

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Climate Change Adaptation Workgroup of the**  
**Advisory Committee on Water Information**  
**November 20, 2014: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time**

**Call in Numbers:**

USGS staff at Headquarters - x4848  
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**Attendees:**

|                                   |                       |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Jeff Peterson, Co-chair, EPA      | Brandon Kernen, ASDWA | Sascha Petersen, ASAP |
| Paul Freedman, Co-chair, WEF      | Brenna Mannion, NACWA | Jeff Manning, ACWA    |
| Dave Carlton, ASFPM               | Erica Brown, AMWA     | Ellen Tarquinio, CEQ  |
| Judy Francis, NACP                | Mike Block, NGWA      | Deirdre Mason, ASDWA  |
| Marla Stelk, ASWM                 | Nancy Turyk, NALMS    | Sara Larsen, WSWC     |
| Mary Musick, GWPC                 | Peg Bostwick, ASWM    | Adam Carpenter, AWWA  |
| Ben Chou, NRDC                    | Rolf Olsen, COE       | Wendy Norton, USGS    |
| Ben Grumbles, U.S. Water Alliance | Paul Fleming, WUCA    |                       |
| Ron Hoffer, EPA                   | Chris Reimer, NGWA    |                       |

**Speakers:**

Brad Spangler, Meridian Institute  
Shira Miller, CEQ

**I) Introductions and Agenda Review**

Jeff Peterson took the roll and reviewed the agenda.

**II) Approval of Notes from Previous Meeting** (see notes at [http://acwi.gov/climate\\_wkg/index.html](http://acwi.gov/climate_wkg/index.html))

No amendments to the previous meeting's minutes were offered, so the minutes are approved.

**III) Presentation: Climate Elements of New Report: *Navigating to New Shores: Seizing the Future for Sustainable and Resilient U.S. Freshwater Resources***; Brad Spangler, Meridian Institute (see attached material and report at: <http://www.johnsonfdn.org/aboutus/capstone>)

- Overview of Report
- Questions and Discussion
- The slides are available here:  
[http://acwi.gov/climate\\_wkg/minutes/spangler\\_acwi\\_wraccw\\_presentation\\_nov\\_2014\\_\(2\).pdf](http://acwi.gov/climate_wkg/minutes/spangler_acwi_wraccw_presentation_nov_2014_(2).pdf)

- Question: Is there a next phase for this work? Answer: The Johnson Foundation is stepping down as the leader of this initiative, and we had a “capstone” event in Washington during October where there was lots of energy around the ideas presented in the report and how to make those ideas happen. It’s not clear what will happen next, but people are definitely thinking about it and having discussions about it.
- Comment: The American Society of Adaptation Professionals’ National Adaptation Forum could be a great venue for introducing this to a wider audience:  
[https://adaptationprofessionals.org/custom\\_type/2015-asap-prize-for-progress-in-adapting-to-climate-change/](https://adaptationprofessionals.org/custom_type/2015-asap-prize-for-progress-in-adapting-to-climate-change/))

IV) **Presentation: Water Related Actions in the *Report of the State, Local, Tribal Task Force on Climate Change Adaptation*** (scheduled for release November 13), Shira Miller, CEQ (report is available online here:

[http://acwi.gov/climate\\_wkg/minutes/2014\\_11\\_17\\_task\\_force\\_recs\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://acwi.gov/climate_wkg/minutes/2014_11_17_task_force_recs_fact_sheet.pdf)

- Overview of Report
- Questions and Discussion
- CEQ co-chaired a task force of Governors and Tribal leaders who delivered their final report of recommendations to the Administration this week.
- Task Force was called for by the President in the Climate Action Plan during 2013. The group includes elected officials from all levels of government and from all over the country who are dealing with impacts such as droughts, wildfire, storms, floods. These officials are already leading efforts to create more resilient communities.
- The group has announced release of new tools to help local leaders, including a climate resilience toolkit which is mentioned in the Climate Action Plan. This tool provides easy access to dozens of Federal tools to help consider the impacts of climate change.
- Many recommendations line up well with Climate and Natural Resources Priority Agenda.
- There are 34 high-level recommendations across several thematic areas, with very specific action items under each of these recommendations (100+ action items total). Specific recommendations include items in the infrastructure bucket (i.e., coastal infrastructure planning and investments, promoting and prioritizing green and natural infrastructure, expanding collaboration between Fed-State-local government organizations and providing technical support for testing vulnerability of water infrastructure), and areas such as promoting watershed management and planning to develop comprehensive, integrated systems to provide decisions makers with info they need to make decisions about improving stormwater best management practices.
- CEQ will ensure that there’s a clear, transparent process for tracking implementation of the recommendations.
- Question: Will CEQ take the role of implementing or tracking implementation of the recommendations, or will someone else take that role? Answer: The recommendations were just delivered a couple of days ago, so we’re still in the process of figuring out what that process will be. A lot of Federal agencies will be playing a big role, and many of them were involved throughout the process. We should be able to provide more detail on that during the next few weeks.

**V) Presentation: Climate Change and Beaver Management Report to the Joint Implementation Working Group for the *National Fish, Wildlife and Plants Climate Change Adaptation Strategy***

Jeff Peterson; US EPA, Office of Water

- Overview of Report (report is available here: [http://acwi.gov/climate\\_wkg/minutes/peterson\\_climate\\_beaver\\_team\\_report\\_to\\_ji\\_wg.pdf](http://acwi.gov/climate_wkg/minutes/peterson_climate_beaver_team_report_to_ji_wg.pdf))
- Questions and Discussion
- The Joint Working Group has agreed to adopt this report and to charter the group that wrote the report for another year.
- There's a summary of initial findings starting on page 2 of the report, explaining what beavers have to do with climate change. Management of beaver populations has been arranged to provide a range of diverse ecosystem benefits. Is beaver management a mechanism to help deal with the water impacts of climate change? The report helps to answer that question.
- Having beavers in a watershed generally flattens out the hydrologic curves/extremes. Beavers also help build water storage capacity (SW and GW recharge), stabilize water temperatures, help watersheds recover more quickly from wildfires, and help to mitigate flood impacts in coastal areas as a result of storm activity.
- Various beaver restoration assessment tools are in development and are emerging for general use.
- Beaver can also be steered away from areas where their presence may have a negative effect on conditions.
- Some work that has been done in specific locations points to very positive economic outcomes, especially when compared to more conventional management practices.
- In dealing with beaver management practices, outcomes are not always predictable; but on the whole, there are very positive benefits associated with beaver management practices, relative to climate adaptation.
- There are recommendations for Federal land management agencies (such as Forest Service) such as identifying beaver as a "focal species," and there are also recommendations for State/local agencies related to State wildlife action plans.
- Most of the benefits of beaver management practices are water related.

**VI) Climate Workgroup Updates and Information**

- Updating Workgroup Membership
  - We've been operating for almost 2 years now. We would like to refresh the workgroup's membership. If you're aware of an organization that you think might be interested in participating, some of our 40 total slots are vacant and can be filled with new organizations.
  - If current member organizations would like to designate a new/different representative (or alternate) to the workgroup, now would be a good time to do so.
  - Question: Over the last 2 years we had a definite project we were working on. Do you see any specific projects that the group will focus on in the next year? Answer: Yes, we'll talk about a couple of those in a minute because they're lower down on the meeting agenda. Providing input to update/amend the National Action Plan is one item that we might tackle.

- Status Report: Interagency Climate Change and Water Resources Workgroup Development of 2014 Progress Report and 2015 Workplan
  - This report will be available in the near future, and WRACCW will need to devote some attention to it.
- Planning for 2014 Report of the Workgroup to the ACWI and 2015 Workplan
  - Over the next couple of months, we will write a report about our 2014 activities and will write a workplan for 2015. The report on 2014 activities will be forwarded to the full ACWI.
- 2015 In-Person Meeting of the Workgroup
  - We probably can't have an in-person meeting this year, because of travel spending restrictions, but that should not prevent us from tackling a major project like the one we worked on during the 2014 meeting (the work would just be stretched out over a longer period).

**VII) Round Robin Reports from Workgroup Members (a brief highlight of your organizations activities related to climate change and water)**

- IPCC Synthesis Report and Supporting Reports; <http://www.ipcc.ch/>
- USGS Release re: Climate Data Initiative; [http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4050#.VFuHj\\_ldXPo](http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4050#.VFuHj_ldXPo)
- GAO Report on USDA Climate Change Programs: <http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/665810.pdf>
- CERES Report on US Companies Responses to Climate Change; <http://www.ceres.org/press/press-releases/first-of-its-kind-report-ranks-u.s.-insurance-companies-on-climate-change-responses>
- *2014 Network Strategic Plan for Landscape Conservation Cooperatives*; [http://www.lccnetwork.org/Media/Default/StrategicPlan/LCC\\_Network\\_Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.lccnetwork.org/Media/Default/StrategicPlan/LCC_Network_Strategic_Plan.pdf)
- *Department of Defense 2014 Climate Change Roadmap*: <http://www.acq.osd.mil/ie/download/CCARprint.pdf>
- Georgetown Climate Center; State and Local Climate Adaptation Planning Tool; <http://www.georgetownclimate.org/adaptation/state-and-local-plans>
- EPA HQ and Regional EPA Implementation Plans: <http://epa.gov/climatechange/impacts-adaptation/fed-programs/Final-EPA-Adaptation-plans.html>
- Other brief highlights?

**V) Adjourn**

**NEXT MEETING: Perhaps in December, perhaps in January ... we will be in touch!**