**WestFAST News**

**October 2013**

**Shutdown Looms and Snow Falls on WSWC Fall Council Meeting in Deadwood, South Dakota**

After a partial shutdown of the federal government prevented many federal agencies from sending presenters and representatives, Winter Storm Atlas (see Weather Channel link) brought an early closure to the Fall Council Meeting of the Western States Water Council (WSWC) in Deadwood, South Dakota. The WSWC shortened the meeting schedule to allow early departure on Thursday after the National Weather Service issued a severe storm warning. Fortunately, the condensed schedule still allowed for the discussion of important matters.

For example, on Wednesday, October 2, a panel from the Corps of Engineers responded to questions about the operation of dams along the Missouri River mainstem reservoir system. The panel included the following representatives from the Corps of Engineers: David Pongalis, Regional Director of Programs from the Northwestern Division (NWD); Jim Fredericks, Water Supply Business Line Manager from NWD; Christina Austin-Smith, Office of Council Attorney from NWD; and Tiffany Vanosdall, Planning Project Manager from the Omaha District.

On Thursday, October 3, the WSWC held the remainder of the meetings on a consolidated schedule. Mark Limbaugh, Managing Director from the Omaha District, discussed application of RIFIA in the North Bay Water Reuse Program. On behalf of Doug Kluck, Central Regional Climate Services Director for NOAA, Dennis Todey, the South Dakota State Climatologist, presented on the Enhanced Missouri River Monitoring System. He explained the value of the system in the context of the current cycles of drought and flooding. Other discussion items included:

- Missouri Basin Quarterly Climate Summary
- NOAA Tribal Engagement in the Missouri Basin

Ken Wolfenbarger, from the NASA JPL, discussed NASA remote sensing applications and research regarding groundwater, subsidence, and snow. As an illustration of capability, he demonstrated how an ASO time series of snow water equivalent from the Tuolumne Basin in 2013 can improve estimates for water management in California.

See this link for presentations and more information regarding the WSWC Fall Council Meeting in Deadwood, South Dakota.

**Partial Federal Government Shutdown Slows Federal News Releases**

As a result of the federal budget impasse, there was a partial government shutdown of the federal government that impacted most of the twelve WestFAST agencies. During the partial shutdown, news releases from the various federal agencies slowed dramatically.

An agreement to end the partial shutdown extended funding of the federal government through 15 January 2014.

**Federal News**

**10/01**: Bureau of Reclamation Shutdown Impacts; see link.

**10/11**: National Park Service Enters Agreement with State of Utah to Re-open Eight National Parks; see link.

**10/11**: National Park Service Enters Agreement with State of South Dakota to Re-open Mount Rushmore; see link.

**10/11**: National Park Service Enters Agreement with State of Colorado to Re-open Rocky Mountain National Park; see link.

**10/11**: National Park Service Enters Agreement with State of Arizona to Re-open Grand Canyon; see link.

**10/17**: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Re-Opens Following Government Shutdown; see link.
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10/21: US Forest Service Seeks Comments on Year-Round Recreation Activities at Ski Areas; see link.

10/22: BLM to Host First-Ever Competitive Auction to Develop Solar Energy on Public Lands; see link.

10/22: Earthquake Swarm Continues in Central Oklahoma; see link.

10/23: USDA Under Secretary Meets With South Dakota Farmers and Ranchers Impacted By Blizzard, Urges Farm Bill Passage; see link.

10/23: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Endorses Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Lesser Prairie-Chicken Range-Wide Conservation Plan; see link.

10/24: Service Extends Comment Periods for Gray and Mexican Wolf Proposals, Reschedules Public Hearings, Adds Hearing in Arizona; see link.

10/25: EPA Awards $400,000 to Communities to Reduce Water Pollution, Build Resilience to Climate Change / Communities in Rhode Island, Michigan, Nebraska, Indiana, Arizona, and South Carolina Will Receive Funding for Green Infrastructure; see link.

10/25: The Effects of Space Weather on Aviation; see link.

10/28: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Protects Five Species of Birds in Colombia and Ecuador as Endangered; see link.

10/28: Secretary Vilsack Highlights First-ever Report on USDA Efforts to Expand Agroforestry Practices on Farms, Ranches and Woodlands; see link.


10/29: Pilot Program Launched to Increase Public Involvement in USACE Flood Risk Management Activities; see link.

10/31: Media Invited to View New Earth Science Satellite before Shipment to Japan; see link.

10/31: NOAA: Primary GOES-R instrument Cleared for Installation Onto Spacecraft; see link.

State News

10/02: Life on the Range Examines Impact of Elk Complex Fire in Idaho; see link.

10/04: Western States, Tribes Address Concerns about Army Corps Rulemaking on Surplus Water in Reservoirs; see link.

10/08: South Dakota Digs Out After Massive Blizzard; see link.

10/09: WGA Testifies at Endangered Species Act Forum in Washington; see link.

10/10: Utah Reopening National Parks as Colorado, Arizona, South Dakota Consider Options; see link.

10/18: WGA News: State Water Plan for Texas; Kansas Water Conference; ‘Starting point’ for Oregon Water Projects; see link.

10/23: Western Governors support Congressional Reauthorization of Water Resources Reform and Development Act; see link.

10/28: Fish & Wildlife Endorses Lesser Prairie Chicken Range-Wide Conservation Plan; see link.

10/29: Western States Tops in Livability, Taxes, Business; see link.

10/30: Interior Returns ‘Sequestered’ 2013 Mineral Royalty Payments to States; see link.

Upcoming WSWC Meetings & Events

- April 1-4, 2014: WSWC Spring Council Meeting and DC Roundtable, Washington DC.
- TBD: WSWC Fall Council Meeting, Arizona.

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
Phone: 801-685-2555
Check out the WestFAST Web Site: http://www.westernstateswater.org/westfast