



**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:**

**Jean Thomas** (Chair), Forest Service  
[jathomas02@fs.fed.us](mailto:jathomas02@fs.fed.us)

**Becky Fulkerson** (Vice Chair), Reclamation  
[rfulkerson@usbr.gov](mailto:rfulkerson@usbr.gov)

**John D'Antonio**, USACE  
[John.R.D'Antonio@usace.army.mil](mailto:John.R.D'Antonio@usace.army.mil)

**Roger Gorke**, EPA  
[Gorke.roger@epa.gov](mailto:Gorke.roger@epa.gov)

**Pixie Hamilton**, USGS  
[pahamilt@usgs.gov](mailto:pahamilt@usgs.gov)

**Dionne Thompson**, Reclamation  
[DEThompson@usbr.gov](mailto:DEThompson@usbr.gov)

**Lee Koss**, BLM  
[lkoss@blm.gov](mailto:lkoss@blm.gov)

**Janet Bair**, FWS  
[janet\\_bair@fws.gov](mailto:janet_bair@fws.gov)

**Mike Strobel**, NRCS  
[michael.strobel@por.usda.gov](mailto:michael.strobel@por.usda.gov)

**Roger Pulwarty**, NOAA  
[Roger.pulwarty@noaa.gov](mailto:Roger.pulwarty@noaa.gov)

**Brad Doorn**, NASA  
[bradley.doorn@nasa.gov](mailto:bradley.doorn@nasa.gov)

**Craig Zamuda**, DOE  
[Craig.Zamuda@Hq.Doe.Gov](mailto:Craig.Zamuda@Hq.Doe.Gov)

**Clare Mendelsohn**, DOD  
[clare.mendelsohn@us.af.mil](mailto:clare.mendelsohn@us.af.mil)

**Eric Stevens**, Federal Liaison  
[ericstevens@swc.utah.gov](mailto:ericstevens@swc.utah.gov)

# WestFAST News

October 2012

## WSWC Fall Council Meeting San Antonio, TX—October 10-12, 2012

Members of WestFAST attended the Western States Water Council (WSWC) 170th Council Meetings in San Antonio, Texas.

On the first day, Dwane Young (WestFAST) and Sara Larsen (WSWC) demonstrated the Water Data Exchange (WaDE) project. Later, attendees heard presentations about the San Antonio River Improvement Project and went on tour to see an example of collaboration between federal and state agencies.

On the second day, individual WSWC committees (Executive, Water Resources, Water Quality, and Legal) met to discuss important issues.

During the Executive Committee Meeting, the Council discussed a position supporting federal water and climate data collection and analysis programs, urging the Administration and Congress “to give a high priority to the allocation and appropriation of sufficient funds for these critical, vital programs which benefit so many, yet have been or are being allowed to erode to the point that it threatens the quantity and quality of basic data provided to a myriad, growing and diffuse number of decision-makers and stakeholders, with significantly adverse consequences.”

The Council approved three new external policy positions, which have since been sent to the Western Governors’ Association (WGA). See WSWC [Policy Statements](#).

The first position supports States’ rights to natural surface water flows. It says that the WSWC “urges the Army Corps of Engineers to recognize the legal right of the States to the development, use, control, distribution and allocation of the States’ surface waters.... [T]hat any policy of the [Corps] to require storage contracts to access natural flows within a reservoir boundary would be a violation of the States’ right to develop, use, control, and distribute surface water.... [T]hat the [WSWC] opposes any and all efforts that would diminish the primary and exclusive authority of States over the allocation of surface water.”



**Photo:** San Antonio River Improvement Project, [Mission Reach](#), San Antonio, TX.

The second position “strongly supports” legislation to reauthorize the Reclamation States Emergency Relief Act, which has expired. No stand-alone bill has been introduced in this Congress, but legislative language was drafted in the Senate to reauthorize the Act through 2017 and raise the limit on authorized appropriations.

The third position supports legislation to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), which expired last month. S. 3584 and H.R. 6489 have been introduced to reauthorize NIDIS through 2017, and authorize \$13.5M and \$14.5M per year for the program.

During the Water Resources Committee meeting, WSWC members from North Dakota and South Dakota expressed concern over the federal position that all waters entering reservoirs on the mainstem of the Missouri River require surplus contracts for any withdrawals. They argued that the federal government should recognize the States’ rights to natural flows that would be available without the reservoirs, citing the 1944 Flood Control Act: “it is . . . the policy of the Congress to recognize the interests and rights of the States in determining the development of the watersheds within their borders and likewise their interests and rights in water utilization and control.”

Other presentations included discussions about the water-energy nexus, water quantity, and water quality issues.

See the [WSWC website](#) for more information.



# WestFAST News

October 2012

## Principles of Collaboration—New WestFAST Project

Salt Lake City, Utah—October 18, 2012

What are the principles that facilitate collaboration between federal agencies, and collaboration between states and federal agencies? This is the focus of a new WestFAST project. During a time of budget challenges, it is becoming ever more important to collaborate, focusing limited resources on critical mission areas and reducing the overlap between federal agencies. One of the best ways to increase efficiency is through establishing collaboration between agencies, such as a national effort regarding water data sharing. As the need for collaboration increases, it is essential to provide a way for federal and state agencies to share data in a common format. (See WestFAST’s on-going [WaDE](#) project).

In his article “[The 7 Essentials of Cross-Agency Collaboration](#),” Kamensky describes how government agencies should move beyond collaboration to “joint management,” following the enterprise model of the private sector by using technology and information to manage “jointly” across agencies. Thus, agencies could move from building “collaborative networks” to “shared operations.” See also, [Managing for Results—Key Considerations for Implementing Interagency Collaborative Mechanisms](#), GAO-12-1022, Sep 27, 2012.

The intent of this project is to develop a list of best practices that federal agencies can use to better engage the states and other federal agencies. A preliminary draft is currently under review. Following revisions and approval by WestFAST, the final document should be released early next year.

## EPA Commemorates 2012 as the 40th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. Forty years ago, in the midst of national concern about untreated sewage, industrial and toxic discharges, destruction of wetlands, and contaminated runoff, the principal law to protect the nation’s waters was passed. Originally enacted in 1948 to control water pollution and primarily based on state and local efforts, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, or Clean Water Act (CWA), was revised in 1972. The CWA set a new national goal “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters,” with interim goals that all waters be fishable and swimmable where possible. The Act embodied a new federal-state partnership, where federal guidelines, objectives and limits were to be set under the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency; while states, territories, and authorized tribes would largely administer and en-

force the CWA programs, with significant federal technical and financial assistance. See the [EPA website](#) for more information.

## Agency Announcements

10/04/2012: USGS Releases First Assessment of Shale Gas Resources in the Utica Shale: 38 trillion cubic feet; see [release](#).

10/16/2012: Rural Water Infrastructure - Additional Coordination Can Help Avoid Potentially Duplicative Application Requirements; see [release](#).

10/17/2012: U.S. EPA Awards Arizona more than \$27 million to Improve Water Quality, Protect Public Health; see [release](#).

10/18/2012: Elusive El Niño challenges NOAA’s 2012 U.S. Winter Outlook; see [release](#).

10/19/2012: Technical Announcement: Landsat Science Team to Help Guide Next Landsat Mission; see [release](#).

10/22/2012: Reclamation Begins Negotiations with the Navajo Nation and the City of Farmington on Navajo Nation Municipal Pipeline Title Transfer Agreements; see [release](#).

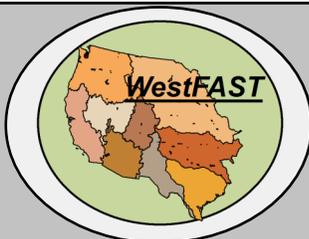
10/23/2012: USDA Drought Assistance Minimizes Impacts While Spurring Improvements on 1M Acres of American Farmland; see [release](#).

10/25/2012: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Seeks Proposals from States for Annual Endangered Species Grants; see [release](#).

10/31/2012: Managers Discuss Water Tools for the Middle Rio Grande; see [release](#).

## Upcoming Meetings/Events

- **November 14-16, 2012:** [Western States Water Resources Infrastructure Needs & Strategies Symposium](#), Phoenix, AZ.
- **December 12-14, 2012:** Colorado River Water Users Association, [Annual Conference](#), Las Vegas, NV.
- **April 3-5, 2013:** WSWC Spring Council Meeting, Denver, CO.
- **June 24-26, 2013:** WSWC Summer Council Meetings, Casper, WY.



WestFAST News is published monthly. To get an Agency Announcement published or to get added to the WestFAST News distribution list contact:

Eric Stevens, WestFAST Federal Liaison

Email: [ericstevens@wswc.utah.gov](mailto:ericstevens@wswc.utah.gov)

Phone: 801-685-2555

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