SECURE WATER FUTURE NEWSLETTER

September - December 2025

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SWF



SWF Q3 - Q4 Highlights

- **Press Release**
  - DWR Awards Dr. Ellen Hanak for Leadership in Science-Driven Water Policy
  - AG Tech for Small Farms
    - Expo at UC Merced
- **Events**
  - WateReuse Symposium
  - Swaner Presents Utah's States Climate Adaptation Program
  - AGU25: Where Science Connects Us
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  - Urban Water Institute: UWI 2026 Conference
  - Climate Change Preparedness Conference
  - Kudos
- **Research**
  - *Transformational strategies for equitable water distribution in a changing climate - **Link***
  - Recent publications
- **Team Member Spotlight**
  - Britta Schumacher

Upcoming Events

- **AGU 2025**
  - December 15-19, 2025
  - SWF Sessions 15th, 16th, and 17th
- **Urban Water Insititue: UWI 2026 Conference**
  - February 25-27, 2026
- **WateReuse Symposium**
  - March 8-11, 2026
- **Climate Change Preparedness Conference**
  - May 20-22, 2026



AgTech Expo Tours Uc Merced's Experimental Smart Farms (2025)

Press Releases

DWR Awards Dr. Ellen Hanak for Leadership in Science-Driven Water Policy



Dr. Ellen Hanak, recipient of the 2025 Sierra Nevada Phillips Award for Women in Water Resource Sciences. Photo taken September 23, 2025.

The Department of Water Resources established the Sierra Nevada Phillips Award for Women in Water Resource Sciences in 2023. The third annual award was presented to Ellen Hanak.

For 25 years, Dr. Hanak has navigated between science and policy on difficult water management challenges. Throughout her career, Dr. Hanak has served as director of the PPIC's Water Policy Center, consulting economist at the World Bank, and a research economist at the Center for Cooperation in International Research for Agricultural Development in France. Throughout Dr. Hanak's career, she published over 200 research reports, books, and journal articles, serving as a leading voice and expert on California's water policy issues.

AG TECH FOR SMALL FARMS HIGHLIGHTED AT UC MERCED EXPO

Patty Guera, 2025

UC Merced hosted a Small Farm Tech Expo to highlight the future of agriculture technology for small farms. The event brought together farmers, researchers, and community organizers for workshops, live equipment demos, tours of UC Merced's Experimental Smart Farm, farmer-driven conversations, and guest speakers, including SWF member Leigh Bernacchi.



The expo was made possible by the Community Alliance with Family Farmers with support from the F3 initiative.

Event Highlights



WateReuse Symposium

Sunday-Tuesday, March 8-11, 2026

The 2026 WateReuse Symposium will bring together water professionals researchers, and policymakers to explore the latest innovations in water recycling and reuse.

The event will highlight...

- emerging technologies
- key regulatory updates
- best practices that support sustainable water management and long-term water resilience

Attendees will have the opportunity to network, share insights, and collaborate on advancing water reuse solutions.

In case you missed it...

Swaner Preserve to Showcase Utah State's Climate Adaptation Program

Park Record Staff (2025)

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

While providing training for the next generation of climate adaptation experts, this program is a new initiative for addressing climate impacts in Utah. Attendees had the opportunity to meet CAIP interns and hear from Dr. Scott Hotaling about recent climate change impacts.



SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2025

Event Highlights

AGU 25:
Where Science Connects Us.

Monday-Friday, December 15-19, 2025



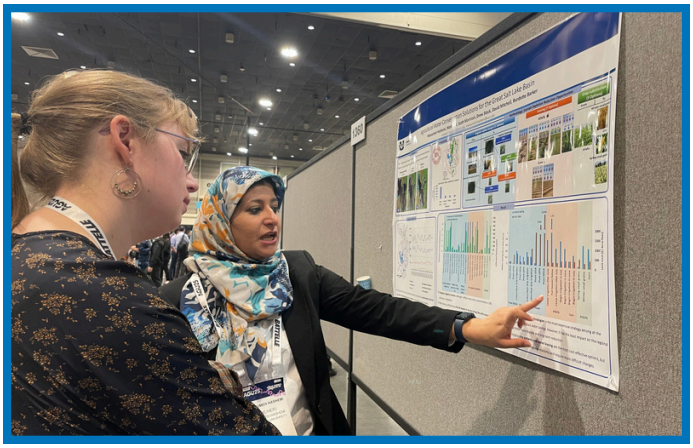
The AGU connects thousands of scientists, educators, and policymakers with global cooperation, interactive sessions, and opportunities for career advancement through mentoring programs and career fairs.

SWF INVOLVEMENT

The SWF Team convened two sessions

H116: Promoting Water Resilience in the Western U.S.

ED029: Watershed Moments: Experiential Learning in Hydrologic Sciences



Dr. Masoumeh Hashemi presents at the SWF session at AGU 2025 in New Orleans

Urban Water Insititue: UWI 2026 Conference

Wednesday-Friday, February 25-27, 2026

ABOUT THE EVENT

The Urban Water Institute's 2026 Spring Conference in Indian Wells, California gathers water-management experts from across California to address pressing water management issues.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Presentations

Presentations from leading experts on water management issues

Networking

The event will provide enhanced netwroking opportunities with public, private, nonprofit, and academic professionals

Discussions

Access to interactive discussions, key note speakers, and social opportunities

"Navigating Change, Shaping the Future"

Event Highlights



Climate Change Preparedness Conference

Wednesday-Friday, May 20-22, 2026

The Climate Change Preparedness Conference in Las Vegas will be a three-day event that will bring together leaders, experts, and professionals in the field of climate change resilience practices.

Key Takeaways

- Understand: The steps to building climate resilience
- Learn: How to integrate nature-based solutions into the community
- Gain: Insightt and knowledge on strategies to protect vulnerable populations

The conference will focus on adaptive solutions to foster climate resilience and investigate the interrelated local, regional, and national impacts of climate change on water supply, food, agriculture, energy, and natural resources, public health, infrastructure, biodiversity, and habitat

Kudos

Congratulations to Yara Pasner and Ken Prewitt who sucessfully defended their dissertations!



DR. KEN PREWITT



DR. YARA PASNER

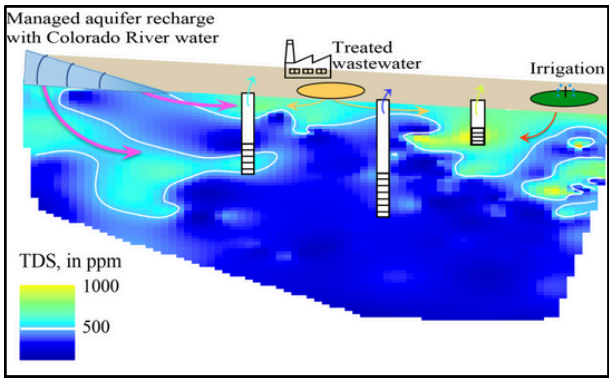
Recent Research

Transformational strategies for equitable water distribution in a changing climate

Thomas C. Harmon, Josué Medellín-Azuara, Natalia Hoyos (2025) Frontiers

The editorial reviews eight studies that explore how water systems can be changed to ensure equitable water distribution under climate change. It highlights technical innovations such as managed aquifer recharge and root zone modeling to support water resilience and equity. However, it emphasizes that technical solutions alone are not enough; reforms are essential for multi-benefit water strategies. International examples from Iran and Mexico further explain the global scope of water challenges.

- *Link to publication here*



Managed Aquifer Recharge is a process that enhances natural groundwater recharge to Improve subsurface freshwater storage and ecosystems while reducing flood risk and managing stormwater.

California Water Science Center USGS, Managed-Aquifer-Recharge, November 2023

More Recent SWF Publications

Enhancing carbon storage through proactively managing fire-prone coniferous mountain forests
Weichao Guo, Mohammad Safeeq, Guotao Cui, Philip C. Myint, Panmei Jiang, Han Guo, Michael L. Goulden, Kristen D. Emmett, Stephen C. Hart, Roger C. Bales (2025) Frontiers

A decade of unraveling the effects of regulation on water innovation
Michael Kiparsky, Dave Smith, Nell Green Nylen, Luke Sherman, Alida Cantor, Anita Milman, Felicia Marcus, David Sedlak, Bernhard Truffer, Christian Binz, Sasha Harris-Lovett, Jeff Lape, Justin Mattingly, Dave Owen, Lars Tummers, Buzz Thompson (2025). LegalPlanet

Rapid contemporary shrinking and loss of ice-capped summits in the western United States
Eric Gilbertson, John T. Abatzoglou, Kathryn E. Stanchak, and Scott Hotaling (2025) Taylor & Francis

Wildfire disasters are increasingly in the news, yet less land is burning globally – here's why
Mojtaba Sadegh, John Abatzoglou and Seyd Teymoor Seydi (2025) The Invading Sea

Navigating Growing Prospects and Growing Pains of Managed Aquifer Recharge
Dave Owen, Helen E. Dahlke, Andrew T. Fisher, Ellen Bruno, Michael Kiparsky (2025) NGWA

Team Member Spotlight



Britta Schumacher (s/h) is an agricultural data scientist/enthusiast and PhD candidate in Ecology @ Utah State University. Her research focuses on food systems' resilience and security, revealing the patterns, processes, and path dependencies that produce US agricultural landscapes. Her dissertation assesses:
1) how the agricultural, water, and risk landscapes in Utah have changed across the historical record, highlighting what we can know using publicly available data; 2) accumulating interest in water banking as a potential water policy leverage point and water insecurity mitigation tool in Utah; and 3) how producers and managers imagine Utah's future agricultural water landscapes could/should be (i.e., assessing what these key stakeholders understand to be possible). Britta has been a graduate student on-and-off since 2016 (MA-UCSB, 2018; MS-USU, 2020; PhD-USU, antic. May 2026), and worked as a full-time federal statistician/data scientist from October 2021 - March 2025. As a fed, she traveled to low- and middle-income counties, providing technical assistance for National Statistical Offices re: geospatial preparation and data analysis for population and housing censuses. She lives in Salt Lake City with her partner, Blake, doggo, Teg, and cats, Leto & Ghanima. She loves to cook and bake, hike and bike, backcountry ski, open water swim, lift heavy weights, read and write, and spend time with the people she loves in the outdoors. Britta is currently seeking postdoc and TT positions and would be delighted to speak with SWF-networked faculty and mentors (@britta.schumacher@usu.edu) about F26 opportunities.

Bulletin

Utah State University

- If you're interested in collaborating with Utah State University on developing factsheets in the semi-arid Southwest, reach out to Dr. Scott Hotaling (*scott.hotaling@usu.edu*) to explore opportunities for engagement.

University of California - Merced

- SWF will be collaborating with the Environmental Defense Fund on a Multi-benefit Land Repurposing workshops to be held at UC Merced in April. If you are interested in learning more, reach out to Lauren or Jack.

New Mexico State University

- Dr. Heerema (*rjheerem@nmsu.edu*) has plans for future Extension outreach opportunities to deliver practical research results to New Mexico agricultural stakeholders, including a field day in the Mesilla Valley during the upcoming growing season (tentatively, late August).

GOT ANYTHING FOR THE NEWSLETTER??

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