

CWEST Seminar  
Wednesday, March 14th, 2018  
11-12pm  
SEEC Sievers Room S228

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## **Water infrastructure finance: What water scientists of the 21<sup>st</sup> century should know about federal budgeting practices and tax policy**

Water infrastructure throughout the U.S. was funded in the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century through federal grants or federally subsidized financing, from Bureau of Reclamation irrigation infrastructure to Clean Water Act funded sewage treatment plants. Over the past forty years, federal financing has been less forthcoming, which is commensurate with an increase in the need for rehabilitation and replacement of water infrastructure. There are a number of federal initiatives for alternative forms of finance, including a growing interest in public-private partnerships, federal loan guarantees, and privatization. However, there are subtle long-standing federal budget practices which undermine the feasibility of many proposed approaches. In addition, the recent tax reform legislation and the recently released White House infrastructure proposal shift infrastructure finance in critical ways, and still-evolving ways. Water in the US is largely managed and affected by infrastructure. The future of water infrastructure in the United States, and particularly the western U.S., will inevitably be one of decreasing federal funding and financing. This has critical implications for how water is managed in the US.