



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 (WGA) in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water resources.

Membership:

Jean Thomas (Chair), USFS
jathomas02@fs.fed.us
 Michael Fallon (Vice Chair), USACE
Michael.p.fallon@usace.army.mil
 Roger Gorke (Chair), US EPA
Gorke.roger@epa.gov
 Pixie Hamilton, USGS
pahamilt@usgs.gov
 Kira Finkler, Reclamation
kfinkler@usbr.gov
 Becky Fulkerson, Reclamation
rfulkerson@usbr.gov
 Robert Boyd, BLM
Robert_boyd@blm.gov
 Heidi Hadley, BLM
Heidi_hadley@blm.gov
 Janet Bair, USFWS
janet_bair@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
 Dwane Young, Federal Liaison
dayoung@wswc.utah.gov

WestFAST News

EPA Releases Final Pesticides General Permit

October 31, 2011

On October 31, EPA issued the final National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Pesticide General Permit (PGP) for point source discharges from the application of pesticides.

The development of this permit is in response to a U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals (National Cotton Council, et al. v. EPA) ruling which vacated EPA's prior rules that stated that so long as pesticides were applied in accordance with pesticide labels as required by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) that no NPDES permit would be required. The PGP is available for immediate use anywhere that EPA is the primary permitting authority. For states or other jurisdictions where this authority has been delegated, that jurisdiction will need to develop their own permitting program.

In the PGP, EPA identifies four use patterns that could fall under this permit: (1) mosquito and other flying insect pest control; (2) weed and algae control; (3) animal pest control; and (4) forest canopy pest control. EPA has stated in follow-on conference calls that agriculture exemption under the Clean Water Act (CWA) would still apply, and as such agriculture applications of pesticides would not need a permit.

The WSWC has an approved position related to NPDES permitting requirements for pesticide applications ([position #328](#)). This position encourages Congress to amend the CWA and FIFRA to exclude NPDES permitting requirements for pesticide use. The WSWC has expressed concern over the added burden that the permitting of pesticides will place on state permitting programs with limited environmental benefit.

In Congress, the House passed [H.R. 872](#) which amends FIFRA and the CWA to exclude pesticide applications from NPDES permitting. This bill has been reported out in the Senate, but has not yet come up for a vote. See [news release](#) for more information.



Federal Geospatial Data Committee (FGDC) Launches Geospatial Website

November 9, 2011

The FGDC, which is a collaboration between the Federal Government and geospatial partners, released a prototype website that provides an integrated, user friendly view of federal data on a geospatial platform. This new platform is available at: www.geoplatform.gov.

Through the website, users can create their own maps by combining their data with public domain data and can collaborate in public and private groups with others who share their interests. Maps assembled through the Geospatial Platform can be shared with others through web browsers and mobile technologies. All of this is possible without requiring users to install software on their own computers.

Examples of the information available on the initial version of the Geospatial Platform include environmental clean-up data from EPA and coastal environmental sensitivity data and historic hurricane data from NOAA. These data sets could be combined on a topographic map from Interior to assess hurricane vulnerability in coastal areas.

The Geospatial Platform is a work in progress that will continue to be refined, updated, and refreshed over the next several months with additional data, services and tools, based on user feedback and partner inputs. For more information on the FGDC see: www.fgdc.gov. You can also see the [news release](#) for more information.

WestFAST Kicks off Support for WSWC Water Information and Data Subcommittee

November 21, 2011

WestFAST, in coordination with the WSWC Water Information and Data Subcommittee, have begun a pilot project to explore improved methodologies for sharing water use and water availability data. This project is being undertaken in coordination with the Western Governors' Association and the Department of Energy National Labs as they are looking at water availability in the west for energy production.

The National Labs have already evaluated some of the WSWC member states' data and have developed some preliminary reports. In order to support this effort, and to ensure the sustainability and repeatability of this study, the WSWC, working with its member states, and with the support of WestFAST expertise, plan to establish a data exchange framework that will allow for real-time access to state water allocation, supply, and demand data in a common format. Also, since the states vary on what data they collect, how they collect it, and how they store it, the WSWC will work with the states to inventory current practices and make recommendations on policies that will need to be put into place to support such a framework.

The intent is that this project will also support USGS's Water Census by getting the western states to a common starting point from which the USGS can engage, as well as providing a test-bed for state-to-state, state-to-fed data exchange approaches that the USGS could adopt as part of the Water Census. Under this project, the WSWC will also make recommendations on how federal agencies can make their data related to water availability and use more available to state water managers in a consistent, well defined format.

The WSWC and WestFAST have begun this process by setting up four workgroups made up of state and federal members. These workgroups are tasked with: 1) Performing an assessment of current state practices and capabilities; 2) Cataloging methodologies for water use and water availability estimation; 3) Developing a list of data elements for sharing this type of data and a recommended format (or schema); and 4) Making recommendations for data exchange approaches. Stay tuned for further updates on this project. A project web site will also be made available in the month of December.

Agency Announcements

November 2, 2011: EPA Releases Statement on Florida's Proposed Rule for Addressing Nutrient Pollution, see [news release](#).

November 2, 2011: USGS Report: Flash Forward 100 Years: Climate Change Scenarios in the California Bay Delta, see [news release](#).

November 3, 2011: EPA Announces Final Study Plan to Assess Hydraulic Fracturing, see [news release](#).

November 7, 2011: WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grant Funding Opportunity Now Available, see [news release](#).

November 7, 2011: WaterSMART Title XVI Water Reuse Program Construction Grant Funding Opportunity Now Available, see [news release](#).

November 10, 2011: Secretary of Energy Advisory Board Subcommittee on Shale Gas Production Posts Draft Report, see [news release](#).

November 18, 2011: LandsAT 5 Mission in Jeopardy, see [news release](#).

November 29, 2011: Reclamation Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study Seeks Input to Help Resolve Projected Future Supply and Demand Imbalances, see [news release](#).

November 30, 2011: DOE Asst. Secretary Hoffman speaks at FERC Reliability Technical Conference: "...Generally speaking, the new EPA rules will not create widespread resource [electricity generation] adequacy issues.", see [news release](#), also see the [DOE Report](#).

Upcoming Meetings/Events

- **December 12-13, 2011:** WGA/WSWC Innovative Water Transfers Workshop, Las Vegas, NV
- **February 8-9, 2012:** [USGS/ICWP/WSWC Cooperative Water Program Data and Science Roundtable](#), Salt Lake City, UT
- **March 14-16, 2012:** Spring WSWC meeting, Washington, DC
- **April 30-May 4, 2012:** [National Monitoring Conference—Water: One Shared Effort—Common Future](#), Portland, Oregon



WestFAST News is published monthly. To get an Agency Announcement published or to get added to the WestFAST News distribution list contact:
Dwane Young, WestFAST Federal Liaison
Email: dayoung@wswc.utah.gov
Phone: 801-685-2555

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