

MINUTES
of the
WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Crystal Gateway Marriott
Arlington, Virginia
March 14, 2018

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MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

ALASKA	David W. Schade
ARIZONA	Einav Henenson
CALIFORNIA	--
COLORADO	Pat Pfaltzgraff
IDAHO	Jerry Rigby
KANSAS	Tracy Streeter
MONTANA	Jan Langel
NEBRASKA	--
NEVADA	Jason King
NEW MEXICO	Tom Blaine Greg Ridgley
NORTH DAKOTA	Jen Verleger
OKLAHOMA	Julie Cunningham
OREGON	--
SOUTH DAKOTA	Kent Woodmansey
TEXAS	Jon Niermann Jim Rizk
UTAH	Eric Millis Norm Johnson Todd Adams

WASHINGTON

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WYOMING

Pat Tyrrell
Steve Wolff
Kevin Frederick

GUESTS

Wendy Nero, HDR, Fort Collins, CO
Stephen Bartell, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC

WESTFAST

Roger Pierce, Federal Liaison, Murray, UT
Indrani Graczyk, NASA WWAO, Pasadena, CA
Doug Cutis, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Washington, DC
Cara McCarthy, NRCS Snow Survey, USDA, Portland, OR
Chris Carlson, U.S. Forest Service, Washington, DC
Avra Morgan, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, CO

STAFF

Tony Willardson
Michelle Bushman
Sara Larsen
Cheryl Redding

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Eric Millis, Vice-Chair of the Water Resources Committee, called the meeting to order, and requested introductions be made around the room. Tom Byler was unable to attend this meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held in Albuquerque, New Mexico on October 19, 2017 were moved for approval by Jason King and seconded by Jen Verleger. The minutes were approved.

SUNSETTING POSITIONS

Eric Millis noted there are two sunseting positions for the Committee to consider for re adoption. These are contained under Tab C in the briefing materials. The first was Position #378, Integrating Water and Energy Policy and Planning, and the second is Position #379 supporting Federal Research on Climate Adaptation Research.

The Executive Committee met by conference call and discussed the positions. There is a desire to continue the sunseting positions. There were no changes recommended for Position #378, with the exception of the dates. A motion to recommend Position #378 to go to the Full Council for re adoption was made by Jen Verleger and seconded by Norm Johnson. Position #379 had only a few minor edits to the text by the Executive Committee, as well as updating the dates. Kent Woodmansey moved Position #379 be taken to the Full Council for adoption. Norm Johnson seconded the motion. Both positions were unanimously recommended by the Water Resources Committee.

PROPOSED POSITIONS

Eric called attention to three proposed positions under Tab C in the briefing materials. The first is in support of Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO); the second supports the Nation's Infrastructure Needs and Improvements; and the third supports Critical Weather Station Networks and Related Data Programs.

Eric called for any further additions or corrections to the FIRO position. Steve Wolff moved that this position be forwarded to the Full Council for adoption. Pat Tyrrell seconded the motion. The position was unanimously approved by the Committee.

Next, Eric addressed the proposed position in support of Water Infrastructure Funding. No changes were offered. Jan Langel moved the position be recommended to the Full Council for adoption. Pat Tyrrell seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The final proposed draft resolution to be brought forward was in support of Weather Station Networks. No comments or changes were recommended. Jason King moved the position be taken up by the Full Council for adoption. The second was offered by Steve Wolff. There was no opposition and the motion was unanimously approved.

WESTERN GOVERNORS' (WGA) WATER-RELATED POLICY RESOLUTIONS

Tony Willardson reported on a summit held by the Western Governors' Association (WGA), the Western State Legislators, the Western Conference of Attorneys General, and a number of other groups. They have created a Western Policy Network. They are holding regular calls and meetings. As part of their efforts, about two weeks ago they held a summit in Washington, DC on realigning the federal-state relationships. Jim Ogsbury, WGA Executive

Director opened the meetings and projected on the screen during his presentation a slide that read: “States, NOT Stakeholders.” He impressed upon the federal partners that States are co-regulators, sovereign entities, and that they expect to be treated as such and not as stakeholders. A number of federal agencies attended. There is a summary of the meeting in your briefing materials under Tab E. This Administration is receptive and anxious to engage the states.

WGA WATER-RELATED POLICY RESOLUTIONS

Tony Willardson noted that there are copies under Tab “Mc” in the briefing materials of the WGA resolutions on water. The WGA Staff Council will be meeting this week to prepare for their Annual meetings, in which these positions will be reconsidered. The basis for these resolutions was in large part due to work the Council performed with the WGA to raise these issues.

Tony commented that he has mentioned previously that the WSWC works mainly through the Staff Council in the Governors’ offices to raise issues. As a result, the WSWC does not have quite as direct input into such matters with WGA as was once the case. If you have questions about the resolutions, please take them to your WGA Staff Council member or to the Governor’s Office. Tony works with Ward Scott, WGA’s Water Program Manager, regularly on WGA and WSWC matters of concern. Different than in the past, WGA does not directly ask the WSWC for comments before they act. Thus, we would encourage you to talk to your governor’s office if you have any concerns or suggested changes.

WaDE UPDATE / WSWC-WWAO WIMS WORKSHOP REPORT

Sara Larsen reported that the Water Data Exchange (WaDE) Water Information and Data Subcommittee (WIDS) convenes regularly. It is comprised of staff members from Council member representatives’ offices. They discuss next steps for WaDE and data topics in general. WIDS helped to organize and give feedback on the Council’s series of Water Information Management Systems workshops. The first workshop to be held in a long time was held in January 2018 with the assistance of Indrani Graczyk of NASA’s Western Water Applications Office (WWAO). About 70 attendees took part in the workshop held at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California. Presentations and topics dealt with remote sensing advances, water use permitting and reporting systems, space applications, federal data sources and applications, and many other topics. Additional subjects addressed included open water data developments and how to document data and present it to the public. A survey was conducted with the help of the WWAO Office on the transfer of data to the cloud, and whether or not that is a likely transition for the states. There was a great transfer of information from state to state and from states to our federal partners.

A summary of the meeting is under Tab F in the meeting briefing materials. The workshop was a big success and the meeting may be held again in 2019. If you would like to

participate in or make suggestions to the WIDS committee on special topics to have discussed either for the WIDS subcommittee or for the next WIMS workshop, please contact Sara.

WaDE is looking at a banner year. There are three states that have not yet linked in, and those are Alaska, North Dakota, and Montana. We are trying to expand the available datasets. The desire is that each of the WSWC member states will be included in the exchange. A new schema will be implemented beginning the summer of 2018 as a result of funding to get this work accomplished. We will be reworking some of the WaDE components to make it easier to gauge usage, to monitor performance, and make sure updates and debugging is easier. Right now with everyone hosting their own WaDE nodes, it is more difficult to make WaDE updates as they are all made at different stages. We will try to implement a strategy to fix that. Some additional funding resources are anticipated in the coming fiscal year, and as the schema is reworked, the WSWC will be able to provide resources to the states.

NOAA NATIONAL EARTH SYSTEM PREDICTION CAPABILITY WORKSHOP

Tony Willardson reported on a National Earth System Prediction Capability workshop on metrics, postprocessing, and products for subseasonal to seasonal timeframes held at the beginning of March. He remarked that after listening to meteorologists discuss dynamical and statistical modeling and multi-model ensembles, he learned a lot.

Congress passed a weather bill – the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 -- in April 2017. As part of that bill, NOAA and other agencies were encouraged to work on improvements to sub-seasonal to seasonal precipitation forecasting. As you know, Jeanine Jones, WSWC Vice Chair, has been particularly active in this area. NOAA has made a commitment to perform research after passage of the legislation. There are a number of agencies in addition to NOAA working on this task. As water managers, you know how critical the 5-10 day forecasts are. A two or three month forecast, with some skill, would be particularly useful.

Among those attending the meeting were NOAA and NASA representatives, as well as from the Armed Services (the Navy and Coast Guard), and others. Ice is very important to the Armed Services, as well as to others. There are some practical national defense reasons for being able to better predict weather.

An insight Tony picked up by attending the meeting was that the genesis of the Weather Service came from General Eisenhower before D-Day during World War II. He wanted to know what the weather was going to be and whether or not the seaborne troops would be able to land along the beaches of Normandy, France. Roger Pierce noted that they did not have models at that time to be able to predict the weather. Roger commented on the importance of observational meteorology and observational forecasting. Weather observation stations were put into place prior to the D-Day situation. When in a pinch, sometimes observational forecasts are as good as it gets for doing weather forecasting.

Roger added that being able to forecast into the future can make a difference. Given the best weather forecast models of the day, forecasting very far into the future is kind of tough. Even a day or two in advance can still be tough to forecast. However if we could forecast out to two years in advance, that would be a great thing to be able to do.

The National Academy of Science has been a little ambitious in stating that within ten years, we will be able to use seasonal forecasting as we do the weather forecasts. Tony mentioned to one representative: “We are just asking for what the weather will be like next year. There have been better predictions. Joseph gave Pharoah seven years to prepare for drought!”

WSWC WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN FOR FY2018-2019

Eric Millis briefly reviewed the items in the work plan. There were no changes or comments in particular on the draft work plan. Tony Willardson commented that there have not been many changes made to the work plan from the previous year. It is a living document, so changes may be made as needed throughout the year. The Management Subcommittee and Executive Committee will discuss the possibility of holding an infrastructure symposium this coming fiscal year, perhaps in November.

A motion to approve the work plan for the coming year was offered by Steve Wolff. Jason King seconded the motion. There was no opposition and the motion was approved.

STATE ENGAGEMENT WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS: TOPICS AND STRATEGIES

Eric Millis drew attention to a list of topics, contained under Tab L of the briefing materials, on which Council members may wish to engage their federal partners and counterparts on over the next few days.

Tony related that a number of federal representatives will be attending and participating during the joint ICWP-WSWC Water Planners’ Conference today. The conference will provide an opportunity to discuss some of these specific topics with our federal partners. As we go through that program, we hope to have some interactive and engaged discussion.

SUNSETTING POSITIONS

Tab XYZ of the briefing materials contains sunseting positions that will be brought up at the 2018 Summer meetings.

OTHER MATTERS

There being no other matters, the meeting was adjourned.