

REORGANIZATION OF THE USDA - SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
SNOW SURVEY AND WATER SUPPLY FORECAST ACTIVITY

742-83

By

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INTRODUCTION

In July 1982, Soil Conservation Service Chief Peter C. Myers approved in principle the reorganization of the Service's Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting activity. Plans and schedules have been developed and we are moving ahead with implementation. Principal goals of the reorganization are to increase the accuracy and timeliness of our streamflow forecasts and to integrate more fully the use of water supply information in the Service's soil and water conservation program.

To accomplish these goals requires changes in staffing configuration and assigned responsibilities. Constraints on federal fiscal expenditures and personnel numbers dictate that we centralize certain data collection and forecasting activities and reduce the number of manual snow course measurements or sites, or both, by placing more emphasis on the data being collected by our SNOTEL system.

MAJOR REORGANIZATION ACTIONS

The implementation plan calls for the reorganization to take place over the next several years. Annual or more frequent reviews are included in the plan. The impact of changes will be evaluated before and after each major action. Where necessary, modification will be made to ensure program continuity, adherence to technical standards, and above all, quality service to western water users. Table 1 provides an overview of major actions.

STAFFING AND FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY CHANGES

Figure 1 shows the boundaries for the new data collection office areas. Data collection in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Washington, and Wyoming will be handled by one or more adjacent data collection offices. SCS and other federal, state, and local public and private agency personnel in these states will continue to be involved in the data collection program. Functional responsibilities and staff organization are shown in table 2 and figure 2 respectively. Snow survey activities in Alaska will remain under the direction of the State Conservationist.

SUMMARY

The reorganization of the SCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Activity over the next several years will result in improved services to western users. Most water users will not notice the organizational changes since their interest is in the timeliness, accuracy, and utility of the water supply outlook information. A keystone of our plan is to meet user needs even more effectively than in the past, while retaining the necessary and essential participation of local state and district agencies and people.

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Table 1

MAJOR REORGANIZATION ACTIONS  
(completed and pending)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
October 1981	Original reorganization concepts developed.
July 1982	Reorganization plan for Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting activity approved in principle by SCS Chief Peter C. Myers.
January 1983	Contacts initiated with water users regarding reorganization. Continue followup contacts throughout the reorganization.
February 1983	Multiyear plan and schedule for implementation of reorganization issued.
June 1983	Complete study to formulate procedures for reducing number of SCS snow courses measured manually compatible with user needs. (Proposed reduction 25% per year commencing Water Year 1984). Initiate development and implementation plan for a process simulation model for streamflow forecasting.
October 1983	Complete staffing of Data Collection offices and Central Unit - Water Supply Forecasting Staff.
February 1984	Complete establishment of Data Collection offices and staffing of water supply specialist positions in Arizona, Nevada, Washington, and Wyoming.
June 1984	Complete transfer of forecast equations and data to Central Unit.
June 1984	Commence testing, design, and selection of models on a limited prototype basis.
January 1985	Complete property transfer between states.
June 1985	Implement a limited number of operational physical process simulation forecast models (one to three per state).
October 1985	Central Unit takes over all forecasting and preparation of state, regional, and westwide reports.
June 1986	Process simulation model forecasting fully operational in all states.

Table 2

FUNCTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS

DATA COLLECTION OFFICES

- Operate and maintain the manual and SNOTEL systems in area of jurisdiction.
- Provide water supply specialist service in the state where office is located.
- Assist water supply specialists of other states in area of jurisdiction.

WATER SUPPLY SPECIALISTS

- Integrate the use of snow survey and water supply forecast information into other SCS soil and water conservation programs and activities.
- Assist Data Collection Offices in program coordination and certain aspects of the operation and maintenance of the manual and SNOTEL systems.
- Coordinate issuance of data and water supply information with local interpretation to water users.

WATER SUPPLY FORECASTING STAFF (CENTRAL UNIT)

- Operate and maintain the central SNOTEL system and provide leadership in field operations.
- Prepare and issue all forecasts.
- Prepare and issue state, regional, and westwide water supply outlook reports.
- Provide technical and procurement support and assistance to western snow survey states.

ALASKA

Continue program as in the past at a state level.

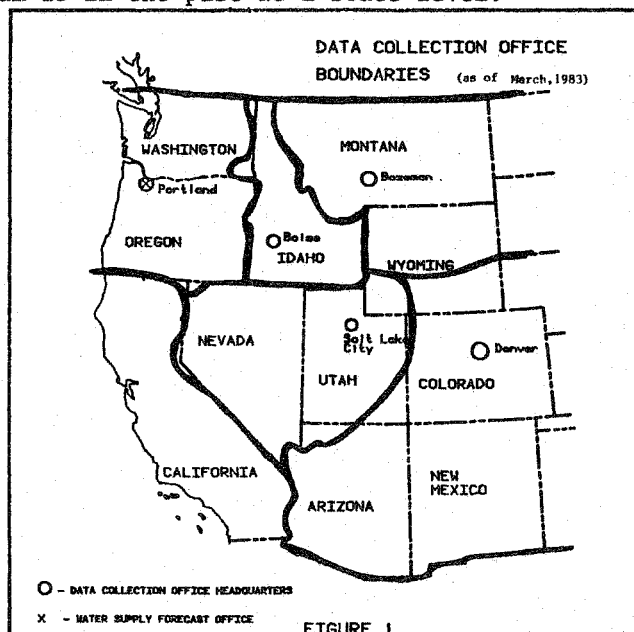


FIGURE 2  
 SNOW SURVEY STAFF ORGANIZATION  
 (AT WESTERN LEVEL)

