Water Security Initiative Update

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ASRED/SAAESD/S-AHS/S-CARET
Joint Spring Meeting
April 25 – 28, 2016

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

- 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Institution-based coordination</th>
<th>$4M</th>
<th>Fixed costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional Water Centers</td>
<td>$6M</td>
<td>Fixed costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated regional water grants</td>
<td>$45M</td>
<td>50% of competitive funds</td>
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<td>AFRI national grants</td>
<td>$36M</td>
<td>40% of competitive funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional grants</td>
<td>$9M</td>
<td>10% of competitive funds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$100M</strong></td>
<td>Annually for a minimum of 5 yrs</td>
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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.