

# EPA Climate Change and Water News

## October 18, 2012

The *EPA Climate Change and Water News* is a bi-weekly newsletter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Water that features news and information about EPA and other federal activities related to climate change and water. Partner activities, as well as related events and publications, are also included.

For more information on climate change and water, please visit our website:  
<http://www.epa.gov/water/climatechange>.

### **U.S. EPA News**

- [WaterSense Intends to Revise the Irrigation Partner and Professional Certification Program](#)
- [EPA Releases Report: "Implications of Climate Change for State Bioassessment Programs and Approaches to Account for Effects"](#)
- [EPA Releases Freshwater Biological Traits Database](#)

### **Other U.S. Federal Agency News**

- [NOAA Reports Warmest First Nine Months of Any Year on Record for the Contiguous U.S.](#)
- [U.S. Department of the Interior Awards Regional Climate Science Center Funding](#)
- [U.S. Department of the Interior Announces Establishment of the Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Natural Resource Science](#)

### **Other News**

- [National Research Council Releases Report: "A National Strategy for Advancing Climate Modeling"](#)
- [Webinar: "When Every Drop Counts: Initiatives in Indian Country" on October 22, 2012](#)
- [Verified Carbon Standard Recognizes Coastal Blue Carbon as New Carbon Trading Category](#)
- [Call for Abstracts for StormCon 2013 Conference Due December 5, 2012](#)

### **U.S. EPA News**

#### **WaterSense Intends to Revise the Irrigation Partner and Professional Certification Program**

WaterSense has announced its intent to modify its specifications for certification programs for irrigation professionals and the WaterSense irrigation professional partnership. The notification of intent outlines EPA's evaluation of the benefits and challenges associated with the existing irrigation partnership program, its experience in running the certification program, and its desires to expand the program's scope to attain additional water savings. The outlined intended revisions are two-fold: development of a consolidated and common set of general requirements that will apply to all professional certifying organizations and removal of the individual irrigation partnership designation to allow the benefits of partnership to expand to all professionals certified by WaterSense labeled programs. WaterSense is soliciting input from stakeholders who would like to provide comment on the Agency's proposal. For more information, visit: [http://epa.gov/watersense/partners/product\\_program\\_specs.html#noi](http://epa.gov/watersense/partners/product_program_specs.html#noi).

## **EPA Releases Report: “Implications of Climate Change for State Bioassessment Programs and Approaches to Account for Effects”**

This final report uses biological data collected by four states in wadeable rivers and streams to examine the components of state and tribal bioassessment and biomonitoring programs that may be vulnerable to climate change. The study investigates the potential to identify biological response signals to climate change within existing bioassessment data sets; analyzes how biological responses can be categorized and interpreted; and assesses how they may influence decision-making processes. The analyses suggest that several biological indicators may be used to detect climate change effects and such indicators can be used by state bioassessment programs to document changes at high-quality reference sites. To view the report, visit: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/global/recordisplay.cfm?deid=239585>.

## **EPA Releases Freshwater Biological Traits Database**

This final report discusses the development of a database of freshwater biological traits. The database combines several existing traits databases into an online format. The database is also augmented with additional traits that are relevant to detecting climate change-related effects, especially traits related to temperature tolerances and flow. For more information, visit:

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/global/recordisplay.cfm?deid=241813>.

## **Other U.S. Federal Agency News**

### **NOAA Reports Warmest First Nine Months of Any Year on Record for the Contiguous United States**

According to NOAA’s recent “State of the Climate” report, the January-September 2012 period was the warmest first nine months of any year on record for the contiguous United States. The national average temperature of 59.8°F was 3.8°F above the 20th century average, and 1.2°F above the previous record warm January-September of 2006. During the nine-month period, 46 states had temperatures among their ten warmest, with 25 states being record warm. Only the State of Washington had statewide temperatures near average for the period. To view the full “State of the Climate” report, visit:

<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/national/2012/9>.

### **U.S. Department of the Interior Awards Regional Climate Science Center Funding**

Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, has announced funding of more than \$10 million awarded by the Department of the Interior’s Regional Climate Science Centers (CSCs) to universities or other partners for research to guide managers of parks, refuges, and other resources in planning how to help species and ecosystems adapt to climate change. For example, CSC-funded projects identify how sea-level rise will affect coastal resources, how climate will affect vegetation, how these changes will affect valued species, and how changes in water availability will affect people and ecosystems as well as ecosystem services such as fisheries. Several studies address the potential effects on resources of concern to Native Americans, some by using traditional ecological knowledge to advance adaptation planning. For more information, visit: [http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3423&from=rss\\_home#.UHXGdlKz5pT](http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3423&from=rss_home#.UHXGdlKz5pT).

### **U.S. Department of the Interior Announces Establishment of the Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Natural Resource Science**

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) is establishing and seeking nominations for the Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Natural Resource Science (the “Committee”). The Committee will provide advice on matters and actions relating to the establishment and operations of the U.S. Geological Survey National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center and the DOI Climate Science Centers. In doing so, the Committee will obtain input from federal, state, tribal, local government, nongovernmental organizations, private sector entities, and academic institutions. For more information about this Committee and the nomination submissions process, visit:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-10-04/html/2012-24478.htm>.

## **Other News**

### **National Research Council Releases Report: “A National Strategy for Advancing Climate Modeling”**

As climate change has pushed climate patterns outside of historic norms, the need for detailed projections is growing across all sectors, including agriculture, insurance, and emergency preparedness. This report finds that climate models will need to evolve substantially to deliver climate projections at the scale and level of detail desired by decision makers. Despite much recent progress in developing reliable climate models, there are still efficiencies to be gained across the large and diverse U.S. climate modeling community. Evolving to a more unified climate modeling enterprise, in particular by developing a common software infrastructure shared by all climate researchers, and holding an annual climate modeling forum, could help speed progress. Learn more about “A National Strategy for Advancing Climate Modeling” by watching a recorded webinar featuring presentations by the report's authoring committee and a question and answer session on the report's findings. For more information, visit: <http://dels.nas.edu/Report/National-Strategy-Advancing-Climate/13430>.

### **Webinar: “When Every Drop Counts: Initiatives in Indian Country” on October 22, 2012**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the American Public Health Association will host a webinar on October 22, 2012 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. American Indian and Alaska Native tribes in the United States are an especially vulnerable population faced with the burden of establishing short- and long-term strategies related to the public health implications of extreme weather conditions. During this webinar, tribal professionals will discuss access to safe water, changes to subsistence lifestyles, adaptation planning, training and collaboration and challenges in obtaining adequate funding to implement sustainable strategies. For more information and to register for this webinar, visit: <http://www.apha.org/advocacy/reports/webinars/default.htm>.

### **Verified Carbon Standard Recognizes Coastal Blue Carbon as New Carbon Trading Category**

A Restore America Estuaries-led initiative, aimed at creating greenhouse gas offset opportunities for coastal wetlands, has received final approval under the Verified Carbon Standard. This approval encourages private investment in wetland restoration and conservation projects through the issuance of internationally recognized carbon credits. Carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, and methane are potent greenhouse gases, which contribute to climate change. Research focusing on “Coastal Blue Carbon” in coastal wetland ecosystems suggests that coastal wetlands sequester carbon at rates three to five times greater than that of temperate forests, making them important carbon “sinks,” as world temperatures and sea levels rise. For more information about this announcement, visit: <http://www.estuaries.org/vcs-recognizes-coastal-blue-carbon-as-new-trading-category.html>.

### **Call for Abstracts for StormCon 2013 Conference Due December 5, 2012**

StormCon, the North American Surface Water Quality Conference and Exposition, is now seeking abstracts for presentations at StormCon 2013. The conference will take place August 18-22, 2013, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Abstracts are due December 5, 2012. The six conference tracks are: Best Management Practices; Case Studies; Green Infrastructure; Stormwater Program Management; Erosion and Sediment Control; Water-Quality Monitoring; and Advanced Research Topics. The Coastal Protection Symposium takes place concurrently with StormCon and focuses on infrastructure protection in coastal cities in the face of sea level rise and potential shoreline changes. For more information, visit: <http://www.stormcon.com/>.