

# Meeting Minutes

## Water Resources Adaptation to Climate Change Workgroup of the Advisory Committee on Water Information

March 29, 2018: 1:00 – 2:30 EST

When it is time to attend the meeting, please visit this link:

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### Attendees:

Jerad Bales, CUAHSI, non-Fed co-chair	Mary Musick, GWPC	Nancy Beller-Simms, NOAA
Kate White, COE, Federal co-chair	Aris Georgakakos, NIWR	Noel Gollehon, USDA
Lisa Engelman, AWRA	Mitch Heineman, ASCE	Karen Metchis, EPA
Eric Loucks, ASCE	Ken Nowak, BOR	John McShane, ASFPM
Mikko McFeely, AMWA	Nancy Turyk, NALMS	Wendy Norton, ACWI-USGS
Michelle Bushman, WSWC	Jeff Manning, ACWA	Juliette Hart (speaker)
Stacey Archfield, USGS	Jimmy Hague, TNC	Susi Moser (speaker)
Deirdre Mason, ASDWA	Adam Carpenter, AWWA	

- **Introductions and Agenda Review**
- **Approval of Notes from Previous Meeting** (see [http://acwi.gov/climate\\_wkg/index.html](http://acwi.gov/climate_wkg/index.html))
- **Transition in ACWI leadership**
  - Wendy Norton is retiring from Federal service on March 31. In the short term, her duties will be assumed by [Adrienne Bartlewitz](#), who serves as Chief of Staff for Don Cline (USGS Associate Director for Water, and Alternate Chair of ACWI). The Climate Workgroup's website will continue to be handled by [Sharon Alcalde](#).
  - Next meeting will be (tentatively) April 26, but the schedule for future meetings may need to change, due to availability of Adrienne Bartlewitz and others. So stay tuned for changes.
- **Presentation:** Work to facilitate the AB2800 efforts for the State of California, presented by Juliette Finzi Hart (USGS) and Susanne Moser (Susanne Moser Research and Consulting)
  - The bill, by July 1, 2017, and until July 1, 2020, requires the establishment of a Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group for the purpose of examining how to integrate scientific data concerning projected climate change impacts into state infrastructure engineering, as prescribed.
  - The presentation slides are [here](#).
  - *Question:* If design numbers aren't codified, engineers are sometimes hesitant to use them due to liability concerns. Has that come up in your process? *Answer:* Yes, we have. Engineers are covered if they follow the standards but not if they deviate from them. You can codify the design numbers or you can codify the process. The burden of responsibility

falls generally on the infrastructure owner. Things get complicated when you're working with entities that have different risk-aversion standards.

- *Question:* I'm curious if the economics of these options have come up in your decision making. Especially when we're working with green infrastructure options, measuring the benefits of the project is difficult. *Answer:* There's a lot of leeway in the existing standards and procedures. There's not a lot of experience/data for those yet. We'll have a couple of green infrastructure webinars that look at different approaches and financing mechanisms.
- *Question:* Do you envision any institutional or management recommendations that would require change in the way institutions work? *Answer:* It's in the purview of the working group to look at institutional barriers. Institutional, professional development, these are all recommendations that we've already discussed.
- *Comment:* It's interesting to note that the first three questions asked here on this teleconference are exactly the questions that our first three meetings have focused on.
- *Question:* Are there any infrastructure projects undertaken in the past that are found to be compatible with climate change? *Answer:* There's excitement about the examples that Kate presented in her presentation to us (building things now in a way that will make them adaptive in the future), but I hear more from the group about past measures that are now falling apart. River and tributary structure design based on the 1927 flood (this is in use in the Corps) has been pretty robust so far. San Francisco is doing a lot to upgrade waterfront on the Bay side, and many properties there can't be changed/adapted because they're historic properties; if those buildings can't be changed, they will eventually be destroyed, so there's a policy recommendation needed to look at the conflict between historical preservation and infrastructure adaptations. ADA requirements also are a factor that affects infrastructure adaptations, because the properties must remain accessible.
- Perhaps Susi and Juliette can come back and update us in August?
- **Further discussion of draft workplan**
  - Kate had a due-out from the last meeting to obtain counsel advice on draft work plan task 8 (Consider making recommendations to the new Administration addressing water resources adaptation to changing climate and answer questions from administration officials as needed). The response she received is summarized below:
    - The second part of the task, "answer questions from administration officials as needed," is fine because the ACWI is an authorized FACA committee and the WG is a properly authorized subgroup under the ACWI. This fits within the ACWI's broad purpose and within the functions of the WG, as provided respectively in the Charter and in the WG Terms of Reference.
    - In the first part of the task, the term "make recommendations" connotes a request for advice and the provision of advice pursuant to that request. To the extent that this phrase means the WG will respond to any appropriate inquiry by making a recommendation, the task is fine. We should avoid making \*unsolicited\* recommendations. The ACWI Charter is clear that subcommittees "must act only under the direction of the DFO and report recommendations for full ACWI consideration." Therefore, if the WG seeks to make any recommendation—especially one that was not specifically requested of it—it should be fully coordinated with the ACWI before releasing or providing it in any form outside of the WG.
    - Is there some middle ground between making unsolicited recommendations and just sitting here waiting for someone to ask for advice? Perhaps we can do something like identify gap areas (and make ACWI aware of these gaps).

- **Round Robin Reports from Workgroup Members ( brief highlights of other organization's activities, news, articles, and reports related to climate change and water)**
  - EPA report "Development of a Climate resilience Screening Index (CSRI): An Assessment of Resilience to Acute Meteorological Events and Selected Natural Hazards," available at <https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi?Dockey=P100SSN6.txt>. (This document also will be posted on the WRACCW website, along with the materials from this meeting.)
  - List of journal papers supported in part by Corps of Engineers climate programs (proposed for defunding in FY 2018) since 2012 may be of interest to the group
  - ASFPM – The Omnibus bill that the President recently signed includes \$250 million for FEMA for pre-disaster mitigation, this is an increase of \$149 million from FY 2017. Also includes \$263 million for floodplain mapping, which was zeroed out in the President's budget. So Congress understands the importance of flood mitigation activities.
  - The new report Guidelines for determining flood flow frequency--Bulletin 17C has been officially released as a USGS Techniques and Methods report: <https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/tm4B5>. This report supersedes Bulletin 17B as the federal guidelines for flood flow frequency analysis. This is an interagency product and we especially appreciate the efforts of John England (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), the lead author. PeakFQ version 7.2 has also been released. This version of the USGS flood frequency analysis software includes updated graphics and terminology to better match Bulletin 17C, as well as an update to the regional skew fields (no longer defaults to Bulletin 17B skew map values). The PRT output file has also been updated. As with the previous version of PeakFQ, Bulletin 17B procedures can still be used, but only if the user explicitly chooses to do so. See <https://water.usgs.gov/software/PeakFQ>. For questions on Bulletin 17C or PeakFQ, please contact Andrea Veilleux (aveilleux@usgs.gov) or Dan Wagner (dwagner@usgs.gov).
  - TNC – co-authored a report with UK University of Bristol regarding FEMA flood maps; study concluded that the number of Americans living in floodplains is about three times higher than FEMA's current estimate. This report is available online [here](#).
  - Three scheduled ASCE Webinars (info [here](#)):
    - Climate Change: Preparing for an uncertain Future – May 11, 2018
    - Climate Resilience for Critical Infrastructure – June 14, 2018
    - Flood Design for a Changing Climate – August 13, 2018
  - Three new ASCE publications (info at <http://www.asce.org/bookstore/>):
    - Sustainable Water Resources Management, Ojha, Surampalli, Bardossy, Zhang and Koa, 2017, 1047 pp
    - Structural Materials and Climate Change, A Primer on Carbon Emissions for Structural Engineers, Mark Webster, ed, 2017, 102 pp
    - Engineering for Sustainable Communities, W.E Kelly, B. Luke and Richard Wright, 2017, 466 pp
  - WSWC – sponsoring a workshop in collaboration with CDWR May 14-16 in San Diego, CA, focused on Improving S2S Precipitation Forecasting and Pilot Projects coming up May 14-16 in San Diego. More information [here](#).
  - ASFPM -
- **Action Items**
- **Adjourn**

Next meeting: probably Thursday, April 26, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern time, but that could change. Also, keep an eye out for news about future meeting dates, because we may need to change our regular meeting time.