

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.



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WestFAST News

April 2014

WSWC Washington DC Roundtable

On April 1-4, 2014, the Interstate Council on Water Policy (ICWP) and the WSWC hosted the Washington DC Roundtable, with associated meetings. Representatives from states and federal agencies met to discuss a wide range of topics pertaining to state-federal cooperation in water resources management. Nine WestFAST agencies made a total of sixteen presentations. The following are some highlights.

On April 2, Bruce Carlson, a Senior Policy Advisor with the US Army Corps of Engineers, discussed the need for increased investments in water infrastructure, noting that cuts to the Corps of Engineers' budget have hindered its ability to reduce its project backlog.

On April 2, Diana Bauer with Department of Energy's (DoE) Office of Energy Policy and Systems Analysis, described DoE's energy-water nexus efforts, including a pending report on the topic. Bauer explained that water scarcity, variability, and uncertainty are creating vulnerabilities in the nation's energy systems, but aging infrastructure presents an opportunity to evaluate and make changes. Bauer described six "strategic pillars" for supporting energy development.

1. Optimize the freshwater efficiency of energy production, electricity generation, and end-use systems.
2. Optimize the energy efficiency of water management, treatment, distribution, and end-use systems.
3. Enhance the reliability and resilience of energy and water systems.
4. Increase safe and productive use of non-traditional water sources.
5. Promote responsible energy operations with respect to water quality, ecosystem, and seismic impacts.
6. Exploit productive synergies among water and energy systems.

On April 3, Roger Gorke—Senior Policy Advisor at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Vice-Chair of WestFAST—described his work on the National Drought Resilience Partnership (NDRP). The NDRP recently developed a web-based portal to improve access to federal drought

resources, host more frequent national drought outlook forums, and improve drought monitoring and forecasting. Gorke explained how the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are spearheading the NDRP, which includes the Department of Energy, the Department of the Interior, EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

On April 4, the WSWC met with lead officials from the 12 WestFAST agencies to discuss the importance of state-federal collaboration and to highlight WestFAST's accomplishments and ongoing efforts.

NDRP—National Drought Resilience Partnership

Recently, as part of President Obama's Climate Action Plan, the Obama Administration formed an interagency National Drought Resilience Partnership to help communities better prepare for future droughts and reduce the impact of drought events on livelihoods and the economy. Responding to requests from communities, businesses, and farmers and ranchers, the National Drought Resilience Partnership will make it easier to access Federal drought resources, and will help link information such as monitoring, forecasts, outlooks, and early warnings with longer-term drought resilience strategies in critical sectors such as agriculture, municipal water systems, energy, recreation, tourism and manufacturing.

In its first year, the Partnership has been developing a new, web-based portal to (1) ease access to Federal agency drought recovery resources; (2) host more frequent regional drought outlook forums that provide access to experts and locally relevant information, support the coordination of a national soil moisture monitoring network to help improve monitoring and forecasting drought conditions; and (3) identify a single point of contact for the public. In cooperation with local, state and regional governments, the Partnership also plans to undertake a pilot project in a western area that has been impacted by drought, creating a local-scale drought resilience plan that could be applied in other parts of the Nation.

For more information on drought and the National Drought Resilience Partnership, please visit www.drought.gov.

Federal News

04/02: Testimony of EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy Before the House Energy and Commerce Committee on Proposed FY 2015 Budget; see [link](#).

04/02: East Poplar Brine-Contaminated Groundwater Plumes Continue to Move; see [link](#).

04/03: U.S. Government Announces \$1 Billion for Abandoned Uranium Mine Cleanup on the Navajo Nation; see [link](#).

04/03: USDA, EPA Partner to Improve Access To Clean Water, Improved Infrastructure in U.S.-Mexico Border Region; see [link](#).

04/03: EPA Awarding Close to \$13 Million to Assist Small Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems Across the United States; see [link](#).

04/04: BLM Lays Out Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Priorities; see [link](#).

04/07: Yakima Basin Water Supply - April Forecast Released; see [link](#).

04/07: Department of Energy Releases 2014 Strategic Plan; see [link](#).

04/08: Secretary Jewell Statement on the Senate Confirmation of Neil Kornze as Director of the Bureau of Land Management; see [link](#).

04/08: Klamath Project 2014 Operations Plan Released; see [link](#).

04/11: Fort Operations Will Not Jeopardize Endangered Species; see [link](#).

04/11: Bureau of Reclamation Seeks Proposals through Desalination and Water Purification Research Funding Opportunity Announcement; see [link](#).

04/11: Reclamation Seeks Applied Science Project Applicants for Desert and Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperatives; see [link](#).

04/14: Water Supply Forecast Shows Record Snow in Northern Parts of West, Parched in Southern Areas; see [link](#).

04/17: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Reclamation Release Spring-run Chinook Salmon into the San Joaquin River for Study; see [link](#).

04/17: EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Establish Interagency Agreement for Work on West Lake Landfill's Isolation Barrier; see [link](#).

04/17: Synthesis of Wildland Fire Emissions, Carbon, and Climate Research; see [link](#).

04/18: "How's My Waterway" Now More User-Friendly / App Lets Users Check Health of Waterways Anywhere in the US; see [link](#).

04/18: Comment Period: Proposed Rule for the Definition of Waters of the U.S. under the Clean Water Act; see [link](#).

04/18: Comment Period: Interpretive Rule for the 404(f)(1)(A) Exemption under the Clean Water Act; see [link](#).

04/21: U.S. EPA Administrator Kicking Off Earth Week Tour on Climate Action Plan / McCarthy traveling to New York, Boston, Cleveland, Atlanta and Memphis; see [link](#).

04/22: EPA Celebrates Earth Day; Agency Encourages Americans to Take Action on Climate Change; see [link](#).

04/22: EPA Announces \$5 million in Grants to Restore S.F. Bay Water Quality and Habitats; see [link](#).

04/22: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Restoration Programs Create 3,973 New Jobs, Pump \$327.7 Million into Local Economies; see [link](#).

04/22: Lessons from the 2013 Northern Colorado Flood: Past, Present, and Future; see [link](#).

04/22: President Obama Honors Earth Day with Series of Administration Events and Announcements; see [link](#).

04/23: U.S. EPA Administrator McCarthy, HUD Secretary Donovan, and DOT Secretary Foxx to Tour Joint Federal Investments and Sustainability Sites in Memphis; see [link](#).

04/24: BLM to Examine Steps to Reduce Methane from Mining Operations on Public Lands; see [link](#).

04/24: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Seeks Proposals from States and Tribes for Wolf Livestock Demonstration Project Grants; see [link](#).

04/24: NOAA: First JPSS-1 Satellite Instrument is Ready for Installation; see [link](#).

04/24: U.S. Drought Monitor Update for April 22, 2014; see [link](#).

04/28: Energy Department Releases New Guidance for Strengthening Cybersecurity of the Grid's Supply Chain; see [link](#).

State News

04/01: Quarterly Outlook: Drought to Persist into the Summer for California, Southern Great Plains, Southwest; see [link](#).

04/07: Western Governors Support Federal Permit Streamlining Pilot Project for BLM Lands; see [link](#).

04/10: WGA Testimony before House Appropriations Subcommittee Addresses PILT, Secure Rural Schools, Reimbursement for opening National Parks; see [link](#).

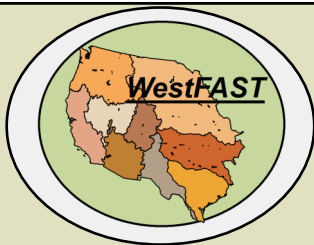
04/17: Case Study: How BLM Used State Wildlife Data Maps to Reduce Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions in Utah; see [link](#).

04/18: WGA News: Montana Business Plan, Wildfire Vigilance in Arizona, California Special Session, Workforce Summits in South Dakota; see [link](#).

04/28: Natural Resources Conservation Service Reports \$350 Million has been Invested in Conservation Across 3.8 Million Acres in 11 States Since 2010; see [link](#).

Upcoming WSWC Meetings & Events

- **July 15-18, 2014:** [WSWC Summer Council Meeting](#), Helena, Montana (Holiday Inn Downtown).
- **October 7-10, 2014:** WSWC Fall Council Meeting, Arizona (Hotel TBD).



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

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