



# WESTERN WATER ASSESSMENT

A NOAA RISA TEAM

## November 2022 Newsletter

### In this newsletter...

- Congratulations to Ben
- NCA Public Comment and Upcoming Webinar
- JAWRA Featured Collection
- Three Centers Retreat
- Research Article Highlight
- Climate Event
- Featured Articles

### Congratulations, Ben

Congratulations go to our director, Ben Livneh, who was awarded tenure in June in the Civil, Environmental, and Architectural Engineering Department at CU Boulder. On top of that exciting news, Assoc. Professor Livneh will receive the American Geophysical Union's (AGU) [2022 Hydrologic Sciences Early Career Award](#) at the AGU's upcoming fall meeting. We are very proud of Ben's accomplishments and appreciative of all the great work he does for WWA!



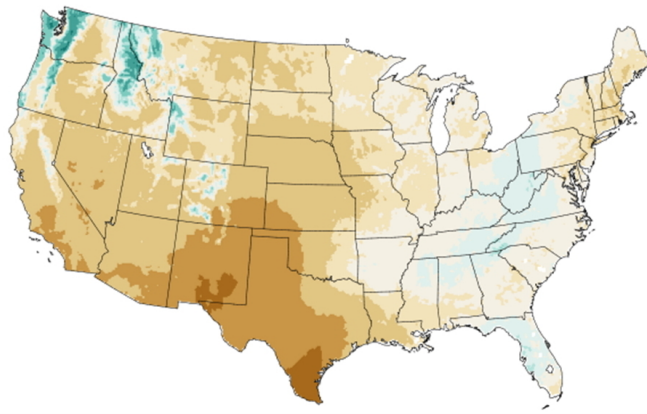
## Research and Products

### NCA Public Comment and Upcoming Webinar

Across the US, floods, droughts, and other water-related hazards are being amplified by climate change, but the impacts are not falling equally across regions and populations. Learn about the consequences of an intensified water cycle in the Fifth National Climate Assessment (NCA5) draft, which is now posted for public review and comment. The Water Chapter and the Northern Great



Plains Chapter of the draft NCA5 are led by WWA team members **Liz Payton** and **Corrie Knapp**, respectively, and supported by WWA/NC CASC team member **Imtiaz Rangwala** as technical contributor. Please consider commenting on the draft NCA5—your input will help shape the final assessment document. Watch this [video](#) to learn how to navigate the comments system, and visit this [link](#) to learn more about the draft assessment. The public comment period began on November 10th and will end on January 27, 2023.



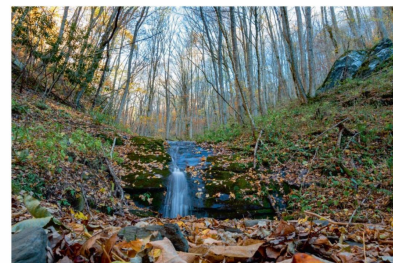
Western Water Assessment, as part of its webinar series, will host a webinar on **December 7th from 11am-noon MT** about the draft Water Chapter of the NCA5. Chapter lead Liz Payton will present highlights from the chapter, followed by Q&A with members of the chapter author team.

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## JAWRA Featured Collection

In 1995, a consortium of seven water research centers from each of the Colorado River basin states published a [collection of articles](#) in a special issue of the *Water Resources Bulletin* (now the *Journal of the American Water Resource Association*, or *JAWRA*) examining the potential for, and impacts of, a severe, sustained drought (SSD) event in the basin. Timed to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Colorado River Compact, JAWRA is publishing a new, 2-part collection: "[Severe Sustained Drought Revisited: Managing the Colorado River System in Times of Water Shortage 25 Years Later](#)." Part I of the featured collection was published in September; Part II is scheduled to be published in December and will include an article co-authored by WWA director **Ben Livneh** with members of his research group. WWA's **Liz Payton**, a co-author of one of the original SSD articles, worked with Guest Editor **George Frisvold** (University of Arizona) and other associate editors on the featured collection.

**JAWRA**  
JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION  
OCTOBER 2022



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## Three Centers Retreat

WWA has a close relationship with the USGS North Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (NC CASC) and the USDA Northern Plains Climate Hub. We meet twice a year at "Three Centers Retreats," which provide opportunities for us to coordinate and collaborate across our programs. This often includes presentations about existing research projects; discussions about how to leverage our existing work to meet user needs; and identification of opportunities to conduct new collaborative projects that help to advance scientific knowledge in stakeholder-relevant ways. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Three Centers Retreat was held virtually over two days this month. Our discussions centered on ethical practice, environmental justice, and other social science topics. We enjoyed seeing our colleagues at the other centers and look forward to the next retreat!

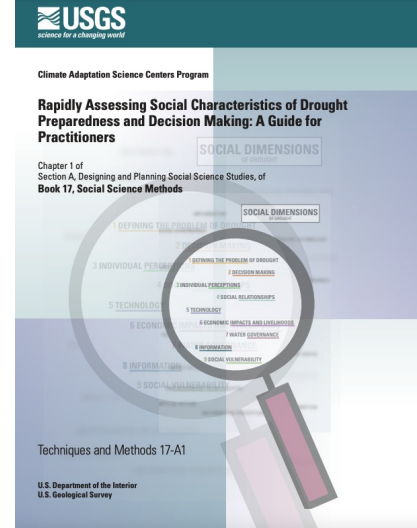
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## Research Article Highlight

WWA Social Scientist **Katie Clifford** authored, along with her USGS colleagues, a newly published guide for



developing a rapid assessment to explore the social dimensions of drought. The guide is aimed at managers, decision makers, and other practitioners with methodological and topical advice on conducting a rapid assessment to provide key social context that may aid in decision-making, such as when preparing a drought plan, allocating local drought resilience funding, or gathering the support of local agencies and organizations for collective action related to drought mitigation. Starting with an exploration of some of the social issues related to drought, the guide then provides a methodological overview (including some of the ethics to working with communities), and then introduces nine social dimensions of drought with background and key considerations related to each as well as potential avenues for how to explore the dimension via a rapid assessment.

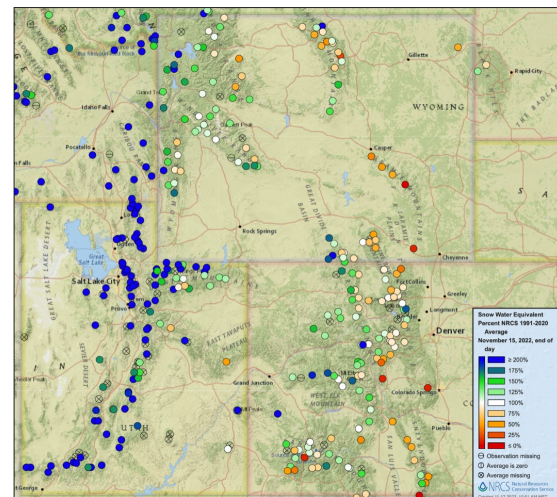
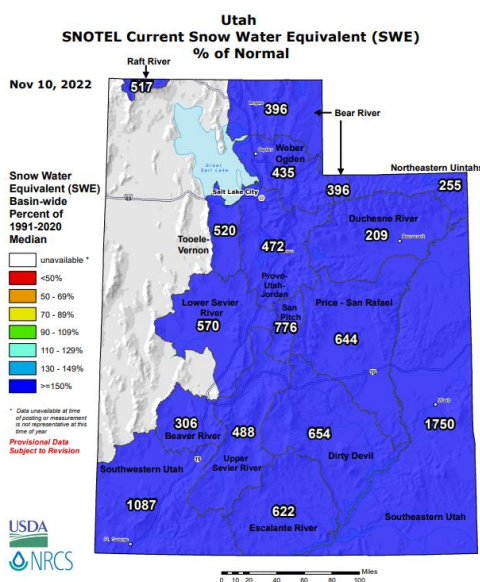


## [Rapidly Assessing Social Characteristics of Drought Preparedness and Decision Making: A Guide for Practitioners](#)

# Climate Event

## Significant Fall Precipitation in the Intermountain West

Utah, western Colorado, and western Wyoming received above to much-above normal precipitation during late October and early November. Precipitation fell as snow above 6,000-7,500 feet and snow water equivalent (SWE) was much above normal throughout most of the region by mid-November. A series of storms from November 2nd – 10th dumped snow containing 3-7" of SWE in Utah and 1-4" of SWE in western Colorado and western Wyoming. Immediately after the early November storm cycle, SWE was 255-1,750% above normal in Utah river basins. On November 10th, there was a record amount of SWE at 22 Snotel sites in Utah; SWE at these sites was already 20-30% of average peak SWE amounts. As of November 15th, SWE remained much above average in Utah (100-470%) and slightly above average in western Colorado and western Wyoming (100-67%) except for northwest Wyoming where SWE is 138-236% above normal. Snowpack east of the Continental Divide in Colorado and in the Bighorn and Laramie Mountains of Wyoming is below normal.



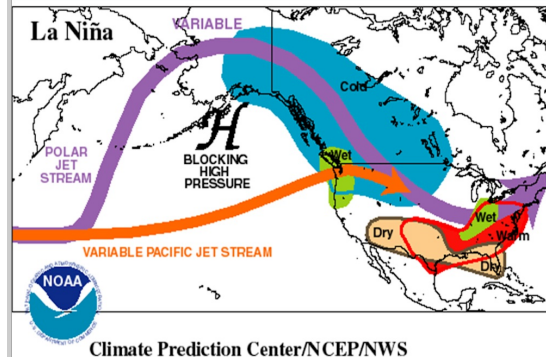
# WWA Features





Glen Canyon's side canyons spring back to life

[Read article](#)



La Niña could spell a warmer, drier winter for the Southwest

[Read article](#)



Lake Powell is drying up, but parts of its ecology are thriving

[Read article](#)



CU Boulder attracts record \$658 million for research in space, climate, more

[Read article](#)



Colorado River District gives \$75K for snow observation

[Read article](#)



The latest briefing is hot off the presses from Western Water Assessment #CRWUA2022

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