

# WestFAST News



The Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 11 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.

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## WestFAST Releases Inventory of Western Water Availability Studies

January 2011

WestFAST released an inventory of the water availability studies currently underway or being planned by WestFAST agencies. This inventory was developed in response to a request by the WSWC at their October 2010 meeting.

This report was compiled in November-December 2010 via the representatives of the WestFAST member agencies. The inventory provides a list of the major agency efforts along with a number of smaller efforts that are indicative of larger scale programs.

The bulk of the federal efforts identified in the inventory are being implemented by the Department of the Interior as part of the implementation of the Secure Water Act, and the WaterSMART initiative. There are also several other water availability studies that were underway prior to the passing of the Secure Water Act. This includes studies on water availability, endangered species protection, drought predictions, and groundwater.

This inventory is available on the WestFAST web site at: <http://www.westgov.org/wswc/westfast/reports/index.htm>

## WSWC Passes Resolution on Pesticide Use and NPDES Permitting

December 2010

The Council's Executive Committee adopted a resolution opposing National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting for pesticides applications. The position responds to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals' National Cotton Council decision, which overturned an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rule that exempted pesticides applications made in compliance with the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) from



the need to obtain NPDES permits. The Sixth Circuit subsequently stayed its ruling until April 9, 2011, after which time EPA and states with NPDES authority must permit point source discharges to waters of the United States from pesticide applications that leave a residue.

EPA estimates that the ruling will affect approximately 365,000 pesticide applicators nationwide who perform 5.6 million applications annually. EPA is in the process of finalizing a general permit for pesticide applications. The general permit will cover the following pesticide use patterns: mosquito and other flying insect pest control, aquatic weed and algae control, aquatic nuisance animal control, and forest canopy pest control.

The Council expressed concern in the resolution that the NPDES requirement will create an unnecessary and duplicative level of regulation without providing clear environmental benefits.

The resolution encourages Congress to amend FIFRA and the Clean Water Act (CWA) to exempt pesticide applications from the NPDES permitting process so long as they are applied in accordance with FIFRA. Wyoming proposed the position, which Oregon and Washington opposed. For a full copy of the resolution see: <http://www.westgov.org/wswc/-328%20pesticide%20applications%2010dec14.pdf>

EPA's Pesticide General Permit is available at: [http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program\\_id=410](http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=410)

## Reclamation and USACE publish climate report

January 2011

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation have published a report, "Addressing Climate Change in Long-Term Water Resources Planning and Management: User Needs for Improving Tools and Information," that identifies the needs of local, state, and federal water management agencies for climate change information and tools to support long-term planning.

The report seeks to focus research and technology efforts to address information and tools needed for longer-term water resources planning and management. It found there were gaps in the information and tools to help water managers in how to use climate change information to make decisions, how to assess the responses of natural systems to climate change, and how to communicate the results and uncertainties of climate change assessments to decision-makers.

For a full copy of the report see:  
<http://www.usbr.gov/climate/userneeds/>

## WestFAST Developing 2011 Work Plan

January 2011

The WestFAST team is in the process of developing the 2011 Work Plan. WestFAST will continue in 2011 to provide a forum for federal agencies to coordinate on western water issues. WestFAST will focus much of 2011 on a number of major WestFAST agency initiatives, including the WaterSMART initiative, the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, and the Climate Science Centers.

By combining the skills of the WestFAST agencies in areas such as water availability, water quality, and climate change WestFAST hopes to serve as a valuable asset to both the Council and the WestFAST member agencies. The work plan is expected to be finalized in mid-February. Once finalized, the work plan will be available at: <http://www.westgov.org/wswc/westfast/workplan/index.htm>

## Agency Announcements

**January 6, 2011:** US Forest Service releases report titled 'Threats to At-Risk species in America's Private Forests.' Available at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/openspace/fote/at-risk.html>

**January 18, 2011:** Reclamation releases Draft Environmental Assessment for Public Review and Comment on a Protocol for Experimental High-Flow Releases from Glen Canyon Dam. Available at: <http://www.usbr.gov/uc/envdocs/ea/gc/HFEPprotocol/index.html>

**January 24, 2011:** NOAA and DOE sign a Memorandum of Understanding on renewable energy. See news release: [http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2011/20110124\\_doedoc\\_mou.html](http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2011/20110124_doedoc_mou.html)

**January 28, 2011:** The Department of Interior released a new policy on scientific integrity. Available at: [http://elips.doi.gov/app\\_dm/act\\_getfiles.cfm?relnum=3889](http://elips.doi.gov/app_dm/act_getfiles.cfm?relnum=3889)

**January 2011:** Pete Silva, EPA Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water will be stepping down in February 2011. Nancy Stoner, the current Deputy Assistant Administrator will be acting in his place until an appointment can be made.

## Upcoming Meetings/Events

- **Week of March 7, 2011:** WSWC will be in DC for Agency and Congressional meetings.
- **March 21-23, 2011:** WSWC and CA Department of Water Resources will co-sponsor a state-federal climate workshop in San Diego, CA
- **April 5-7, 2011:** NASA will host: Evapotranspiration: An Essential Observation for Climate Understanding and Efficient Water Management Workshop, Silver Spring, MD
- **April 11-12, 2011:** NASA will host: Global Drought Monitoring Workshop, Silver Spring, MD
- **April 13-15, 2011:** Spring WSWC meeting, Santa Fe, NM
- **June 29-July 1, 2011:** Summer Western Governors' Association Meeting, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
- **July 27-29, 2011:** Summer WSWC meeting, Oregon
- **Fall 2011:** Native American Rights Fund (NARF)/WSWC Indian Water Rights Symposium, Billings, MT



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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Check out the WestFAST Web Site: <http://www.westgov.org/wswc/WestFAST.htm>