

June 3, 2015

NATIONAL INITIATIVE ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF WATER SECURITY

NIFA RESPONSE

NIFA concurs that water security is indeed a significant national challenge and that our Land Grant University partners can play a significant role in protecting and enhancing water security across the nation.

NIFA concurs that water security issues impact several sectors of the national economy including agricultural production, natural resources and the environment, energy and bio-based products, human health and safety, and community vitality.

NIFA agrees that a national competitive initiative that fully integrates research, education, and extension would optimize the impacts of the proposed \$500 million investment. This new initiative must take into account that currently over \$100 million per year is being invested in various aspects of water across the United States through various funding lines (Table 1).

NIFA recommends the development and articulation of a compelling vision and justification, along with major outcomes and impacts anticipated from the new investment initiative, particularly in light of the current investments being made, as noted above, and how the new initiative will result in additional, transformative outcomes.

NIFA recommends the development of a science roadmap for water security to ensure that the proposed investments in research, education and extension are strategically positioned and outcomes based.

NIFA recommends increased investments utilizing national competitive grant programs such as AFRI while minimizing the creation of new authorities or funding lines utilized to implement any expanded water initiative.

NIFA recommends utilizing funding authorities that ensure full integration of research education, and extension functions to maximize impacts of these efforts, as opposed to single function authorities outlined in the proposed initiative. The proposed use of the Smith Lever 3(d) authority for several components of the initiative would restrict funding to extension only activities for these components.

NIFA recommends more effective and streamlined administrative structures to minimize management and coordinating costs.

NIFA recommends that when addressing regional needs for water security, regional approaches be based on biological, climatic, geophysical, or watersheds should rather than the current regional LGU administrative boundaries.

NIFA has conducted a detailed analysis of the agency's current investments in water security across programs and funding authorities (Table 1); unfortunately, Table 1 does not include data for investments under the Extension authority because the Plan of Work reports are not easily searchable for investments in water. It is critically important the Land-grant system work with NIFA to capture the resources invested, outputs, and outcomes resulting from all mission areas.

NIFA looks forwards to working with our Land-grant partners and other stakeholders, including other federal agencies, in expanding the agency's effort in the area of water security.

Table 1. NIFA INVESTMENTS IN WATER RESEARCH, EDUCATION, and EXTENSION
FISCAL YEAR 2009-2013 FUNDS (IN THOUSANDS) BY FUNDING AUTHORITY and FTEs

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

FY	NO. PROJ	HATCH	MC-STN	EVANS-ALLEN	ANIMAL HEALTH	SPECIAL GRANTS	AFRI/NRI GRANTS	SBIR GRANTS	Smith-Lever 3b & 3c and /1890 Extension	OTHER NIFA	SARE ³	TOTAL NIFA
2009	3108	\$14,853	\$3,023	\$3,006	\$76	\$5,931	\$4,858	\$588.00	NA*	\$18,455	\$100	\$104,790
2010	2538	\$14,313	\$2,689	\$4,357	\$56	\$5,991	\$6,818	\$779.00	NA	\$23,300	n/a	\$114,560
2011	2586	\$16,310	\$2,902	\$4,030	\$26	\$851	\$28,748	\$1,176.00	NA	\$12,095	\$210	\$127,550
2012	2658	\$17,074	\$3,067	\$3,881	\$42	\$786	\$17,302	\$1,134.00	NA	\$11,897	\$307	\$118,347
2013	2442	\$16,238	\$3,172	\$3,913	\$34	\$716	\$20,033	\$1,748.00	NA	\$10,384	\$57	\$116,618
Total	13332	\$78,788	\$14,853	\$19,187	\$234	\$14,275	\$77,759	\$5,425.00	NA	\$76,131	\$674	\$581,865

* NA – Not Available; the Plans of Work and POW Annual Reports do not allow quantifying the amount of funding invested for water related efforts under Smith-Lever 3b&3c and 1890 Extension authorities.

Full Time Employment					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
SCIENTIST YEARS	929	767	746	771	733
PROFESSIONAL YEARS	1833	1468	1496	1513	1383
TECHNICAL YEARS	558	440	437	459	378
CLERICAL, LABOR AND OTHER YEARS	573	455	466	457	426
TOTAL ALL SUPPORT YEARS	3892	3130	3145	3199	2920