

WestFAST News



The 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 resources.

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WSWC Holds Summer Meeting

Seattle, WA
 June 6-8, 2012

The WSWC held their Summer meeting in Seattle, WA on June 6-8. At the meeting, the WSWC approved the [WSWC Vision on Water](#). The Vision states the importance of state primacy for water planning, the importance of water as a resource, the importance of managing water in a collaborative way, the importance of managing water to sustain economic growth while also protecting and restoring aquatic ecosystems, and a call for continue cooperation at all levels of government. The Vision was originally proposed at the Summer 2011 WSWC meeting.

The WSWC revised and re-adopted a position supporting EPA's current Water Transfers Rule (#342). The WSWC also adopted a new position supporting legislation to establish a dedicated funding source for completion of federal rural water projects approved by Congress (#343).

During the meeting, the WSWC underwent a change in leadership. Weir Labatt (TX) completed his term as WSWC Chair. Phil Ward (OR) was nominated and elected the WSWC Chair with Pat Tyrrell (WY) as the Vice Chair and Jerry Rigby (ID) as the Treasurer.

WestFAST provided a number of presentations, including Jean Thomas (USFS) giving a report-out on WestFAST activities during which she discussed the activities outlined in the 2012 WestFAST Work Plan. Jean also gave an update to the Legal Committee on the Federal Non-Tribal Water Rights Survey, which is an activity being jointly led by the WSWC and WestFAST. Krista Mendelman (EPA Region 10) gave a presentation on Green Infrastructure to the Water Quality Committee. At the full council meeting, Jim Barton (USACE) and Paul Wagner (NOAA) each gave presentations regarding the Columbia River Treaty. Lastly, as part of the half-day pre-meeting, Dwane Young gave the WSWC an in-depth overview of the Water Data Exchange.



The next WSWC meeting will be in San Antonio, TX October 10-12, 2012. To see a copy of the presentations given at the Summer meeting click [here](#).

WestFAST 2012 Work Plan Released

June, 2012

WestFAST has released the 2012 Work Plan which covers the time period from July 1, 2012—June 30, 2013. For this work plan, WestFAST has adjusted the time frame to coincide with the WSWC work plan which, starting this year, will be based on the state fiscal year.

The 2012 Work Plan continues to support the Governors' Next Steps Report. In 2012, WestFAST will focus on the following key activities:

- Develop a 'Principles of Collaboration' document that will describe a list of best practices that federal agencies can take in order to better engage the states.
- Continue supporting the implementation of the Water Data Exchange.
- Support the 2012 WSWC Infrastructure Symposium
- Work with WestFAST agencies to coordinate efforts in the Colorado River Basin.
- Support NOAA and the WGA in the Memorandum of Understanding signed in June 2011.

WestFAST will also continue to promote interagency cooperation and communication. The [WestFAST Work Plan](#) is available on the [WestFAST Web Site](#).

Federal Partners Continue to Support Response Efforts to Combat Western Wildfires

July 1, 2012

The U.S. Forest Service, Department of the Interior, Department of Defense and FEMA continue to ramp up efforts to protect life, public safety and aid in community recovery. On top of resources already deployed to support response efforts in a number of Western states, President Obama approved a disaster declaration for Colorado providing additional support to State and local officials responding to the fires, as well as federal assistance for individuals affected by the High Park and Waldo Canyon Fires.

As part of heightened efforts, the Forest Service is training an Army battalion at Fort Carson, located near Colorado Springs, Colo., to potentially serve as ground firefighters to boost the number of firefighters available for wildfire suppression throughout the nation.

Since the beginning of the fire, Fort Carson units and services have committed more than 120 soldiers, 10 bulldozers and other equipment and resources to provide assistance to ongoing fire containment operations and interagency support to the Greater Colorado Springs community.

Fire can have a significant impact on water management in the West, especially as it changes landscapes, water retention, and water infiltration. For more information, see the [news release](#).

WSWC and WestFAST Release Draft Water Data Exchange Schema for Review

June 26, 2012

As part of joint efforts on the [Water Data Exchange \(WaDE\)](#), the WSWC and WestFAST released the draft XML schema for exchanging water planning, allocation, availability, supply, and use data. These data are a critical component of WaDE, and the schema will define the common format by which these data can be shared.

The schema is draft, and the WSWC is seeking comments on the draft schema. Comments can be sent to [Dwane Young](#) or [Sara Larsen](#). To see the draft schema, as well as other materials released in June, click [here](#).

Agency Announcements

June 2, 2012: Secretary Salazar, President Shelly Break Ground on Major Infrastructure Project to Deliver Running Water to Navajo Nation, see [news release](#).

June 4, 2012: Aging Landsat 5 Changes Glasses, see [news release](#).

June 5, 2012: USDA Secretary Vilsack Names Members of Planning Rule Advisory Group, see [news release](#).

June 5, 2012: Climate Change and Water Supply in California's Central Valley: A Model Approach, see [news release](#).

June 12, 2012: EPA Announces Framework to Help Local Governments Manage Stormwater Runoff and Wastewater, see [news release](#).

June 12, 2012: USFS Seeks Comments on Efforts to Improve Efficiency of Forest Conservation Activities, see [news release](#).

June 14, 2012: USGS Study: High Salt Concentrations in Water from Coal-bed Natural Gas Production Harmful to Aquatic Life, see [news release](#).

June 19, 2012: Energy Department and National Park Service Announce Clean Cities Partnership to Drive Sustainable National Parks, see [news release](#).

June 26, 2012: EPA Awards \$2.7 Million to Revitalize Urban Waters, see [news release](#).

June 26, 2012: Reclamation Announces St. Mary River and Milk River Basin Studies are Complete, see [news release](#).

Upcoming Meetings/Events

- **July 30-Aug 1, 2012:** [Extreme Weather Events Workshop](#) (co-hosted by WSWC and CA DWR), San Diego, CA
- **Sept. 24-26, 2012:** [NIDIS Workshop](#) (co-hosted by WSWC and CA DWR), San Diego, CA
- **October 10-12, 2012:** [Fall WSWC Meeting](#), San Antonio, TX
- **November 14-16, 2012:** Water Management Symposium on Infrastructure, Phoenix, AZ



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.westgov.org/wswc/WestFAST.htm>