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5. *Management of operational products and advisory service.* This subsystem receives, disseminates, catalogs, and registers products published by the main system and other units, so that various kinds of products, information, and reports can be retrieved and used to provide advisory service for users.

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Quarterly Report Provides Assessment of Western Water Supply Indicators

A new quarterly report, *Western Climate and Water Status*, provides decision makers in the western United States with a comprehensive assessment of water supply indicators that can give early warning of emerging droughts. A product of the Western Drought Coordination Council, the report is an important new connection between scientists and policy makers.

It is based on analysis of more than 75 data sources each quarter and is actually produced in two different forms, both of which are available on the World Wide Web at <http://enso.unl.edu/wdcc/quarterly>:

- The *comprehensive version* is likely to be of interest to water resource planners and others who need a detailed overview of water supply in the western states.
- The *briefing version* is a two-page executive summary with wet and dry areas highlighted on the first page, and relevant water supply maps on the back. It's in Adobe's portable document format, which preserves the layout, but to access it your web browser needs the Adobe Acrobat Reader

plug-in, available free from www.adobe.com. The maps are generally U.S. government data products that are produced only in color, so the document is far more effective when printed out in color.

The Council, co-chaired by New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Daniel Glickman, is producing the report to help states anticipate drought and shift their attention from crisis management to preparedness and mitigation. The drought that gripped the Southwest in 1996 demonstrated that significant opportunities exist for states to reduce economic losses and other effects of drought.

Western Climate and Water Status is based on data through March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31, so it is ready about two weeks after each quarter's end. It's posted to the web, to achieve the fastest distribution, and can also be sent via e-mail. If you'd like to be added to the list of people to receive the executive summary via e-mail as soon as it's available, please contact Kelly Smith, khsmith@enso.unl.edu.