



Water Security Initiative Update

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ASRED/SAAESD/S-AHS/S-CARET

Joint Spring Meeting

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Background

- USDA-NIFA ended the National Integrated Water Quality Program.
- In late 2013, the “National Water Working Group” was formed.
 - Ad hoc working group of the BAC, APLU-BAA and Policy Board of Directors.
 - 27 members from LGIs.
 - Chaired by Jimmy Henning and Steve Slack.
 - Also led by Mike Harrington and Robin Shepard.



Purpose of the working group

- Identify and prioritize water quality and quantity issues that LGIs play a critical role in addressing.
- Prioritize future funding needs of LGIs to protect and enhance water resources – including both programmatic and institutional needs.



Fast-forward to August, 2014

- Report to NIFA: “National Initiative on the Improvement of U.S. Water Security.”
- Recommendation: \$100 million annual initiative by the nation’s LGIs to address water security challenges.



The Grand Challenge: The Improvement of U.S. Water Security

Issues of national significance:

- Food and agricultural production.
- Environment and ecosystem services.
- Energy production.
- Human health and safety.
- Community vitality.



Essential Elements from LGIs

State/Institution-based coordination	\$4M	Fixed costs
Regional Water Centers	\$6M	Fixed costs
Integrated regional water grants	\$45M	50% of competitive funds
AFRI national grants	\$36M	40% of competitive funds
Instructional grants	\$9M	10% of competitive funds
Total	\$100M	Annually for a minimum of 5 yrs



NIFA's response

- Concurrence with the concept.
- Currently, NIFA invests more than \$100M per year in water through various lines.
- A suite of recommendations detailing how the report and proposal could be improved.
- Thanks, but no thanks (at this time).
- Let's continue to work on expanding water security efforts.



The Working Group's response

- A treatise called “Expanding and Developing New Approaches to Water Security.”
 - Further discussion on the National LGI initiative to improve U.S. water security.



Where we are now...

- Not much movement.
- Harrington and Shepard have been meeting with NIFA.
- NIFA: If we grow AFRI, we should be able to do “some” of this.
- Disconnect between the AFRI competitive approach and the comprehensive idea presented by the committee.



Final thoughts

- At least we are still talking.
- If there is a big jump in AFRI funding, some is likely to be directed at water.
 - Might not be where we at LGIs had hoped via the Water Security Initiative – but we shall see.
- Not giving up the cause... will keep pushing.