

CONFLUENCE

JULY 2010: CAN ALPHABET SOUP CURE CLIMATE CHANGE?
CARPE DIEM PROJECT NEWS



Carpe Diem
WESTERN WATER & CLIMATE CHANGE
A PROJECT OF EXLOCO – PATHFINDING IN THE NEW WEST

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BACKGROUNDER

From Famine to Feast: Federal Climate Programs Proliferate

Not all of the programs that have sprung into life throughout the federal government apply directly to the western water community, but it is worth knowing that the US Global Change Research Program Office is coordinating the climate work of 13 federal agencies. These range from the obvious, such as the Department of Commerce, which houses NOAA, the Department of Interior (Bureau of Reclamation) and the Department of Agriculture (US Forest Service), to the Department of Defense (food and water security) on to the Smithsonian Institution. The website is globalchange.gov, and it is information rich.

NOAA is currently developing its Climate Centers, which will track climate change regionally, and its climate portal at climate.gov is also in the prototype stage. It's worth bookmarking and checking back as the program and the Climate Centers develop. There will be regional-specific information.

In the near term, two interesting reports and processes are underway that should affect programs of interest to the western water community as well as offering useful information. As Dr. Hartmann mentions, the Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force is scheduled to release its report to the President in October. That will contain recommendations toward a national strategy for adaptation focused on federal agencies. In the longer term, adaptation activities will be more-broad based.

In addition, there is the National Climate Assessment, established by the Global Change Research Act of 1990. Two previous assessments have been done, one in the Carter administration, and one in the George W. Bush administration. The third Assessment is now underway, and the work it is doing includes evaluating what we know and don't know about climate science, and comparing scientific predictions about climate change impacts within sectors with the observations of people on the ground. The intent is to build capacity within federal agencies to make better decisions about adaptation and mitigation over the next 25 to 50 years. The Assessment is due in June of 2013.

The [Carpe Diem - Western Water & Climate Change Project](#) is a network of over 600 experts and decision makers dedicated to addressing the unprecedented challenge that the impacts of climate change on water resources pose for the western United States. The Project is housed at [Exloco](#), a nonprofit organization with expertise in spotlighting critical issues and facilitating strategic thinking.

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