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March Issue of the Southwest Climate Hub Bulletin

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What's Happening at the Hub



Climate Change and Water Cycle Curriculum

An article was featured in *Science* on February 12th, titled "[Climate Confusion Among U.S. Teachers.](#)" We have an educational unit aligned with Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. This unit is freely available and intended for use by anyone, especially educators of 6-12 grade students.

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The Jornada and Asombro featured on "Out On The Land"

The rural TV network program "Out On The Land" presented two episodes about the USDA Agriculture Research Service Jornada Experimental Range and Asombro Institution for Science Education. The 100+ year history and an introduction to Criollo cattle were featured. Click on 'Read More' to watch the episodes online.

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New Mexico First Resilience in Agriculture

New Mexico First is a nonpartisan forum that engages stakeholders in developing public policy recommendations. New Mexico First and New Mexico State University County Extension Service convened a series of regional meetings from January to March 2016 that brought together a diverse group of agriculture stakeholders to identify industry trends and solutions to climate stress and other challenges. Meeting reports are now available online.

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Recent Research

[Climate Change and U.S. Agriculture](#)

This research by A. Manale, S. Hyberg, N. Key, S. Mooney, T.L. Napier and M. Ribauda explores opportunities for conservation to reduce and mitigate emissions and support adaptation to rapid change.

[Investing in the Transition to Sustainable Agriculture](#)

Agroecological farming systems, including biologically diversified systems, have been found to be capable of meeting global food needs sustainably and efficiently.

[Physiological and Ecological Factors Influence Trends to Climate Change](#)

The health of United States forests is a concern for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services, forest commercial values, and other reasons.

[Effects of Drought on Forests and Rangelands in the United States](#)

This is a comprehensive science synthesis report by the USFS. Authors include: James M Vose, James S. Clark, Charles H. Luce, and Toral Patel-Weynand. Download the full report here (302 pages, 8.7MB)

[Groundwater Governance in the United States: Common Priorities and Challenges](#)

Groundwater is a critical component of the water supply for agriculture, urban areas, industry, and ecosystems, but managing it can have its challenges.

DOI: [10.1111/gwat.12294](#)

[The Impacts of Increasing Drought on Forest Dynamics, Structure and Biodiversity](#)

In the Eastern U.S., the effects of increasing drought are becoming better understood at the level of individual trees, but this knowledge cannot yet be confidently translated to predictions of changing structure and diversity of forest stands.

DOI: [10.1111/gcb.13160](#)

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Research about recent ecosystem services (ES) often aims to generate knowledge that influences policies and institutions for conservation and human development.

Recent News

[**USDA Expands Insurance Options for Farmers Transitioning to Organic Production**](#)

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a new step to support farmers transitioning to certified organic production by expanding a crop insurance option to allow producers to purchase insurance coverage that better reflects their product's actual value.

[**The Southwest is sliding into a drier normal**](#)

The types of weather patterns that bring rain to the Southwest are becoming less common, according to a new study in Geophysical Research Letters. Andreas Prein (NCAR) and colleagues analyzed historical data from 1979-2014 to find that frequency of low-pressure systems in the North Pacific has decreased, possibly influenced by anthropogenic climate change.

[**Studies Call for Leaner 'Carbon Budget' to Slow Warming**](#)

A new study shows that humanity must emit less than half the carbon dioxide than previously thought in the coming years, in order to avoid the possible catastrophic effects of climate change.

[**EPA Releases Online Mapping Tool to Help Protect Drinking Water Sources**](#)

The DWMAPS is an online mapping tool to help you find information about drinking water in your community. This user-friendly tool is also capable of finding data, accidental spills and sources for contamination.

[**USDA Initiative Restores Forests and Reduces Wildfire Threats**](#)

The USDA announced a federal investment of \$40 million for restoration of forests near growing communities to reduce wildfire threats, protect water supplies, improve wildlife habitat and support rural economies. The U.S. Forest Service is partnering with the NRCS to form the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership for the third year.

[**Montana Rancher Looks to the Past to Prepare for Tomorrows' Climate**](#)

Climate changes are forcing farmer Erik Kalsta to consider changing his farming techniques. Due to the lack of precipitation in his area, Kalsta is trying to adapt by getting his soil to absorb more water and turning his ranch into a laboratory, figuring out what "climate adaption" actually looks like.

[**Can You Trust The Farmer's Voice? It Depends.**](#)

The ways in which researchers collect the beliefs of farmers are often subject to bias, which can limit the meaningfulness and accuracy of a study's claims about the farmer experience.

[**Cover Crops, A Farming Revolution With Deep Roots in the Past**](#)

This NY Times Business Day article describes renewed interest in cover crops in the Midwest. It highlights corn and soybean farmer Mark Anson, who became an outspoken proponent of cover crops after achieving a bumper corn harvest despite a severe drought in 2013.

[**Preparing For An Uncertain Future with Climate Smart Agriculture**](#)

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Upcoming Events

[Northwest Climate Hub Workshop](#)

March 9-11, 2016 | Kennewick, WA

[2016 Water Resources Research Center Annual Conference](#)

March 21, 2016 | Tuscon, AZ

[USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Rural Development Memorandum of Understanding, Coordination of Programs, and the Ability to Stack REAP and EQIP Funding for Energy Programs](#)

March 22, 2016, 2:00PM (EST) | [Webinar](#)

[Reservoir Operation for Cottonwood](#)

[Recruitment on the Provo River](#)

March 22, 2016, 2:30PM (MDT) | [Webinar](#)

[NOAA's 14th annual Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop \(CPASW\)](#)

March 22-24, 2016 | Burlington, VT

[Grassland Vulnerability to Climate Change in Southwest Deserts](#)

March 29, 2016, 12-1PM (MST) | [Webinar](#)

[USDA Northern Forests-Climate Hub and FCWG Workshop](#)

March 29-30, 2016 | Chicago, IL

[California Adaption Forum Session](#)

[Proposal Deadline](#)

April 4, 2016 | Long Beach, CA

[Transitioning to Organic Production](#)

April 5, 2016, 3:00PM (EST) | [Webinar](#)

[Natural Areas Conference Abstract Deadline](#)

May 2, 2016 | Davis, CA

[Building Blocks for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry: Southwest Perspective](#)

May 17-18 2016 | Las Cruces, NM

[AgroEnviron: 2016 The 10th International Symposium on Agriculture and the Environment](#)

May 24-27, 2016 | West Lafayette, IN

[North American Symposium on Climate Adaption](#)

August 16-18, 2016 | New York City, NY

[COMET-Farm Web Based Training: Schedule for March](#)

Various dates | [Webinar](#)

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