\$1.8 million to 11 tribes for water projects](#)

DOI/USDA 4/8/21. [Joint Statement from Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on the Western Water Crisis](#)

USDA 4/2/21. [USDA Celebrates 5 Million Acres Enrolled in Conservation Easements](#)

NASA 4/5/21. [WWAO Passes Baton to U.S. Dept. of Agriculture](#)

USDA 4/6/21. [New Frameworks Guide Conservation Action on America's Working Rangelands](#)

NASA 4/6/21. [Satellites Shaping Algal Bloom Monitoring Standards](#)

EPA 4/9/21. [EPA Releases Updated Tool to Help Communities Protect Recreational Waters](#)

NOAA 4/13/21. [March 2021 and year to date were among Earth's top-10 warmest](#)

BOR 4/21/21. [Reclamation providing \\$808,912 to California, Nebraska and Utah to prepare for future droughts](#)

USDA 4/21/21. [USDA Expands and Renews Conservation Reserve Program in Effort to Boost Enrollment and Address Climate Change](#)

NASA 4/21/21. [NASA's 2021 Water Resources Solicitation](#)

DOI 4/21/21. [White House Launches Drought Relief Working Group to Address Urgency of Western Water Crisis](#)

FWS 4/21/21. [Secretary Haaland Announces Nearly \\$80 Million in Funding for Wetland Conservation Projects and National Wildlife Refuges](#)

NASA 4/22/21. [Using Floodwater to Weather Droughts](#)

EPA 4/23/21. [EPA Administrator Regan Announces New Initiatives to Support Environmental Justice and Climate Action](#)

NOAA 4/26/21. [Raytheon Intelligence and Space to lead new center dedicated to advancing U.S. weather forecasting](#)

FWS 4/26/21. [Yangtze Sturgeon Receives Endangered Species Act Protection](#)

USDA 4/26/21. [USDA Awards 85 New Partnership Projects to Help Mitigate Climate Change and Protect Natural Resources while Supporting America's Producers](#)

EPA 4/28/21. [EPA awards \\$9 Million to Alaska Native Villages to Improve Drinking Water Access](#)

EPA 4/29/21. [EPA Releases Tools to Help Reduce Nutrients in Water, Improve Public Health and Support Ecosystems](#)

## People

DOI 4/14/21. [White House Announces Several Nominations to Interior Leadership](#)

USDA 4/16/21. [Statement by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on the Nomination of Robert Bonnie to Serve as Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation](#)

DOI 4/23/21. [White House Announces Additional Interior Leadership Nominations](#)

DOI 4/30/21. [Interior Department Announces Newest Members of Agency Team](#)

**The WESTERN STATES FEDERAL AGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West, including: BLM, DOD, EPA, FWS, NASA, NOAA, NPS, NRCS, Reclamation, USACE, USFS, and USGS. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council and the Western Governors' Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.**