

Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 13 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 (WGA) in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.

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WSWC and WestFAST Ready for Transition

(WestFAST 02/28/17)

The new administrations getting its cabinet nominations and staff in place has been slow. This has several projects with many unknowns facing our organizations. Some of the WestFAST cabinet level positions and virtually all undersecretary positions are still vacant without little information available on potential candidates.

The Western States Water Council (WSWC) continues to be active with all WestFAST agencies, Western Governors' Association (WGA), States, Tribes, and many other water related organizations ready to help in the coordination of any transition activities. WSWC has a number of objectives that could be critical in the next couple years for water issues. The WestFAST agencies are also ready to work with the new administration and stakeholders start taking action on critical water issues.

The latest piece of news, released just yesterday (2/28/17), involves the outlook for the 2018 budget. The President is outlining a \$54 billion dollar increase to the Defense Budget, with cuts expected across many of the "discretionary" agency budgets. This will have a major impact on many of the WestFAST agency budgets, particularly the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Welcome Chris Carlson!

(WestFAST 02/15/17)

One of our newer WestFAST team member is Christopher Carlson, Assistant Director for Water and Aquatic Resources for the USDA Forest Service. He has been with the Forest Service since 2005 and has served in a number of roles focused on resource stewardship, including National Groundwater Program Leader, Acting Assistant Director of Minerals and Geology Management, Acting Deputy Director of Ecosystem Management Coordination, and Acting Mitigation Coordinator. Chris has

also served as a Legislative Fellow and Acting Legislative Assistant in the Office of U.S. Senator Tim Johnson (SD). Prior to



Chris Carlson – Forest Service

joining federal service, Chris worked for nearly 15 years as a senior hydrogeologist for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, where he focused primarily on waste management and hardrock mining. He has also worked as a researcher for the Indiana Geological Survey and the Department of Soil Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Chris holds a bachelors in physics from Carleton College in Minnesota and a masters in Environmental Science, a masters in Geology, and a doctorate in Geological Sciences from Indiana University. We look forward to working with Chris, and the expertise and experience that he will bring to the WestFAST Team!

Rain and Snow Ends Western Extreme Drought

(WestFAST 02/28/17)

Heavy precipitation in the Western United States, especially in Northern to Central California has ended extreme drought conditions. This is the first time since 2013 that no extreme drought area was observed in California or the Western United States. The latest Drought Monitor shows improving conditions throughout the west. Although, the Drought Monitor doesn't reflect the full story of soil conditions, it is a measure for watching for specific problems in the water system for farmers, land

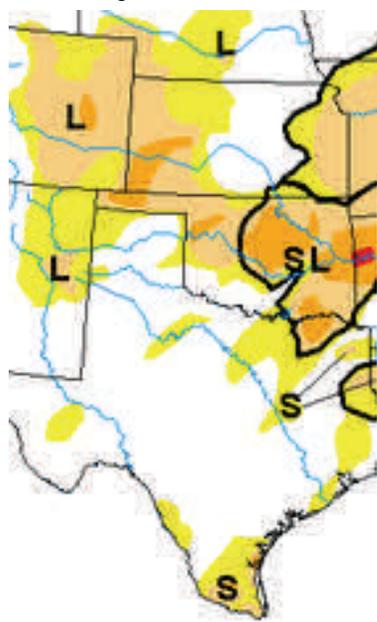


use managers, and water managers.

This doesn't mean the drought is over. Many ground water wells continue to show little or no improvement as recharge of deep aquifers take many years beyond a couple years of average to above average rainfall.

Below is a section of the Western States that is not showing improvements, but is slipping more toward intense drought conditions. This increase in drought has been enhanced by unseasonably warm temperatures across the United States with all time records being broken from the high plains east to the Atlantic and south to the Gulf of Mexico. There is also some increase in drought coverage as precipitation on the

Drought Monitor 3/28/17



high plains and portions of the southern plains has also been below average. So far the greatest impact has been on agriculture, particularly winter wheat.

Drought Impact Types

- ~ Delineates dominant impacts
- S = Short-Term, typically less than 6 months (e.g. agriculture, grasslands)
- L = Long-Term, typically greater than 6 months (e.g. hydrology, ecology)

Intensity

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

USACE to Grant Easement for Dakota Access Pipeline

(USACE 02/06/17)

Dakota Access, LLC, submitted an application for permits and permissions to construct and operate the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) Project, a 1,168-mile, crude oil pipeline system designed to carry up to 570,000 barrels per day of U.S. light sweet from the Bakken and Three Forks production region of North Dakota to Patoka, Ill.

USACE Responsibilities

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is responsible for evaluating and issuing permits for all water crossings under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Sections 10 and 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. In total, USACE has jurisdiction

over a very small portion of the total pipeline project – approximately 37 miles of the pipeline's 1,168 total miles. However, these 37 miles encompass 202 jurisdictional water crossings, which USACE was required to review and complete each as a single project.

Throughout the permitting review and approval process, USACE has worked diligently to meet its obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires consultation with Native American Tribes. Specifically, USACE has completed cultural resource surveys for USACE jurisdictional areas; facilitated individual Tribal site surveys; consulted more than 250 times with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and respective State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices or other designated Tribal representatives.

USACE is charged with supporting economic development and ensuring measures exist to minimize impacts to the environment and the authorized purposes for which the Missouri River Reservoirs are operated. To this end, USACE seeks to support energy development in accordance with Executive Order 13604 in an environmentally sound manner.

In response to public feedback, for those interested in voicing their thoughts and concerns on the Dakota Access Pipeline project call (202) 761-8700.

EPA to Act on Waters of the United States Rule

(EPA 02/28/2017) EPA Media Relations (press@epa.gov)

President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order at the White House February 28, 2017, directing the EPA and the USACE to review and then rescind or revise the 2015 Clean Water Rule: Definition of "Waters of the United States."

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt joined the President for this announcement and afterward issued the following statement: "EPA intends to immediately implement the Executive Order and submit a Notice to the Office of the Federal Register announcing our intent to review the 2015 Rule, and then to propose a new rule that will rescind or revise that rule. The President's action today preserves a federal role in protecting water, but it also restores the states' important role in the regulation of water." See *Federal Register* Notice: <https://www.epa.gov/cleanwaterrule>

Monticello Dam and its Morning Glory Spillway

(BR 02/27/17)

On February 17, 2017, Lake Berryessa in Napa County, California, reached an elevation of 440 feet around 6 a.m., at which time, water began spilling into Monticello Dam's Morn-



ing Glory Spillway. The spillway is a tunnel-shaped outlet that can swallow lake water at a rate of up to 48,000 cubic feet per second and then discharge it 700 feet below into Putah Creek. The last time water spilled into the Morning Glory Spillway was 2006.

The Bureau of Reclamation first employed bell-mouth spillways – also known as glory holes – in dam design at the Montana Milk River Project’s Lake Sherburne Dam in 1921. Reclamation used this spillway type in Oregon’s Owyhee Dam in



BR – Monticello Dam's Morning Glory Spillway Feb. 21, 2017

1932 and in 1953 on the Hungry Horse Dam in Montana. Between 1953 and 1967, Reclamation utilized the bell-mouth spillway design in California at the Trinity Dam, Monticello Dam and San Luis Dam.

To view a video, please visit the Mid-Pacific Region’s Central Valley Project Twitter page at <https://twitter.com/ReclamationCVP/status/834512719101333504> *Note: Some Internet Explorer users may not be able to view the video. Please try Google Chrome or other web browser.

Not So Glorious Spillway

(WestFAST 02/21/17)

On February 7, 2017 the first hints of problems with the California Department of Water Resources (CDWR), Lake Oroville Dam spillway were noted. The release of water through this spillway continued to create erosion that evolved to this!



CDWR Lake Oroville Spillway – Pacific Standard

Above is the damage that was done with an estimate 1.7 billion cubic feet of eroded materials.



CDWR Lake Oroville Spillway Damage



CDWR Lake Oroville emergency spillway – NY Times

The lake filled (above) for the first time in the lakes history, such that water flowed over the emergency spillway.

WESTERN GOVERNORS Corps-Water Supply Rule

(WSWC 02/28/17)

On February 27, the Western Governors’ Association (WGA) sent a letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) commenting on the proposed water supply rule (81 FR 91556). The letter emphasizes the federalism implications of the proposed rule, despite the Corps’ assertions to the contrary, with the need for state consultation under Executive Order 13132. “The text of the [rule] is rife with references to the importance of state authority over water resource management and the [Corps’] intention to respect the same. Western Governors, however, are concerned that certain provisions... would substantially interfere with states’ sovereign authority to manage and allocate water resources and that the proposal exceeds [the Corps’] legal authority over state-managed water resources.”

The letter points out that states have not ceded any rights to the natural flows that existed prior to Corps projects, and



access to these natural flows should not be denied through any Corps' actions. "Additionally, natural flows should be exempt from any monetary charges imposed for water storage within [Corps] reservoirs. Such waters would exist within the streambed in the absence of [Corps] reservoirs and, therefore, should not be subject to federal management or the imposition of fees." WGA states that, legally, the Corps "must define 'surplus water' to expressly exclude natural flows (and any quantification of such flows) which would have occurred without the development of federal water projects. Natural flows must remain subject to states' authority to allocate water resources for beneficial uses." See <http://www.westgov.org/letters-testimony>.

USDA Announces RCPP Webinar Series *(NRCS 02/21/17)*

In January 2017, USDA invited potential conservation partners to submit project applications for federal funding through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Through this fourth RCPP Announcement for Program Funding (APF), USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will award up to \$252 million to locally driven, public-private partnerships that improve the nation's water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat and protect agricultural viability. Applicants must match or exceed the federal award with private or local funds.

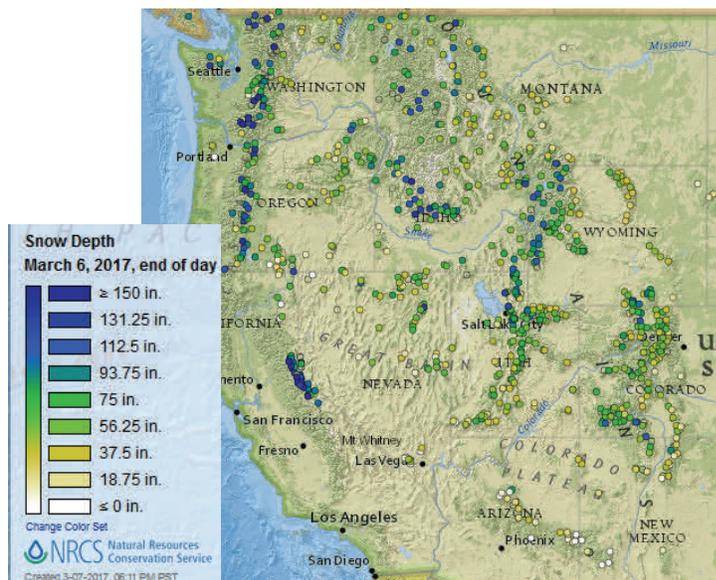
The NRCS will host a webinar for potential applicants to assist with pre-proposals, due April 21, 2017. The webinar will introduce participants to the NRCS and its programs, discuss the RCPP and APF requirements, and offer best practices for project applications.

The NRCS will offer the webinar from 2:00 – 3:30 PM Eastern Time on the following dates.

March 22, 2017
April 5, 2017

Impressive Snowpack NRCS SNOTEL *(WestFAST 03/01/17)*

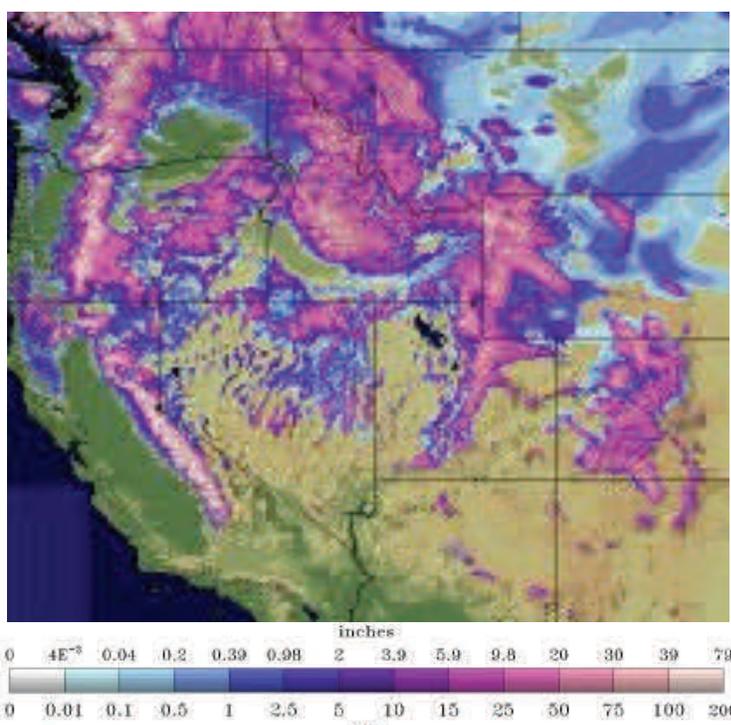
There is an impressive snowpack in a number of the Western United States. The NRCS SNOTEL data is a great source for direct access to the data and there are multiple ways of looking at the data interactively. See: https://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/snow_map.html.

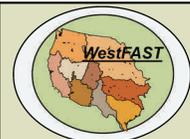


Above is snow depth for the water year, but the maps are interactive to meet your individual temporal and climate needs or scales.

More Snowpack Data

The map below is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's NOAA [National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center](#) March 1, 2017 snow water equivalent estimations.





The Latest Issue of Fish and Wildlife News is Available:



FWS News – post pic and link
https://www.fws.gov/home/fwn/pdf/Winter17News_final.pdf.

Low Impact Design

In recent calls with the WestFAST there were discussions about impact design. Marc Kodack, DOD sent along this link that may be useful to many WestFAST members.

Copy of Unified Facilities Criteria document for Low Impact Development : <https://www.wbdg.org/ffc/dod/unified-facilities-criteria-ufc/ufc-3-210-10>.

Western States Water Council Spring Meeting

The WSWC Spring Meeting will be held April 12-14, 2017, in Nebraska City, NE.

Federal News *(control click to links)*

2/3: [NOAA's GOES-16 EXIS Instrument Observes Solar Flare](#)

2/4: [Wildfire evolution forces Forest Service into new thinking](#)

2/08: [Advanced data would improve how California manages water](#)

2/9: [Gas Hydrate Breakdown Unlikely to Cause Massive Greenhouse Gas Release](#)

2/09: [Notice of an Open Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Water Information](#)

2/14: [Severe West Coast Erosion During 2015-16 El Niño](#)

2/16: [Land Elevation Changes Due to Groundwater Withdrawals Indicate Regional Shifts in Houston-Galveston Area](#)
2/16: [NASA: Snow Science in Support of Our Nation's Water Supply](#)

2/17: [Satellite Views Storm System Affecting Southern California](#)

2/17: [Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary supports jobs, business income](#)

2/21: [NASA's SnowEx Challenges the Sensing Techniques](#)

2/21: [USDA Invests \\$103 Million to Protect Lives, Property After Natural Disasters](#)

2/21: [USDA Announces Webinar Series about Project Applications for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#)

2/22: [Bureau of Reclamation Launches Prize Competition Seeking Ideas to Better Estimate the Water Storage Capacity of Reservoirs](#)

2/22: [South Dakota Native to Head USGS Dakota Water Science Center](#)

2/22: [Sediment Flows into Galveston Bay Studied to Help Understand Health of Watershed](#)

2/24: [EPA Extends Comment Period on Hard Rock Mining Proposed Rule](#)

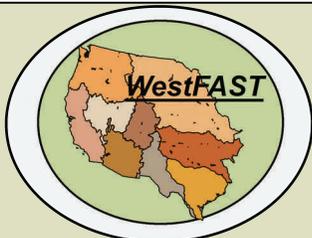
2/24: [From the Directorate: Connecting Our Constituencies](#)

2/21 [Unprecedented Arctic weather has scientists on edge](#)

2/27: [First Solar Images from NOAA's GOES-16 Satellite](#)

2/28 [NASA Data Show California's San Joaquin Valley Still Sinking](#)

2/28: [Late winter 'heatwave' hits the U.S. in February](#)



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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