

# WRP Year in Review

Brief Highlights of 2015-2016 Efforts



# Western Regional Partnership

## WRP Steering Committee Chair and Vice Chair Observations

Fellow Westerners-

The Western Regional Partnership (WRP) continues to facilitate collaboration among State, Federal and Tribal agencies.



Utah is proud to be involved in WRP, especially since the WRP Region is home to numerous military installations and ranges. The WRP provides a key forum to continue to

plan together and implement actions together to assure bases are viable, manage encroachment, and continue to collaboratively manage resources with all the partners.

Utah was pleased to host the 2016 WRP Principals' meeting and appreciates the 145 policy leaders for their attendance. This meeting provided an opportunity to further explore key areas of critical importance to the West.

Thank you for your involvement in WRP!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael L. Mower".

Mike Mower  
WRP Steering Committee Chair  
Deputy Chief of Staff, Governor Herbert

WRP Partners-

The WRP provides opportunities for all partners to proactively work solutions. With future growth and development projected in the southwest region, it is important to continue to work better together on planning efforts. It is important for Nevada, as well as other states, to have close, effective working relationships for development, energy, habitat and transmission projects.



Within the WRP Region, there is considerable State, Federal and Tribal lands and various land management processes. In 2017, WRP will celebrate its decennial anniversary - to best prepare WRP will focus its next year on a Regional Assessment. We seek your involvement in this important endeavor.

Sincerely-

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan McGinness".

Ryan McGinness  
WRP Steering Committee Vice Chair and  
Director of Governor Sandoval's  
Washington DC Office

# WRP Year in Review

## Brief Highlights of 2015-2016 Efforts

### Executive Summary

WRP is a forum for information exchange, issue identification, problem solving and recommendations across the WRP region. During the 2015-2016 year, WRP accomplished the following:

- Held [Eighth WRP Principals' meeting](#) attended by 145 senior-policy leaders. At the meeting there were four plenary sessions on critical western issues and remarks by WRP Co-CHairs Governor Gary Herbert, Assistant Secretary Janice Schneider, Mr. Frank DiGiovanni (acting DoD Principal) as well as Utah Congressman Chris Stewart and Partners sharing on land management issues.
- Developed [WRP Regional Strength, Areas of Commonality and Emerging Issues Report](#)
- Updated [summaries of 80 military installation and range fact sheets](#)
- Organized the following [10 webinars to highlight best practices and lessons learned](#) on issues impacting the region such as projected transmission projects in the region, energy tools, improving species management and regulatory predictability, aviation safety, and issues of importance to the military:
  - U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) Mission and stewardship responsibilities
  - US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Threatened and Endangered Species Team activities in the WRP region
  - Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms mission, land acquisition and airspace expansion
  - National Transportation Safety Board mission and efforts to address safety hazards associated with Meteorological Evaluation Towers
  - Western Electricity Coordinating Council mission and transmission projects in the region
  - Energy Zones Mapping Tool
  - Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative (RETI) v2.0
  - Spectrum Policy Developments affecting the U.S. Department of Defense Test Ranges
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Presentation on Monarch Conservation: A focus on the Southwest
  - DOI's Integrated Rangeland Fire Strategy
- [Facilitated solutions for WRP Partners](#) and other notable efforts described below.

# WRP Year in Review

*Listed below is information on the major accomplishments achieved by the Western Regional Partnership over the 2015-2016 year to meet or exceed the Strategic Priorities set forth at the 2015 Principals' Meeting and presented at the 2016 WRP Principals' Meeting.*

## WRP Eighth Principals' Meeting

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Senior leaders from state, federal and tribal agencies gathered August 17-18 for the Eighth Western Regional Partnerships' Meeting hosted by the State of Utah at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. WRP Co-Chairs Frank DiGiovanni, acting DoD Principal; Utah Governor Herbert; and DOI Assistant Secretary Janice Schneider addressed the 145 senior policy-level leaders in attendance.



Governor Herbert thanked the group for continuing to work collaboratively on shared interests in this region, such as unmanned air systems, wildfire and endangered species, and emphasized the progress to be made when we work in a culture of cooperation.

Assistant Secretary Schneider noted WRP's collaborative framework and importance of working together. She touched on topics of interest to DOI, including drought and wildfires, protecting landscapes, unmanned aerial vehicles, endangered and sensitive species issues, energy trends, fulfilling trust responsibilities to American Indian Tribes, and collaborative efforts with DoD.

Mr. DiGiovanni offered that he is impressed with the level of involvement of the various partners in WRP. He discussed several issues of importance to DoD, including compatible

use of land and airspace, unmanned aerial vehicles, the need to work cooperatively in the development of renewable energy resources as energy security is part of national security, and the encroachment challenges presented by the use and limitations of spectrum.





Keynote remarks were provided by Utah Congressman Chris Stewart and highlighted national security challenges and environmental issues.

Four WRP plenary sessions with senior subject-matter experts focused on the following subjects: Immediate Threats to the West: Drought and Wildfires; Energy Trends in the WRP Region; Endangered Species Act: Challenges, Trends and Efforts; and Integrating UAS in Airspace: Challenges, Trends and Efforts. WRP Partners shared updates in an “around the room” highlight of land management issues. All of this information sharing assisted WRP Partners to be more aware of key efforts in the region, best practices, emerging issues, current resources and collaborative opportunities.

During the meeting, Committee Co-Chairs serving as panel moderators shared information on WRP efforts over the past year, with a focus on the information available in the “WRP Regional Strengths, Areas of Commonality and Emerging Issues” 2016 Report.



WRP Principals concurred with WRP Steering Committee recommendations to adopt the priority of conducting a Regional Assessment and maintain the current WRP Charter and Structure. During the WRP 2016-2017 year, WRP will work to better understand the current priorities of its Partners and the continuing or emerging issues impacting their agencies; and to identify and recommend potential available resources (such as grants, agency actions, planning efforts) to address these issues. A report highlighting these items and findings will be presented at the 2017 WRP Principals’ Meeting in New Mexico.



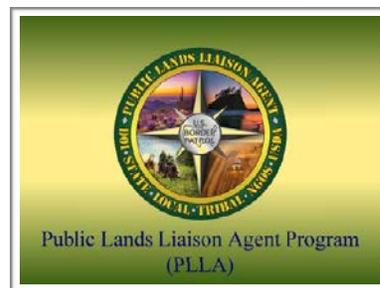
## WRP 2015-2016 Webinar Series:

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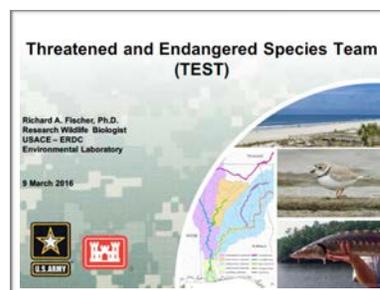
WRP continues to hold webinars to showcase Partners' efforts, offering insights to best practices and lessons learned on issues impacting the region. This cross-sharing of information has helped WRP Partners have better situational awareness of agency efforts and additional opportunities for collaboration. The WRP webinar series continues to have robust attendance. The following webinars were sponsored by either the WRP Energy, Natural Resources or Military Readiness, Homeland Security, Disaster Preparedness and Aviation Committee, the GIS Support Group, or were jointly sponsored.

- The WRP Natural Resources Committee and WRP Military Readiness, Homeland Security, Disaster Preparedness and Aviation Committee jointly sponsored webinars in February and June 2016, on the [U.S. Border Patrol \(USBP\) Mission and stewardship responsibilities](#).

These webinars highlighted Public Lands Liaison Agent (PLLA) Program and inter-agency efforts and restoration success at the Organ Pipe National Monument. Presentations were made by Assistant Chief Rafael Cano and (A)Assistant Chief Bryon Strom, National Public Lands Liaison Agent Program Manager at U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters; Superintendent Brent Range of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument; and Patrol Agent in Charge Anthony Good of the Ajo U.S. Border Patrol Station.



- In March 2016, Dr. Richard A. Fischer, Research Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Army Engineer R&D Center, Environmental Laboratory, presented on the [US Army Corps of Engineers \(USACE\) Threatened and Endangered Species Team \(TEST\)](#) activities in the WRP region. TEST accelerates the development of solutions to priority threatened and endangered species (TES) issues to improve operational flexibility, reduce future costs, improve budget planning capabilities, reduce adverse impacts to mission execution and improve species conservation outcome. TES conservation and compliance spending averages approximately \$230 million per year, about 85% on fish and 10% on birds. TES conservation concerns currently exist at over 430 USACE projects for over 300 different species.

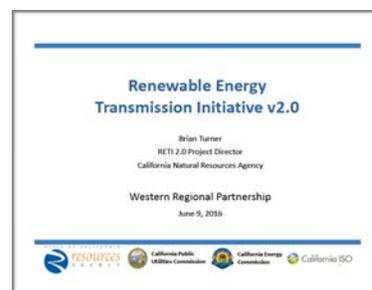
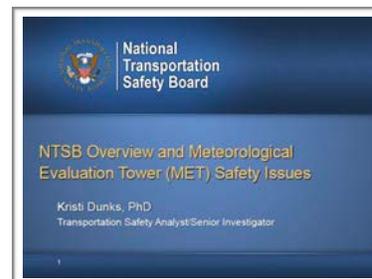


- In March 2016, Major Brian Welsh, Regional Airspace Coordinator, Marine Corps Installations West, and Mr. Jim Ricker, Assistant Chief of Staff, G5 Plans, Community Liaison/Public Affairs Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) Twentynine



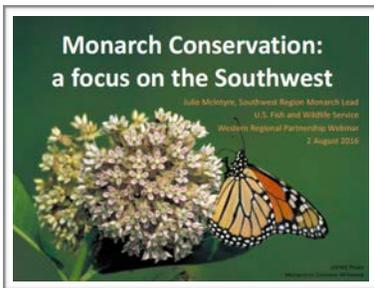
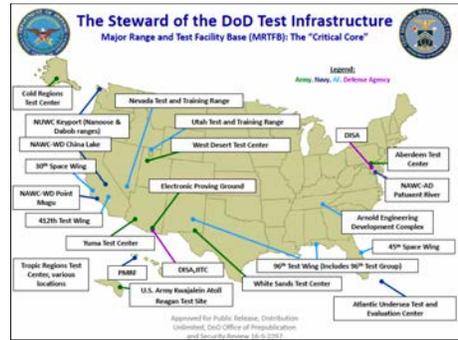
Palms, presented on the mission of [MCAGCC Twentynine Palms](#), [land acquisition](#) and [airspace expansion](#). This webinar highlighted the Marine Corps aviation mission, including types of aircraft currently flying and their roles, airspace challenges that impact DoD's ability to carry out its flying mission and why the southwest region provides a unique environment to conduct their mission.

- In April 2016, Dr. Kristi Dunks, Analyst/Senior Investigator, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), presented a webinar on the [National Transportation Safety Board \(NTSB\)](#), [hazards associated with Meteorological Evaluation Towers \(MET\)](#) and what the NTSB is doing to address them.
- In May 2016, Dr. Vijay Satyal, Sr. Policy Analyst; Colby Johnson, Associate Staff Engineer, and Byron Woertz, Manager System Adequacy Planning at [Western Electricity Coordinating Council \(WECC\)](#) provided an overview of their organization and [transmission projects in the region](#). The webinar provided information regionally significant transmission projects that have a high expectation of being in service in a 10-year timeframe given current trends and showcased WECC's Interactive Transmission Project Portal Map.
- In June 2016, Jim Kuiper, Argonne National Laboratory, demonstrated the [Energy Zones Mapping Tool](#), a public web-based mapping application that provides data, models, reports, and policy information for nine clean (low- or no-carbon) energy resource categories in the Eastern Interconnection. Efforts are underway to extend the scope to the entire United States.
- In June 2016, Brian Turner, RETI 2.0 Project Director, California Natural Resources Agency presented on the [Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative \(RETI\) v2.0](#), a cooperative project of five agencies, four state and one federal. It is a non-regulatory planning effort to help meet state greenhouse gas and renewable energy goals



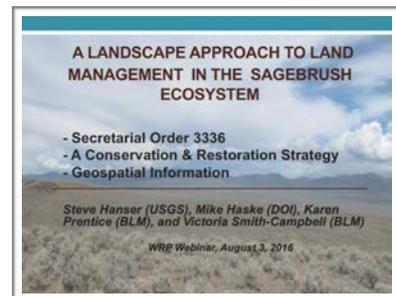
exploring combinations of renewable generation resources in California and throughout the West.

- In July 2016, Chris Mazur, DoD T&E Ranges Sustainability Lead, providing information on [Spectrum Policy Developments Affecting the U.S. Department of Defense Test Ranges](#).
- In August 2016, Julie McIntyre, Southwest Region Monarch Lead, [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#), presented on the Monarch Butterfly current status and efforts undertaken as well as opportunities to help support the Monarch.



•The WRP Natural Resources Committee and WRP Military Readiness, Homeland Security, Disaster Preparedness and Aviation Committee jointly sponsored an August 2016 presentation on [DOI's Integrated Rangeland Fire Strategy](#) (Implementation of DOI Secretarial Order 3336). Secretarial

Order (SO) 3336 is to enhance policies and strategies for preventing and suppressing rangeland fires to conserve habitat for the greater sage-grouse, other species and economic activity including ranching and recreation. Among the key features are integrated response plans, allocation of resources, integrating science into project design and implementation, post-fire restoration, multi-year investments in restoration, large-scale removal of invasive grasses and a national seed strategy. This webinar was presented by Mike Haske, DOI, SO 3336 Implementation Manager; Karen Prentice, BLM, National Healthy Lands Coordinator, Steve Hanser, USGS, Sage-grouse Specialist; and Victoria Smith-Campbell, BLM, Fire Management Specialist (GIS).

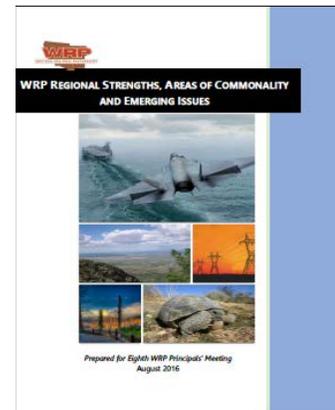


# WRP Regional Strengths, Areas of Commonality and Emerging Issues Report

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For the 2015-2016 year, WRP Principals tasked the Steering Committee to work with the WRP Committees to identify WRP regional strengths, areas of commonality and potential emerging issues impacting WRP Partners' missions. The report includes a summary of efforts conducted by Committees and information on new projects, trends, efforts and resources in the region such as:

- Energy Committee: New energy generation and transmission planning efforts and projects in the WRP region and potential impacts on WRP Partners' missions.
- MRHSDP&A Committee: Efforts to support the DoD Mission and serve as a forum for information exchange with focus on military operations, homeland security/disaster preparedness missions and aviation.
- Natural Resources Committee: Committee efforts to serve as a resource and forum for WRP Partners to more fully collaborate and address natural resources-related issues
- GIS Support Group: Provided GIS mapping support for this effort.



## Highlight of Findings:

Within the WRP Region, there are many regional strengths, areas of commonality and emerging issues/trends. These are documented in the [report](#) and brief highlights are below.

### Regional Strengths

- There are significant renewable energy resources in the region. The six States have climates that are conducive to alternative forms of energy, including wind, solar and geothermal, and they have significant hydroelectric resources, e.g., Hoover Dam.
- There are significant military assets and capabilities in the region, detailed below.
- Nearly year-round fair weather, enabling all types of flying missions. Within the region there are some of the nation's busiest airports.
- Incredible wealth of natural resources within the WRP Region.

### Areas of Commonality

- Government funding for renewable energy projects remains steady
- Additional focus on protecting the electric grid and energy-related infrastructure
- Greater focus on energy impacts on the environment
- Agencies working together (e.g. signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by DOE and DOI to assist Indian Tribes in developing energy resources)
- Many agencies are concerned about cyber security issues and threats and devoting additional resources to address them
- Agencies have additional focus on national security issues and planning elements with more focus on threats to infrastructure
- Concerns over wildfires
- Many WRP Partners want to work proactively to address/preclude listing of species and desire regulatory predictability
- More focus at the ecosystem/landscape level to address natural resource-related issues

### Emerging Issues/Trends for WRP Partners' Awareness:

- Natural Gas generated more electricity than coal
- More focus on development of offshore wind in the United States
- Increase in energy technology
- Increase in governmental agencies' goals on clean energy power sources
- Federal government overall energy consumption is declining
- Conflict on Clean Power Plan
- Solar surpasses wind in California; Arizona loses solar jobs in 2015
- West-wide Energy Corridor efforts
- More focus on regionalizing energy planning and efforts
- BLM looking to expedite solar energy development on public lands
- U.S. solar installations hit a record high in 2015
- Testing of energy kites that reach altitudes of 80-350 meters
- Energy Storage Market is growing
- Increase in use of Remotely Piloted Airplanes for government use
- Increase in small, hobbyist and commercial Unmanned Aircraft Systems (FAA estimates may grow from 2.7 million purchased in 2016 to as many as 7 million by 2020).
- Potential DoD budget instability (many articles referencing leadership concerns)
- Potential DoD mission changes (new aircraft, operations, etc.)

- Continued increase in Cybersecurity threats (agencies reported 72,000 cyber incidents in 2015)
- Changes in airspace (e.g., to accommodate UAS operations, use of UAS for new operations such as first responders, FAA Metroplex, etc.)
- Potential changes in how frequency spectrum is managed/utilized
- The WRP Region is experiencing drought and it is anticipated to continue
- Changes in agency land use planning efforts and rules
- Continued need for federal and state land management collaboration

## Other Notable WRP Efforts:

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- Throughout the year, the WRP Steering Committee, members representing Governor's Offices in each WRP State, various federal agencies, liaison from the Western Governors' Association and Native American Leadership, maintained effective communication among its members, coordinated with WRP Committee Co-Chairs, advanced efforts for the Eighth Principals' Meeting and supported WRP Partners by responding to their inquiries or requests for assistance.



- Conducted outreach within WRP Region and Washington DC (headquarters).
- The WRP Natural Resources Committee served as a resource to the Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape. The Committee previously initiated and managed the WRP Southeastern Arizona/New Mexico (SoAZ/NM) Project, which was a significant reason that Fort Huachuca was designated a Sentinel Landscape in 2015. Additionally, WRP has sent letters of support in the past year for Arizona Land and Water Trust (ALWT) in their

successful efforts to support Fort Huachuca and receive Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) funding. Other results of the SoAZ/NM project include: Over \$15 million in partnership funding with the focus of restricting development on 3,500 acres, thereby supporting the military mission, preventing degradation of water resources and supporting critical/proposed habitat supporting endangered species.



- The WRP Natural Resources Committee served as a resource for the DoD Legacy Funded Project regarding *“Coordinated multi-species management plans for high priority species at risk on or near DoD lands in the Southwestern U.S.”* WRP DoD Management Team, WRP Natural Resources Committee Co-Chairs and WRP Steering Committee provided input on species for this effort and additionally provided the 2015 report on “WRP Partner Input on Species of Concern.”
- The MRHSDP&A Committee updated the [Meteorological Evaluation Towers \(MET\) fact sheet](#) to highlight aviation safety issues and information from recent federal law mandating that the FAA, within a year, develop regulations requiring marking of towers between 50 and 200 feet AGL. Additionally, this law directs the FAA to maintain a database of the location and height of covered towers. WRP Partners are encouraged to monitor the new FAA regulations and determine where and if appropriate additional disclosure and notification of METs would promote aviation safety. For more information, please WRP [MET Tower Fact Sheet 2016](#).
- The MRHSDP&A Committee coordinated the update of [80 Military Asset Listing \(MAL\)](#) summaries from all of the Services and the National Guard in the region. MALs describe the history, missions, and importance of these assets. These military summaries are for general planning purposes and were developed and updated through inputs and involvement with installation and Services-level contributors, including public affairs officers, intergovernmental liaisons, regional environmental coordinators, sustainability officers and community plans and liaison officers from Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, National Guard and Navy throughout the six-state region.
- The [WRP DoD Management Team](#) served as a resource to WRP members on DoD-specific issues. This team consists of representatives from OSD and the military services to coordinate issues and best support WRP efforts.

