

West Region Technology Workgroup and Technical Discipline Consortia FY2012-2013 Business Plan



West Region Technology Workgroup (WRTWG) Members:

Helen Denniston, SRC - Alaska
Steve Barker, SRC – Arizona
Kurt Simon, acting SRC – California
Gene Backhaus, SRC – Colorado - **Chair**
Eugene Schock, ASTC Technical Services – Idaho
Rob Sampson, SCE - Idaho
Jerry Schaefer, SRC – Montana
Chuck Gordon, SSS - Montana
Steve Becker, SCE - Montana
George Chavez, SRC – New Mexico
Mike Odegard, SRC – Nevada
Tom Makowski, acting SRC – Oregon
Anthony Ingersoll, Assistant Director for Technology - Pacific Islands – **Chair Elect**
Elise Boeke, SRC – Utah
Bronson Smart, SCE - Utah
Bonda Habets, SRC – Washington
Larry Johnson, SCE - Washington
Astrid Martinez, SSS – Wyoming
Casey Sheley, SRC – Wyoming
Chuck Schmitt, SCE - Wyoming

WRTWG Advisor:

Jeff Burwell, State Conservationist – Idaho

WRTWG Coordinator:

Russ Hatz, NTS, WNTSC – Portland

West Region Technical Consortia

<u>Consortium</u>	<u>Chairperson(s)</u>	<u>Mentor</u>	<u>Technical Advisor(s)</u>
Agronomy	Adam Reed	Elise Boeke	Rick Fasching and Giulio Ferruzzi
Biology	Karen Fullen	George Chavez	Kathryn Boyer, Meg Bishop, Marcus Miller
Design Engineers	Mark Yerger	Larry Johnson	Steve Durgin
Economics	Julie Pierce	Vacant	Hal Gordon
Environmental Engineers	Karen Hoffman	Bronson Smart	Sally Bredeweg
Forestry	Misty Seaboldt	Bonda Habets	Craig Ziegler
GIS	Randy Wiggins and Scott Splean	Casey Sheley	Steve Campbell
Grazing Lands	John Tunberg	Eugene Schock	Pat Shaver and Gene Fults
Irrigation Engineers	Fernando Morales	Chuck Schmitt	Peter Robinson
Plant Materials	Joe Scianna	Steve Barker	Jim Briggs
Soils	Levi Steptoe	Chuck Gordon	Steve Campbell

State Conservation Engineers	Steve Becker	Rob Sampson	Kip Yasumiishi
Water Quality	Norm Evenstad	Anthony Ingersoll	Shaun McKinney

Past Chairpersons:

FY2005-2006 – Ron Nadwornick, SRC, Montana
FY2007 – Mark Weatherstone, ASTC Technical Services, Idaho
FY2008 – Russ Hatz, SRC – Oregon
FY2009 – Jerry Jasmer, SRC – Wyoming
FY2010 – Eugene Schock, SRC – Alaska
FY2011 – Steve Barker, SRC - Arizona

Role of the West Region Technology Work Group:

- Coordinate technology transfer at the state level
- Coordinate technology needs across state lines
- Coordinate technical support activities
- Assist in determining technology transfer and training needs
- Assure that available and needed technology is delivered to specialists and field staffs
- Coordinate technology needs at the field level
- Facilitate the development of high priority and mission critical technology

Role of the West Region Discipline Consortia:

- Communicate with other State Technical Specialists and identify opportunities for collaboration
- Work together on projects assigned by the WRTWG to find favorable solutions to problems or develop requested products and eliminate duplication of efforts
- Strive for consistent and compatible technical information being utilized in the field.
- Identify research and technology development needs among the states.
- Work to eliminate inconsistencies in the implementation of technology and technical processes across state lines.
- Forward information and technology needs to the West Region Technology Work Group.
- Forward information and regional technology needs to leadership within the consortium.
- Function as a two-way communications mechanism between the WRTWG and the Field, including Technical Discipline Specialists.

Relationship to the West National Technology Support Center:

This business plan focuses on coordinating the activities of the Western States to reduce duplication and improve technology delivery. The activities listed in this plan reflect efforts to be carried out by the States working in partnership with the WNTSC. The WNTSC is supporting most of the activities in this plan and, for those items for which the WNTSC is providing support, the name of the WNTSC specialist is shown and a reference number to the WNTSC business plan may also be included.

Action items that require a budget have been approved by the WRTWG and are highlighted in green. Many of the action items will be accomplished by state staff with no additional expenditure of funds. It is understood that all consortia would benefit from an annual meeting if budgets allow.

Action	When	Responsible Consortium/Person	Status	Budget	NTSC Technical Contact
Obtain and Develop Technology					
Objective: Obtain and develop technology needed to promote productive soils, clean air and water, healthy plant and animal communities and energy conservation.					
Plan a potential FY12 National Agronomy meeting	FY12	Agronomists	Coordinate w/ training need. Regional WRAC request was no. Possible hosting national in California. Guilio is working on this. Training needs NM 590 & PM 595, policy on 590& 595, Organic, energy, payment schedules, High tunnel. As of may 9, 2011 Giulio reported that there would be no National meeting scheduled in 2011.		Fasching/ Ferruzzi
Coordinate with federal and state partner agencies for sage grouse planning on public lands CA, NV, OR, WA	FY12	Biologists	Ongoing. MOU with BLM signed, state agencies and non-federal partners hiring for positions for sage-grouse planning, individual states coordinating with their state wildlife agencies and BLM state offices.		Marcus Miller
Continue to develop guidance for integrating fish and wildlife considerations into ESDs, including Riparian Complex ESDs	FY12/13	Biologists	Ongoing. Wendell provided Marcus Miller with concepts and materials Wendell worked to integrate in ESD's, much of which will become standard collection protocols. Kathryn provided fish and wildlife considerations into the Final Draft of Guidelines for Riparian Complex		Kathryn Boyer/ Marcus Miller

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			Ecological Site Descriptions.		
Enhance and increase capacity for biological Technical Assistance by working with partners to place more biologists on the ground; insure new hires have adequate training and resources thru mentoring, training, and technical assistance	FY12	Biologists	Ongoing. SGI SWAT positions are being advertised and IWJV staff is developing training and mentoring programs for those positions. Wendell has retired from NRCS and is working directly with PRBO to secure funding for new positions.		Kathryn Boyer/ Marcus Miller
Clarify policy regarding job approval authority for field office biologists throughout the western states	FY12	Biologists	Ongoing. Bill Wood compiled states' wetland delineation JAA procedures. SRCs are working on ecological JAA for all disciplines.		Danielle Flynn, Tom Moore, Pete Husby, Bill Wood
Convene WRBC Meeting to develop region-wide templates for state biology practice standards, job sheets, specifications, technical notes, and state supplements, integrated with CSI	March 2013	Biologists			Marcus Miller , Kathryn Boyer, Karen Fullen
Request Biologist Consortia Face to Face Meeting	FY12	Biologists / Fullen	Fullen to work with Biologist consortium to draft request to WRTWG	\$20,315 Complete. Request submitted Nov. 4, 2011.	Boyer
Create a Catalogue of Low-Cost Fish Screens for Surface Water Diversions (document and website) to illustrate the range of low-cost options for screening diversions where regulatory criteria are not involved	FY12	Biologists	Sept. 2011 - In progress with NRCS funding through interagency agreement with BoR.	\$4000	Kathryn Boyer
Work with the Engineering Consortium to review National Conservation Practice Standard Code 574 Spring Development and propose edits to enhance protection for spring-dependent species of concern; develop	FY12	Biologists/Engineers			Kathryn Boyer and Kip Yasumiishi

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technical guidance to accompany the revised standard, including job sheets and habitat specifications.					
Develop GPS surveying policy and an associated tech note dealing with survey grade and other GPS technology	FY12	Engineers/ Chuck Schmitt (WY)/ Bronson Smart (UT)	20% complete		Peter Robinson
Develop naming conventions for Forest Ecological Site Descriptions (task taken on by ecology staff at NSSC since this is a national issue)	FY12	Foresters			Craig Ziegler / Craig Busskohl (NSSC)
Review and comment on forestry conservation practice standards:	FY12	Foresters			Ziegler
Review and comment on forestry state specifications, technical notes, job sheets, etc	FY12	Foresters			Ziegler
Review and comment on ranking criteria and evaluations of conservation programs	FY12	Foresters			Ziegler
Biomass for energy-develop economic analysis of hauling biomass from the forest (with and without subsidy). Will need WNTSC economist time. (Will need real life data from state foresters)	FY12	Foresters / Carri Gaines/Mitch Michaud			Ziegler / Gordon
Work with other Consortia, state specialists, regional specialists and Lane Price on the "Integrated Grazinglands Tool".	FY12	Grazing Lands Specialists / Brendan Brazee, Jon Siddoway, Shane Green, Bob Gillaspay	In progress		Gene Fults, Pat Shaver
Advance a list of research support needs that will enhance the data gathered for ecological site descriptions (eg, hydrology section of ESDs can use data from RHEM model).	Ongoing	Grazing Lands Specialists / Jon Gustafson, Herman Garcia	Working with Grazing land Technology team. Riparian recommendations submitted to ARS in March 2011In progress.		Pat Shaver, Ken Spaeth
Develop common strategies and goals for soil mapping and ecological site correlation on National Forests in the West. In conjunction with the USFS Regional Offices, develop possible Regional and MLRA wide approaches for mapping	Ongoing	Grazing Lands Specialists & Soil Scientists/ Foresters Colorado, Idaho, Utah, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and New Mexico in an initial group with full findings	State Range Specialists and MO/MLRA staff as appropriate and needed		Steve Campbell / Shaver / Ziegler

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and interpretations. Conduct a workshop with the USFS and those states with significant National Forest mapping. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NM, NV, MT, OR, ID currently working with USFS on soil/site 		discussed through the Soil Scientists.			
White Paper on Center Pivot Re-nozzle Policy and Procedures – Paper will address what are the West state’s current policies, what tools are available and can the procedure be standardize in the west, for example standard job sheet.	FY12	Irrigation Engineers			Peter Robinson
Review New Water Measurement and Soil Moisture Monitoring Standards White Paper for Consortia – Irrigation consortia will review and make comments on new proposed standard that will facilitate use within the West Region..	FY12	Irrigation Engineers	Complete		Fernando Morales
Continue to obtain plant attribute data for use in Almanac and other models.	FY12	Plant Material Specialists / ID, WA, CA, AZ, NV, MT, CO	Data collected 2010-2011 and provided to ARS.		Jim Briggs
Conduct multi-PMC study and develop region report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alkali sacaton 	FY12	Plant Material Specialists/ AZ, CA, NM, TX PMC’S	60% complete. Final report expected 2013		Jim Briggs
Conduct multi PMC study and develop region reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Squirreltail 	FY12	Plant Material Specialists/ ID, CO, NM, NV PMC’S	40% complete Final report expected 2014		Jim Briggs
Inventory the available benchmark soil characterization data for each state to analyze for potential enhancements. Develop a report of existing data and identify possible data gaps and possible additional benchmark soils.	FY12	Soil Scientists	50% complete		Campbell

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Refine and Deliver Technology					
Objective: Ensure that field personnel have technology that is up to date, easily accessible, and designed to meet user needs.					
Facilitate RUSLE 2 Grazing Model implementation a) Database work b) Training c) Rollout	FY12	Agronomists	Database work complete. Reviewing current version. Not many people showing interest in the West.		Ferruzzi
Ensure Job sheet consistency between states. Coordinate and discuss six standards and associated job sheets and spec sheets. Selected Spec sheets to be discussed at each quarterly meeting.	FY12	Agronomists	On going. Several states have shared High Tunnel 798. Use WRAC as a sounding board for discussion of new standards /spec sheets. States will send their new Cover Crop 328 job sheets & spec sheets to Giulio who will post on share point site, then we can post comments.		Fasching/ Ferruzzi
Revision of Design Note #12, NEH 636.52 – This was initially developed by Dave Thackeray and will be pursued by this team.	FY12	Engineers/ Schmitt, Becker, Sampson			Peter Robinson
White Paper for Design Services using Regional Design Units	FY12	Engineers/ Johnson, Durgin			Kip Yasumiishi
CAD Drawings (1) Text fill structural drawings, (2) Structural Design of Flex Conduits.	FY12	Engineers			Kip Yasumiishi
Conduct training session on ESD process for MO 1 staff and select soil scientist	FY12	Foresters			Craig Ziegler
Western Joint Forestry Team – Collaboration a) Continued participation with the WJFC: - Winter teleconference - Summer meeting - Fall meeting	FY12	Foresters/Frank Gariglio/Bruce Wight			Craig Ziegler
Develop step-by-step instructions for ESD inventory process (form ECS-005, plus Supplements 1 and 2)	FY12	Foresters / Misty Seiboldt			Craig Ziegler
Improve overall GIS	FY12	GIS/ Scott Splean &			Steve Campbell

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architecture, geodata, and coordination strategies with national geospatial and CDSI leadership.		Randy Wiggins			
Develop a strategy to advance implementation of viable mobile GIS technologies	FY12	GIS/ Scott Splean & Randy Wiggins			Steve Campbell
ESD and FSG benefit cost assessment. Develop peer reviewed paper for Rangelands.	FY12	Grazing Lands Specialists / Loretta Metz, Jon Siddoway, Homer Sanchez	Have draft copy from Hal Gordon. Review/comment needed. In progress		Hal Gordon, Dennis Thompson
Develop decision support template (for individual states) relative to sagebrush ecosystem health and treatment of sagebrush. Establish a joint committee (with Grazing and Biology Consortia) to draft such a document with NTSC specialist assistance.	FY12	Grazing Lands Specialists / Patti N-E, John Tunberg, Bob Gillaspay, Shane Green, Rachel Murph (similar to West Juniper guide)			Pat Shaver
Convene WRGLC meeting in Spokane, WA in association with SRM meeting.	January 2012	Grazing Lands Specialists / Patti N-E			Pat Shaver
Partner with the BLM/USFS on including appropriate rangeland and pastureland interpretations in Soil Data Mart uploads of soil survey tabular data. States will include field office BLM input and jointly report findings to the National Soil Survey Center. • Oregon reviewing interpretations	Ongoing	Grazing Lands Specialists & Soil Scientists/State Range Specialists Loretta Metz, Shane Green, others.			Pat Shaver, Steve Campbell
Develop issue paper identifying technological solutions to resolve broad inefficiencies in the collection, management, analysis, and use of ESI and ESD data products.	Dec 2011	Grazing Lands Specialists / Jon Gustafson			
Analysis of NRI data for ESD development	FY12	Grazing Lands Specialists			Ken Spaeth, Pat Shaver, Gene Fults
Development of Forage Suitability Groups in the West. Use of PCORD multivariate techniques for grouping soils and correlating sites (includes training and use of PCORD manual for ESD development).	ongoing	Grazing Lands Specialists			Ken Spaeth, Pat Shaver, Gene Fults
Rangeland Hydrology and	FY12	Grazing Lands			Ken Spaeth, Pat

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Erosion Model, CDSI and for ESD development		Specialists			Shaver, Gene Fults
Deployment of Pipeline Network and Hydraulics Transient Software to Western States. – will deploy Wyoming Licensed Bentley product to irrigation and design engineers requesting software within the west region.	March 2012	Irrigation Engineers			Chuck Schmitt, Peter Robinson
Develop a proposal to hold a west region training/ coordination workshop in calendar year 2012 for plant materials personnel as recommended at the 2010 workshop.	FY12	Plant Materials Specialists			Jim Briggs
Develop Access based seed calculator tool for western state FO.	FY12	Plant Materials Specialists	Draft prototype provided to NHQ; waiting for development using ACCESS.		Jim Briggs
Develop or update all plant release fact sheets/brochures at each PMC	FY12	Plant Materials Specialists	Idaho and Alaska PMCs 100% current. Additional work needed by others.		Jim Briggs
Begin planning for 2012 Consortium meeting	April 2012	Water Quality Specialists/ Nephi Cole (WY), Norm.Evenstad (UT)			Shaun McKinney
Revise old SCS tech note: Water Quality Tech Note 1.	FY12	Water Quality Specialists/ Jason Peel (CO)			Shaun McKinney
Work cooperatively to assist initiative with coral reef efforts in Pacific	FY12	Water Quality Specialists/ Adam Reed (HI)			Shaun McKinney
Review the CSP 2008 enhancements and the "CMT" for adequacy in addressing and documenting water quality concerns, and make recommendations to improve in future. The CMT tool doesn't adequately address water quality concerns in the west.	FY12	Water Quality Specialists/ Dee Carlson (ID)			Shaun McKinney
Provide timely reviews and comments on water quality models, tools, and materials under development	FY12	Water Quality Specialists			Shaun McKinney

Action	When	Responsible Consortium/Person	Status	Budget	NTSC Technical Contact
Train and Support the Field					
Objective: Ensure that our employees acquire and maintain the knowledge and skills needed to be successful.					
Develop a White Paper addressing the need, feasibility, and options for developing Job Approval Authority for non-engineering practices.	FY12	WRTWG/ Steve Barker	Complete – Draft JAA Policy sent to NHQ 1/3/12		Russ Hatz
Develop an Issue Paper to provide feedback to West Region Leadership Team on the process used to carry out the PPS regionalization effort.	FY12	WRTWG			Russ Hatz
Conduct WRTWG workshop to provide training on and coordinate work related to CDSI, Practice Payment Schedules, and Organizational Improvement Initiatives	April 2012	WRTWG		\$24,000	Russ Hatz
Training on Organic Production	FY 11/ FY12	Agronomists	Sarah providing training opportunities this year. States that received training in 2011: ID, OR, AZ, HI, AK		S. Brown /Ferruzzi
Training on NM 590. P-Index and Leaching Index	FY 12	Agronomists	Rick will provide training via video teleconference by end of FY 12.		Fasching
Video Teleconference training	FY 11/ 12	Agronomists	Giulio will provide ideas for video training for WRAC members		Ferruzzi
Conduct Training: 1) Forest ecological site inventory and descriptions - Conduct ESD workshops 2) Forest practices: develop guidelines/tool for forest road inventory and application. (Oregon) 3) Forestry Training: Field staff Forestry training in procedures, planning (PIA)	FY12 FY12 FY12-13	Foresters		States will need to support travel and per diem costs to sessions; \$1000 per session for meeting rooms and incidental expenses for WFC/WRTWG approved sessions	Craig Ziegler
Work with WNTSC Soil Scientist and develop/conduct online	FY12	Foresters			Ziegler

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session on accessing/using forest site index data, forest-soil imitation ratings and ecological site descriptions in web soil survey and soil data viewer.					
Hold training seminar on appropriate use of Pest Management standard 595, on forestlands	FY12	Foresters			Ziegler / Ferruzzi
Continue to conduct training opportunities at SRM and NGLC/GLCI meetings in the form of breakout sessions. Topics for training include: GSAT Basic; GSAT Advanced; ESD course; Rangeland Health course and/or updates; NUTBAL; etc.	Ongoing	Grazing Lands Specialists			Pat Shaver, Gene Fults, Hal Gordon
Coordinate with the new WERA committee in the west focusing on water quality BMPs for pesticides.	FY12	Water Quality Specialists/ Rebecca Challender (CA)			Shaun McKinney
Provide input to the CDSI to assure water quality concerns are adequately addressed for western US	FY12	Water Quality Specialists/ Norm Evenstad (UT)			Shaun McKinney
Coordinate with other Western Resource Consortia on interdisciplinary issues; provide networking mechanisms	FY12	Water Quality Specialists			Shaun McKinney