

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

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WestFAST Forms Four Work Groups

In December 2013, the WGA adopted [Policy Resolution 2014-03](#) in which the Western Governors provided the following water management priorities: (1) state primacy, (2) new infrastructure, (3) innovative water management, and (4) reliable water data. This resolution supersedes the direction given to the WSWC in the 2008 Next Steps Report. In response to the WGA policy resolution, WestFAST focused efforts around forming four work groups: data, drought, energy, and infrastructure. Each of these work groups were organized in the latter part of 2013 in preparation for beginning work-group activities in early 2014.

The following shows the sections from the WGA policy that provide a collaborative justification for each of the newly formed WestFAST work groups.

Data Work Group — § 4 Western States Need Reliable Water Resource Information: “Basic information on the status, trends and projections of water resource availability is essential to sound water management.” *WGA Policy Resolution 2014-03* § 4.

Drought Work Group — § 4(b) Drought Information and Planning: “Western Governors encourage federal agencies to partner with states in the gathering, coordination and effective dissemination of drought-related data between the federal government and states. The National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) is a successful model of state-federal collaboration in the development of information services.

i. Governors recommend Congressional reauthorization of the NIDIS program, particularly with respect to implementation of regional drought early warning systems.

ii. Governors support a comprehensive national policy that promotes a coordinated and integrated approach to future drought, including improved forecasting and monitoring, drought preparedness and planning, and efficient delivery of drought programs.

iii. Governors believe that drought preparedness and contingency plans – created through partnerships of states, federal agencies and

local communities – provide a proactive approach to addressing drought.” *WGA Policy Resolution 2014-03* § 4(b).

Energy Work Group — § 3(b) Energy Development: Western Governors recognize that energy development and electricity generation may create new water demands. Western Governors recommend increased coordination across the energy and water management communities, and support ongoing work to assess the interconnection of energy and water through the Regional Transmission Expansion Planning Project for the Western interconnection and similar efforts. *WGA Policy Resolution 2014-03* § 3(b).

Infrastructure Work Group — § 2 Infrastructure Needs: “Aging infrastructure cannot be ignored; infrastructure investments are essential to our nation’s continued economic prosperity and environmental protection, and they assist states in meeting federally-mandated standards.” *WGA Policy Resolution 2014-03* § 2.

For information about participating in these WestFAST work groups, please contact the WestFAST Liaison at 801-685-2555 or email him at ericstevens@wswc.utah.gov.

USACE Releases Report on Value Added by Civil Works Program

According to a new report by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) entitled *Value to the Nation of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Programs*, these programs in 2010 provided \$48.82 billion of Net National Economic Development Benefits and \$14.83 billion of Revenues to the U.S. Treasury. For each dollar spent on the USACE Civil Works program, approximately \$9 in economic benefits to the nation were generated, and \$2.70 in US Treasury revenues were generated.

The rate of return for the USACE Civil Works program was estimated to be 26%, calculated by dividing total net NED benefits by the estimated value of USACE capital stock in FY 2010, which was \$192.9 billion approximately \$189.2 billion in 2010 dollars).

For the full report, see this [link](#).

Note: For more water-related news links, see the [Water Resources Headlines](#) tab on the [Federal Support Toolbox](#), available at www.watertoolbox.us (select “News & Events” then “Water Resources Headlines”).

Federal News

01/06: Reclamation Reduces Flows on the American River in Preparation for Dry Conditions in Water Year 2014; see [link](#).
01/07: USDA Extends Deadline for Conservation Stewardship Applications; see [link](#).
01/07: U.S. Drought Monitor Update for January 7, 2014; see [link](#).
01/08: EPA Awards Almost Half a Million in Funding to Three Universities for Projects to Reduce Pesticide Risk Including Risks to Bees; see [link](#).
01/08: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Seeks Proposals from States For FY 2014 Endangered Species Grants; see [link](#).
01/08: Secretary Jewell Announces \$1 Million Private Funding Commitment to Advance Youth & Conservation Initiative; see [link](#).
01/09: Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project Contract Negotiations Continue with the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority; see [link](#).
01/09: The Connected Consequences of River Dams; see [link](#).
01/09: EPA Launches New Citizen Science Website; Resources Available to Conduct Scientific Investigations in Communities; see [link](#).
01/10: Conflict Resolution & Public Participation Center of Expertise Celebrates Fifth Year of Accomplishments; see [link](#).
01/14: U.S. Drought Monitor Update for January 14, 2014; see [link](#).
01/15: Year’s First National Water Forecast Predicts Limited Supply West of the Continental Divide; see [link](#).
01/16: Secretary Jewell Presents 2013 Partners in Conservation Awards; see [link](#).
01/16: EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy Statement to Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on the President’s Climate Action Plan; see [link](#).
01/16: Interior Secretary Honors Four Fish and Wildlife Conservation Partnerships with Major Award; see [link](#).
01/17: Joint Statement from Secretaries Jewell, Pritzker and Vilsack on the Drought Declaration in California; see [link](#).
01/17: Silver Jackets Program Adds State Teams 40 and 41; see [link](#).
01/21: Mobile Applications Hold Potential to Increase Productivity for USACE; see [link](#).
01/21: Long-Term Climate Warming Trend Sunstained in 2013; see [link](#).
01/21: EPA Announces Nearly \$5 Million in Grants to Support Research to Protect America’s Urban Watersheds with Green Infrastructure; see [link](#).

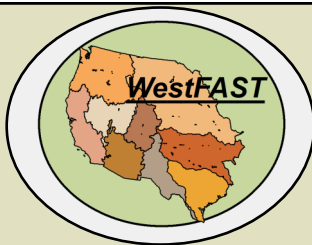
01/21: Sec. Jewell and Gov. Hickenlooper Tour Innovative Efforts to Conserve and Enhance Habitat for Sage Grouse; see [link](#).
01/22: Latest Idaho and New Mexico Quads Available; see [link](#).
01/23: Secretary Jewell, Director Ashe Announce \$16.5 Million in Grants to Conserve Coastal Wetlands; see [link](#).
01/23: Report Measures Value to the Nation of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Programs; see [link](#).
01/24: IGEMS Offers Integrated Maps Allowing Monitoring, Analysis as Events Occur; see [link](#).
01/27: NASA, JAXA Prepare Rain and Snow Satellite for Launch; see [link](#).
01/28: GAO Audit Studies USACE and Reclamation Climate Change Collaboration and Processes; see [link](#).
01/28: Benchmarks for Incorporating Adaptive Management into Water Project Designs, Operational Procedures, and Planning Strategies; see [link](#).
01/29: Scientists Discover New Fish Species, the Cedar Sculpin; see [link](#).
01/30: EPA Releases Climate Assessment Update to National Stormwater Calculator; see [link](#).
01/30: Interior Announces Next Cooperative Agreements Under Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations; see [link](#).

State News

01/09: Read ‘State of the State’ Speeches by Western Governors; see [link](#).
01/14: WGA News: Tax Reform, Timber, Habitat Improvement, Water, Mental Health; see [link](#).
01/17: New budget Delivers Wins for Western Governors on State Wildlife Data, Forest Management; see [link](#).
01/23: Gov. Hickenlooper talks about Combatting Wildfires in Colorado and Across the West; see [link](#).
01/27: Wyoming Opposes EPA Ruling that Moves Riverton into Wind River Indian Reservation; see [link](#).

Upcoming WSWC Meetings & Events

- **February 27, 2014:** Webinar on EPA’s Jurisdictional Waters, Water Quality Standards and Ammonia Criteria, 1:00 PM (EST).
- **April 1-4, 2014:** WSWC Spring Council Meeting and DC Roundtable, Washington DC (Crystal Gateway Marriott).
- **July 14-18, 2014:** WSWC Summer Council Meeting, Helena, Montana (Holiday Inn Downtown).
- **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:

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