

**NIWR STATEMENT OF MISSION AND PURPOSE:
Imperatives in Water Resources for the 21st Century**

**January 2016
Revision 3**

NIWR STATEMENT OF MISSION AND PURPOSE

Meeting Imperatives for our Nation's Water Resources

Section 1. NIWR Vision Statement

The National Institutes for Water Resources, its member water resources research institutes, and their university partners, serve as the primary resource to assist the Nation in the development and implementation of programs aimed at achieving sustainable quantities of quality water.

Section 2. NIWR Mission Statement

The 1984 Water Resources Research Act led to the formation of state Water Resources Research Institutes (WRRI), all of which are members of NIWR. Our mission is to assist the Nation and the States in water resources science and technology to:

1. assure sufficient quantity and quality of water to meet the Nation's needs for the production of food, materials, and energy;
2. discover practical solutions to the Nation's water resources-related problems;
3. provide tools so that water resources management and utilization protects and enhances environmental and societal values;
4. promote the interest of governments and the private sector in research and development of water technologies that will reclaim wastewater and convert saline and other impaired waters to suitable condition for municipal, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and other beneficial uses;
5. promote more effective coordination of the Nation's water resources research programs;
6. help to train a cadre of research scientists, engineers, and technicians to address current and future water resources problems; and
7. encourage long-term planning and research to meet future water management, quality, and supply challenges.

Section 3. Support of U.S. Geological Survey's Water Mission

The NIWR Mission supports the U.S. Geological Survey's Water Mission to understand the "*spatial and temporal distribution of water quantity and quality, as related to human and ecosystem needs, as affected by human and natural influences.*" (U.S.G.S., 2013 Circular 1383).

Section 4. Benefits to the Nation of a Strong Water Resources Research Institute Program

NIWR, through member water resources research institutes, provides benefits to the Nation through sustained support from Congress, various federal and state agencies, and other partners.

- The national WRRI Program has a *Congressional mandate* to address water resource issues using university-based expertise.
- The WRRI Program allows members to be *objective brokers* of water resources information among a wide range of constituencies.

- University-based institutes can examine *long-term consequences* of water resources policies and recognize long-term problems through access to expertise in *all water-related disciplines*.
- The WRRRI Program is *flexible* in addressing emerging water resources problems and adaptable to local cultures, institutions of governance, and regional socio-economic and physical conditions.
- Institutes and academic researchers are motivated to consider *institutional, in addition to technical*, solutions to water resources challenges.
- The national WRRRI Program is, collectively, an extensive *well-established network* with diverse capabilities that facilitate *regional* as well as state and local cooperation.
- The WRRRI provide experiential *educational opportunities* to develop the highly trained workforce necessary to build national capacity for sustainable water resource management.
- *Technology transfer* programs at each Institute provide scientifically credible communication of research needs and results *upward* from states and localities to federal agencies and *downward* from these agencies to users of research results.
- Institutes are *experienced in assessing priorities* for research, with strong stakeholders involvement.
- The WRRRI Program provides information to increase *efficiency* of federal water resources research investments by identifying research gaps and avoiding redundancies.
- The WRRRI Program provides funding to fill research gaps that improves *effectiveness* of water resources management.
- The WRRRI Program includes a *quality review process* with mandated reviews every three years. Institutes are held accountable for expenditures as well as for the quality and relevance of scientific results, the vigor of outreach programs, and the effectiveness of training initiatives.

Section 5. Program Objectives

The unique capacities and strengths of NIWR institutions, allow state WRRRI programs to be timely and agile in meeting program objectives.

Water Resource Management Objectives

To provide relevant and timely information that can assist the Nation's water resource users in their development and implementation of programs aimed at providing sustainable water quality and supply; the following three objectives will be pursued by NIWR, its members and partners.

1. Provision of a sufficient **quantity** of water to meet demands.
2. Provision of an adequate **quality** of water to satisfy intended uses.
3. Assurance of a reliable **supply** of water wherever and whenever needed.

Water Resource Management Targets

To achieve sustainable water quality, quantity and adequate supply, NIWR and its member institutes and partners directly assist the Nation's water resources needs in five improvement areas.

1. Improvement of water availability through better **Supply Management**.
2. Improvement of water quality through better **Source Management**.
3. Improvement of water use through better **Demand Management**.
4. Improvement of water infrastructure & technology through better **Systems Management**.
5. Improvement of water institutions and policies through better **Strategic Management**.

Performance Goals

NIWR adopts the following performance goals, toward which institute performance metrics are designed to measure progress.

The Nation's Water Resources Research Institutes shall conduct research, education, and outreach activities aimed at managing water resources so that adequate quantities of water of sufficient quality are available to satisfy water needs, wherever and whenever these needs arise.