

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 (WGA) in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.

Membership:

Roger Gorke, (Chair), EPA
Gorke.roger@epa.gov

Kevin Werner, (Vice Chair), NOAA
kevin.werner@noaa.gov

Becky Fulkerson, Reclamation
rfulkerson@usbr.gov

John D'Antonio, USACE
John.R.D'Antonio@usace.army.mil

Sonya Jones, USGS
sajones@usgs.gov

Paul (Doug) Curtis, BLM
pcurtis@blm.gov

Andrew Hautzinger, FWS
Andrew.Hautzinger@fws.gov

Mike Strobel, NRCS
michael.strobel@por.usda.gov

Roger Pulwarty, NOAA
roger.pulwarty@noaa.gov

Brad Doorn, NASA
bradley.doorn@nasa.gov

Craig Zamuda, DOE
Craig.Zamuda@Hq.Doe.Gov

Marc Kodack, DOD
marc.d.kodack.civ@mail.mil

Ed Harvey, NPS
forrest_harvey@nps.gov

Patrick Lambert, USGS
patlambert@swc.utah.gov

Roger Pierce, WestFAST Liaison
rogervpierce@swc.utah.gov



FY18 Presidential Budget Request

(WSWC/WestFAST 5/26/17)

May 23, President Donald Trump submitted his proposed FY2018 budget to Congress. The President requests \$17.9B for the Department of Agriculture (USDA), a \$4.7B, 21% decrease from the 2017 annualized continuing resolution (2017CR); \$5B for the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), a \$1B, 16% decrease from the 2017CR; \$11.6B for the Department of the Interior (DOI), a \$1.5B, 12% decrease; \$5.7B for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a \$2.6B, 31% decrease; and \$19.1B for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), a \$200,000, 0.8% decrease. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is 4.78B this is a 997M, 20.6% decrease with the parent agency of Department of Commerce (DOC) taking a 1.4B, 15% decrease. More detailed summaries are available on each agencies homepages, often highlighted in the news release sections.

The proposed budget cuts emphasize the importance of regulatory reforms and private sector funding to help improve the economy. The President declared, "As this Budget returns us to economic prosperity, it will also allow us to fund additional priorities, including infrastructure.... We must eliminate every outdated, unnecessary, or ineffective Federal regulation, and move aggressively to build regulatory frameworks that stimulate – rather than stagnate – job creation. Even for those regulations we must leave in place, we must strike every provision that is counterproductive, ineffective, or outdated...."

He added, "everyone believes in and supports safe food supplies and clean air and water. But the agencies of the Federal Government have gone way beyond what was originally intended by the Congress. The hallmark feature of these regulations has been a mind-numbing complexity that minimizes the understanding of what constitutes compliance, and maximizes the opportunity for arbitrary and ad hoc bureaucratic decision-making, often through vehicles

that may not be a legitimate substitute for notice-and-comment rulemaking, such as guidance and interpretive documents."

As we are aware, this is the just an outline of suggestions for a budget to set the presidential priorities, but the House and Senate generate the budget.

See: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/budget/fy2018/budget.pdf>.

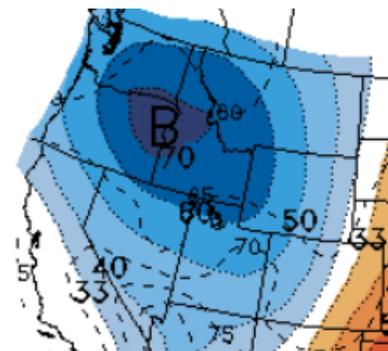
Snowmelt Accelerates

(WestFAST/NRCS/NOAA 05/31/17)

Snowmelt in the past couple weeks has really accelerated. In fact, just my time in Salt Lake City has been defined by temperatures of at least 15 to 20 degrees above average. Snowmelt in the local area is also quite notable. This rapid melt has sent streams, canals, and water control structures to bank-full and beyond with very cold snowmelt water, which has lead to at least 4 drowning deaths here in Utah. In looking around the West, similar snowmelt reports have been reported in most of the western and especially southwestern parts of the area.

Many local NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) office's and River Forecast Centers (RFC) have issued forecasts, watches, warnings, and advisories to alert the public to the hazards of the rapidly melting snow leading to dangerous water levels. An additional factor, is the very cold water conditions. Once an individual gets into the water, it is just a matter of minutes before the cold water induces hypothermia.

The 6-10 day temperature forecast below for the first of June is cooler than average and should slow the snowmelt some.



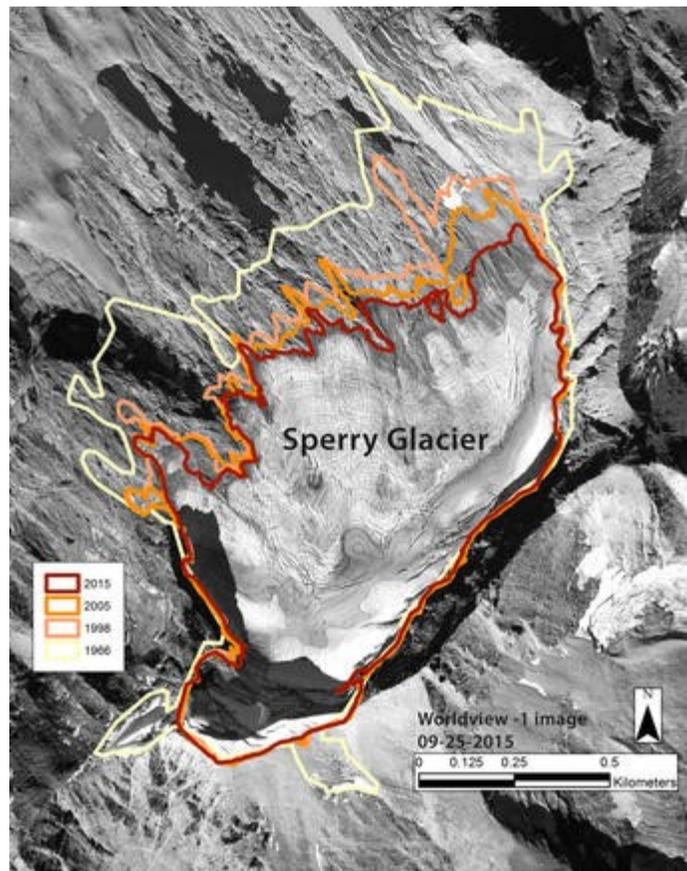
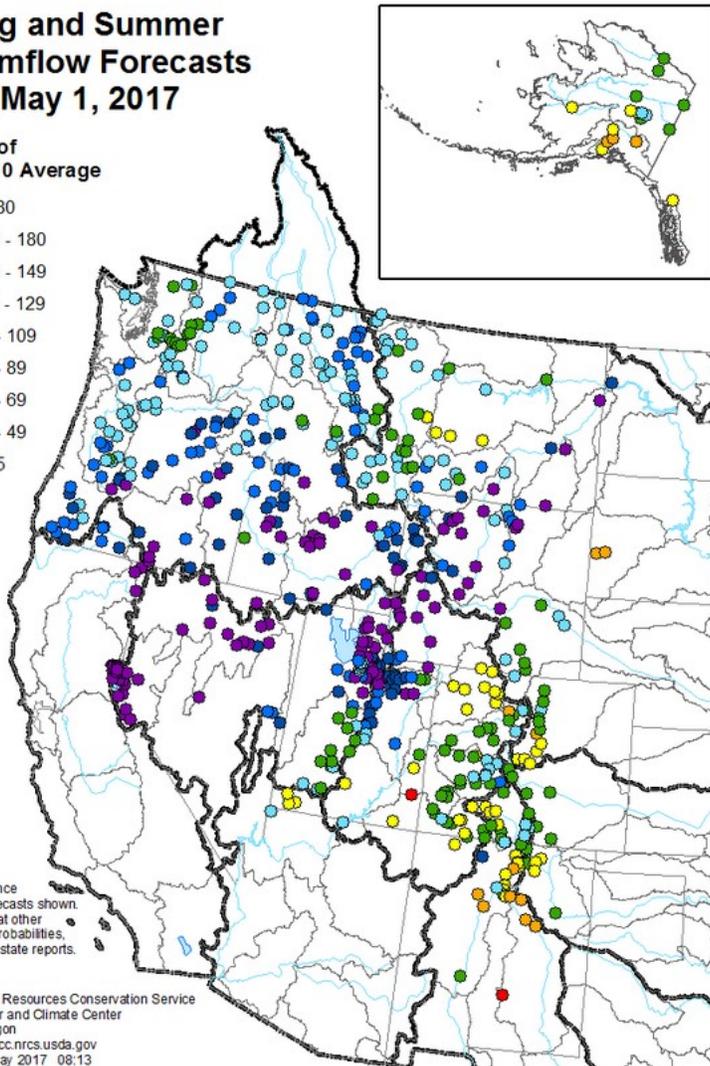


In looking at the latest Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) stream flow forecasts, there is still a lot of snow to melt, particularly in the intermountain west. Therefore, if the current warm period in the west slows down some, it will just help to prolong the melt on into the summer months.

Spring and Summer Streamflow Forecasts as of May 1, 2017

Percent of 1981-2010 Average

- > 180
- 150 - 180
- 130 - 149
- 110 - 129
- 90 - 109
- 70 - 89
- 50 - 69
- 25 - 49
- < 25



This image shows the perimeter of Sperry Glacier in Glacier National Park in 1966, 1998, 2005, and 2015. (Public domain.)

On average, the glaciers have reduced by 39% and only 26 glaciers are now larger than 25 acres, which is used as a guideline for deciding if bodies of ice are large enough to be considered glaciers.

The data include scientific information for the 37 named glaciers in Glacier National Park and two glaciers on U.S. Forest Service land. The retreat of glaciers is significant in Montana because of the impact shrinking glaciers can have on tourism, as well as being a visual indicator of mountain ecosystem change in the northern Rockies.

“The park-wide loss of ice can have ecological effects on aquatic species by changing stream water volume, water temperature and run-off timing in the higher elevations of the park,” said lead USGS scientist Dr. Daniel Fagre.

Portland State geologist Andrew G. Fountain partnered with USGS on the project. He said glaciers in mountain ranges throughout the U.S. and the world have been shrinking for decades. “While the shrinkage in Montana is more severe

Glaciers Rapidly Shrinking and Disappearing: 50 Years of Glacier Change in Montana

(USGS 5/10/17)

The warming climate has dramatically reduced the size of 39 glaciers in Montana since 1966, some by as much as 85% , according to data released by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and Portland State University.



than some other places in the U.S., it is in line with trends that have been happening on a global scale,” Fountain said.

Scientists used digital maps from aerial photography and satellites to measure the perimeters of the glaciers in late summer when seasonal snow has melted to reveal the extent of the glacial ice. The areas measured are from 1966, 1998, 2005 and 2015/2016, marking approximately 50 years of change in glacier area.

Site visits to glaciers were also made over several years to investigate portions that were covered by rock debris that are difficult to see with digital imagery. The mapped measurements of glaciers complement ground surveys of glaciers using GPS along with repeat photography that involves re-photographing historic photos of glaciers taken early last century when there were an estimated 150 glaciers larger than 25 acres in Glacier National Park.

“Tracking these small alpine glaciers has been instrumental in describing climate change effects on Glacier National Park to park management and the public,” said Lisa McKeon, USGS scientist who has been documenting glacier change since

1997.



This image shows the perimeter of Chaney Glacier in Glacier National Park in 1966, 1998, 2005, and 2015. (Public domain.)

This information is part of a larger, ongoing USGS glacier study of glaciers in Montana, Alaska and Washington to document mass balance measurements that estimate whether the total amount of ice is increasing or decreasing at a particular glacier. This information helps scientists understand the impact of large scale climate patterns on glaciers in distinctly different mountain environments.

The data for Glacier National Park’s named glaciers are available at the USGS ScienceBase [website](#). Additional information about the glacier research can be found at the USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center [website](#) and the USGS Benchmark Glacier program [website](#).

This project was funded in part by the USGS Climate and Landuse Change Research and Development Program.

About the Glaciers in Glacier National Park

[Glacier National Park](#) has 37 named glaciers and they are one of the reasons people come to Glacier each year. Last year, 2.9 million visitors came to the park.

National Water Model Assessment for Reclamation’s Water Management Needs *(NRCS 2017)*

Research Question: How do National Water Model (NWM) forecasts over a variety of forecast lead times provide added value, in terms of skill and resolution, to Reclamation water managers above and beyond current available products issued by NOAA and other agencies (e.g., NRCS)?

Current River Forecast Points (~3,600)



In July 2016, NOAA’s NWM will begin initial operational forecasts extending from hourly to 30-days over the U.S. The model will provide streamflow and other hydrologic information on 1km and 250m grids.

NWM will eventually produce forecasts at longer lead times. Using an R&D version of the model at PSD will provide a unique opportunity for Reclamation to assess the NWM and help improve products and services to better meet Reclamation’s needs. Our hypothesis is that the NWM forecasts,



even if plagued by large bias, will provide useful information to water managers in terms of watershed characteristics (e.g. evapotranspiration) in areas that traditionally have not had any forecast information.

Need: Reclamation depends on streamflow forecasts across the temporal continuum of water management. As part of the recently launched NOAA National Water Initiative, the NWM is being adopted. In the interest of being an informed user and exploring new potential water management utility of the NWM, Reclamation seeks to seize the opportunity to partner with NOAA at the outset of this new modeling framework. Understanding the NWM will be important for Reclamation as NOAA begins to use its output in forecasts.

NWM Streamflow Output Points (~2.7 mil)



Benefit: The NWM is being launched in 2016. It is expected that RFCs will eventually incorporate the NWM into their forecasting work flow. As such, Reclamation has a unique opportunity to be actively involved with research related to evaluation and exploration during this early stage of the NWM and shape future products and services.

Urgency: As the NWM will begin issuing initial forecasts in July 2016, there is a window of opportunity for Reclamation to tailor NWM information to the benefit of the water management community. A delay or postponement of funding would significantly reduce the impact of this work.

Contact the Principal Investigator, [Kenneth Nowak](#) for information about partners, products, and documents.

EPA Launches New 'Waters of the U.S.' Website (EPA 5/10/17)

New site aims to provide transparency and information about EPA review of "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS).

EPA is launching a [new website \(www.epa.gov/wotus-rule\)](http://www.epa.gov/wotus-rule) to provide the public with information about EPA's review of the definition of "WOTUS" as set out in the 2015 "Clean Water Rule." The site replaces the website developed for the 2015 rulemaking process.

"EPA is restoring states' important role in the regulation of water by reviewing WOTUS," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. "The president has directed us to review this regulation to address the concerns from farmers and local communities that it creates unnecessary burdens and inhibits economic growth. This website aims to provide the public with information about our actions to meet the president's directive."

In the spirit of transparency, the site will provide the public with relevant information explaining the Agency's actions, along with the Department of the Army and the Army Corps of Engineers (the agencies), to review the WOTUS rule, including how the agencies are working with our local, state and tribal partners, to examine our role in the regulation of water under the Clean Water Act (CWA). All the pages, information and documentation from the Clean Water Rule site will remain available in the EPA archived site, archive.epa.gov.

EPA is initiating consultation and coordination with stakeholders and the public as the agencies implement the February 28, 2017, Presidential Executive Order on "Restoring the Rule of Law, Federalism, and Economic Growth by Reviewing the 'Waters of the United States' Rule."

The February Order states that it is in the national interest to ensure that the Nation's navigable waters are kept free from pollution, while at the same time promoting economic growth, minimizing regulatory uncertainty, and showing due regard for the roles of Congress and the States under the Constitution. It also directs the agencies to review the existing Clean Water Rule (promulgated in 2015) for consistency with these priorities and to publish for notice and comment a proposed rule rescinding or revising the rule, as appropriate and consistent with the law. Further, the Order directs the agencies to consider interpreting the term "navigable waters," as defined in the CWA at 33 U.S.C. 1362(7), in a manner consistent with the opinion of Justice Antonin Scalia in *Rapanos v. United States*, 547 U.S. 715 (2006). "WOTUS" are those waters that are protected under the CWA.

To meet these objectives, the agencies intend to follow an expeditious, two-step process that will provide certainty across the country:

- 1) An initial rulemaking to rescind the 2015 rule and recodify the regulatory definition that had been in place for decades and is currently being used in light of a nationwide stay of the 2015 rule, and thus maintains the status quo; and
- 2) A rulemaking to revise the definition of "WOTUS" consistent with direction in the February 28, 2017 E.O.



Western States Water Council Summer Meeting

The WSWC Summer Meeting will be held June 27-29, 2017, in Rohnert Park, CA.

For the latest agenda and meeting information see:
<http://www.westernstateswater.org/upcoming-meetings/>.

Federal News *(control click to links)*

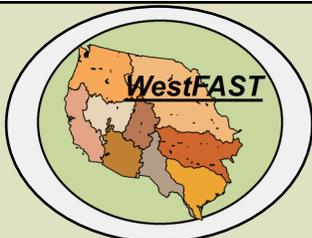
May 2017: [Series: NPS Trip Planning Guide](#)
5/01: [Preparing the Nation for Intense Space Weather](#)
5/02: [IN CASE YOU MISSED IT ...EPA is Putting American Workers First](#)
5/03: [Bureau of Reclamation Awards \\$20,000 For Potential Solutions to Move Fish Downstream Past Tall Dams](#)
5/04: [EPA Honors Award-Winning Asthma Programs](#)
5/04: [AIRS: 15 Years of Seeing What's in the Air](#)
5/05: [Is Climate Changing Cloud Heights? Too Soon to Say](#)
5/5: [Soggy, cool April sets stage for abundant spring, summer streamflow](#)
5/09: [EPA and U.S. Army Solicit State Input on Redefining "Waters of the U.S."](#)
5/10: [Spike in Southwest dust storms driven by ocean change](#)
5/10: [NASA Education 'Science WOW!'](#)
5/12: [Secretary Zinke Announces \\$23.6 Million for Water Reclamation and Reuse Projects and Studies](#)
5/17: [Bill Signed by President Trump Gives EPA's WIFIA Program Additional Help to Meet Communities' Water Infrastructure Needs](#)
5/18: [NASA's CPEX Tackles a Weather Fundamental](#)
5/18: [In Next Decades, Frequency of Coastal Flooding Will Double Globally](#)
5/18: [Globe had 2nd warmest April and year to date on record](#)
5/22: [While Enjoying America's Waterways Play It Safe](#)
5/23: [President Proposes \\$922 Million FY18 Budget for USGS](#)
5/24: [Best of the West: National Parks' big economic impact, Lake Tahoe filling up, cleanup crews in space WGA/NPS](#)
5/24: [Igniting a New Trend in Public Safety](#)
5/24: [Increasing Aridity and Land-use Overlap Have Potential to Cause Social and Economic Conflict in Dryland Areas](#)
5/24: [U.S. Forest Service Awards Grants to Expand and Accelerate Wood Energy and Wood Products Markets in 19 States](#)
5/25: [NOAA's newest geostationary satellite will be positioned as GOES-East this fall](#)
5/25: [EPA Takes Action to Postpone Costly Steam Electric Power Plant Effluent Guidelines Rule](#)

5/25: [BLM Honors Outstanding Volunteers at 'Making a Difference' Awards Ceremony](#)
5/26: [Conservation Leads to Stream Delisting](#)
5/31: [ANNOUNCING The Award of \\$56.8 Million in FY17 Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants](#)
5/31: [Unconventional Oil and Gas Production Not Currently Affecting Drinking Water Quality](#)
6/1: [As Hurricane Season Opens, USGS Is Ready](#)
6/01: [Seeing Soil Moisture from the Sky](#)

State News *(control click to links)*

5/09: [Reclamation Promotes Public-Private Partnerships through Denver Water Infrastructure and Alternative Financing Forum](#)
5/12: [NRCS in Texas Celebrates Soil and Water Stewardship Week](#)
5/16: [How the Colorado River's Future Depends on the Saltion Sea](#)
5/25: [New Grants to Spark Innovation in Forest Resiliency](#)
5/31: [NRCS Seeks Projects to Improve Water Quality in High-Priority Watersheds](#)
5/31: [Reclamation Releases Revised Final Environmental Documents for Six San Luis Unit Central Valley Project Interim Renewal Contracts](#)

Pierce picture I-70 along the Colorado River No Name Rest Area



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Roger V. Pierce, WestFAST Federal Liaison
Email: rogervpierce@wswc.utah.gov
Phone: 801-685-2555

Check out the WestFAST Web Site: <http://www.westernstateswater.org/westfast>