

# CONNECTING SCIENCE AND DECISIONS

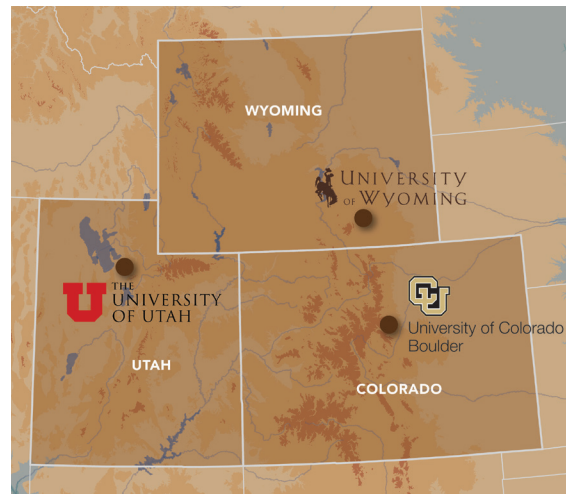


**WESTERN WATER ASSESSMENT**  
A NOAA RISA TEAM

**Western Water Assessment (WWA)** is an applied research program that works directly with communities, water managers, hazard mitigation planners, and other partners in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming to help them make the best use of science to build resilience and manage for climate impacts. WWA's team includes faculty, researchers, and students in multiple disciplines in the physical and social sciences—hydrology, geography, climate, policy, and law—at the University of Colorado Boulder, University of Utah, and University of Wyoming.

## Research Themes

Our interdisciplinary team works with partners on projects across four key areas:



### 1. Building Resilient Communities



WWA works with a wide range of communities to help them build climate resilience. For example, our *community climate planning workshops* provide locally relevant climate information and convene conversations that help smaller communities advance their own efforts to increase resilience.

### 2. Building Resilient Water Systems



WWA researchers are *working with water managers* to expand our understanding of the compounding impacts of increasing wildfire and declining snowpack on water supply across CO, UT, and WY, and making critical advances in medium-range forecasting for water system reliability in the Intermountain West and beyond.

### 3. Climate and Hydrology in the Colorado River Basin



WWA is home to leading experts on the Colorado River Basin, and we leverage this in research and synthesis activities. For example, the *Colorado River Basin Climate and Hydrology: State of the Science* synthesis report has guided research investments by water resource managers, and recently played a critical role in the Department of the Interior's Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Colorado River Basin.

### 4. Advancing Adaptation and Resilience Science



Currently, WWA researchers are working with partners on the ground to *understand adaptation needs* and how connection to a place influences adaptation in the Intermountain West. As part of this work, we have funded three community-led projects through our *Adapting to Climate Change in Wyoming* competition.

## Tools and Resources

WWA developed and maintains a set of easy-to-use tools and resources on our website that help partners and the public access information about weather, climate, water, hazards, and extreme events.

### Intermountain West Climate Dashboard

WWA's Intermountain West Climate Dashboard is an online 'one-stop-shop' for up-to-date climate and water information for the WWA region. We also release regular Intermountain West Climate Briefings that summarize monthly climate and weather conditions.

### Utah Hazard Planning Dashboard

The Utah Hazard Planning Dashboard is a climate information resource designed to connect hazard planners and others with information about historical incidence, current risks, and projections of future occurrence of key hazards in Utah.

## Partners

WWA's work is centered in partnerships and our success stems from this commitment. We are grateful to work with a wide range of partners from rural, suburban, and urban municipalities, federal programs, state programs and agencies, applied academic programs, resource management agencies, non-profit organizations, and Tribes. Visit our website for a full list of partners across our projects and programs.



## Leveraging the U.S. Investment in Science for Decision-Makers

WWA is one of 13 regionally based interdisciplinary teams across the United States and Territories in the NOAA Climate Adaptation Partnerships (CAP) network. For a modest investment, this network leverages the billions of climate and weather research dollars spent each year by the government, translating and synthesizing research into usable information for communities, decision-makers, and the public. The CAP model is unique across the federal government and is often used as an example of how to produce usable science with partners. The CAP program is housed within the NOAA Climate Program Office and is funded under the Regional Climate Data and Information budget line.



**Climate Adaptation Partnerships (CAP)**

### Benefits of CAP

- Helping communities reduce economic damages from droughts, floods, wildfires, and other climate and extreme events
- Maintaining regional presence and long-term relationships with stakeholders
- Ensuring science is responsive to information needs for on-the-ground decision making
- Leveraging the billions of dollars invested in weather and climate research to help practitioners protect lives and property
- Informing innovative solutions that promote social welfare, equity, and community resilience across a diverse range of sectors and landscapes

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