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Conferences that Inspire Solutions

**World Water Day 2010: United States
Facing Its Own “Quiet Crisis”**

***Johnson Foundation at Wingspread Marks WWD
2010 by Announcing New Initiative to Address
Emerging US Freshwater Crisis***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2010

RACINE, Wisconsin – As World Water Day 2010 was observed today across the globe, The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread announced a new initiative to focus long-overdue attention on the emerging freshwater crisis within the United States.

Intensified by climate change, this “quiet crisis” threatens access to safe drinking water, the reliable supply of surface water and groundwater resources for agricultural, industrial and recreational uses, and the health of natural ecosystems, according to experts convened by The Foundation. They say it also has significant environmental, economic and quality-of-life implications.

The Johnson Foundation’s Freshwater Forum has so far convened 100 freshwater experts representing more than 80 business, government, non-governmental and scientific organizations at a series

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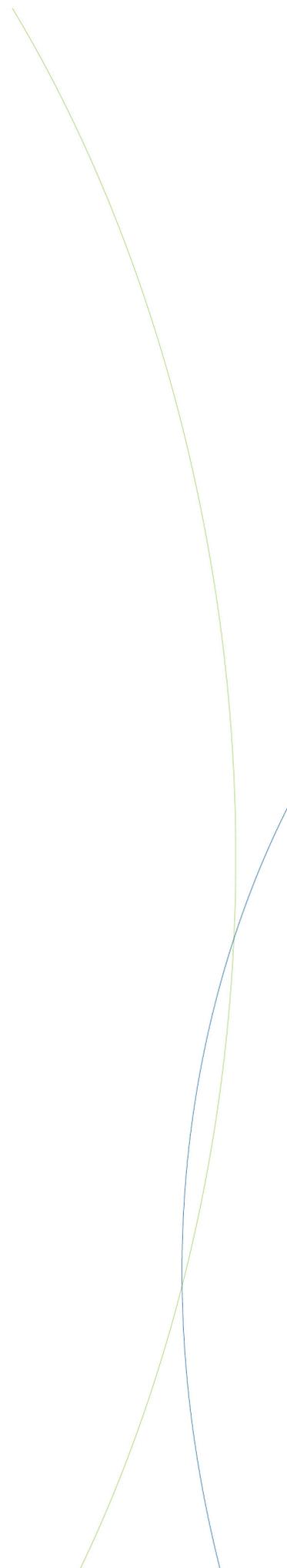
of conferences to explore the dimensions of the emerging crisis and propose potential solutions. Conference findings are contributing to a new national agenda for action to put the United States on a course toward sustainable, safe water supplies by 2025.

That agenda will be shaped by leaders in business, government and non-governmental organizations invited to The Johnson Foundation Freshwater Summit to be held June 9 at the historic Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. This call to action will be delivered to the Obama administration, Congress, the business community, NGOs, the media and others.

“Over and over we have heard that U.S. freshwater policy has lurched from crisis to crisis over the last 30 years without a national strategy or set of clear, actionable national goals,” said Roger Dower, Foundation president. “We hope the Wingspread Summit can be a catalyst for fulfilling this vital public need, and do so in a way that brings together diverse interests committing to consensus solutions.”

The Foundation’s decision to focus its resources on freshwater issues at this time is based in part on the view of science and policy experts that earlier progress achieved from the landmark 1970s federal legislation, including the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, may have led to complacency in the face of current environmental and economic realities.

“We no longer see pictures of rivers on fire, most point sources of pollution are treated before being discharged into our lakes and streams, and we have markedly decreased or eliminated many critical waterborne diseases,” said Dower.



“But this success may have fostered a dangerous notion that we have successfully addressed the freshwater issue; that we can now ‘check that box’ and move on. Far from it. Quietly, a crisis has been building that has yet to capture the full attention of leading public and private policymakers or the American public. We ignore this ‘quiet crisis’ at our peril,” Dower said.

In conjunction with the Summit, The Johnson Foundation will issue a report describing the multiple dimensions of this crisis such as:

- Threats to human health from polluted water, with new public health risks identified regularly that were not anticipated by the Clean Water Act, such as groundwater contamination and endocrine disruptive chemicals in drinking water supplies
- Regional and local water shortages that create economic and political turmoil, along with growing competition between municipalities, agricultural users and ecosystems for increasingly scarce freshwater resources.
- Aging and inadequate water infrastructure systems that pose not only health risks, but enormous financial burdens given the projected costs of building and financing municipal drinking water and wastewater systems – at a time of tremendous stress on public budgets. Estimates from the Congressional Budget Office and the U.S. EPA have pegged those costs as ranging from \$500 billion to \$1.2 trillion over the 20-year period ending in 2019.

- National food security threatened by unsustainable water withdrawals and land use practices affecting surface and groundwater supplies and water quality.
- Climate change that is altering the hydrologic cycle, leading to drought, severe flooding, reduced snowpack, dwindling aquifers and other affects that may have permanently altered our environment.
- A failure to recognize the powerful linkage between water and energy and adjust public and private planning and investment accordingly. Traditional and new sources of energy use tremendous amounts of both fresh and salt water, while water treatment and movement is responsible for at least 13 percent of U.S. electrical consumption -- contributing significantly to greenhouse gas emissions.

Lynn Broaddus, Ph.D, MBA, The Foundation's director of environment programs, noted that America's ability to address the global impact of water scarcity and contamination depends in part on addressing its own water challenges.

"Our focus on water often turns, with good reason, to helping those whose very survival is threatened by scarcity or contamination of water supplies," said Broaddus. "As we continue to devote financial and humanitarian resources to this global crisis, we must recognize that our ability to help others is increasingly linked to more effective management of our own water resources.

"For example, the world's growing population depends on U.S. food exports, but if we are going to do our part to feed the world, we need

to figure out how to support sustainable agricultural production here in the United States,” she said.

Food and agriculture are the leading consumers of water, with an estimated 70 percent of the water taken from surface water and groundwater used for irrigation.

The Johnson Foundation Freshwater Forum is one of the nation’s first efforts to reach across traditional disciplines to bring together experts who approach domestic freshwater issues from different vantage points: climate science, public health, protection of natural ecosystems, agriculture and food production, energy, and municipal water and wastewater management.

The Foundation aims to be a catalyst for integrated, sustainable solutions to freshwater challenges, and promote technology innovations to improve the health of communities and the environment while spending limited resources wisely.

The Freshwater Forum was cited during recent testimony at a hearing held by a subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee as one of the country’s most promising efforts to break down barriers between interest groups and integrate water programs and policies.

The Johnson Foundation Freshwater Forum and Summit builds on the Foundation’s 50-year legacy of hosting leading thinkers at the Wingspread Conference Center, inspiring consensus and action on a range of policy issues. Among organizations with roots at Wingspread

are the National Endowment for the Arts, National Public Radio, the International Criminal Court and the Presidential Climate Action Plan.

The Foundation is moving forward on a mission-driven strategic direction designed to achieve a greater, more sustained impact on a single issue – the environment. For more information about the Johnson Foundation’s Freshwater Forum, including conference reports, please visit www.johnsonfdn.org.

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(NOTE: A list of organizations that have participated in the Freshwater Forum to date is included on the NEXT PAGE. Further information about the Summit and its participants will be released in the days preceding the Summit.)

The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread Freshwater Forum Conference Participants

Through February 2010

The following organizations from across the U.S. have participated in the series of conferences convened by the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread Freshwater Forum. Reports from these conferences are building the platform for the June 2010 Johnson Foundation Freshwater Summit at the Foundation's Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin.

(NOTE: Inclusion on this list does not imply endorsement of documents or position papers issued by The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread.)

Academic/Scientific/Policy (22)

Colorado State University, Colorado Water Institute
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin/Medical College of Wisconsin
Electric Power Research Institute
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Institute for Medicine, National Academies
The Institute for Public Health and Water Research
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management
Michigan State University, Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Resource Economics
Michigan State University, Fisheries and Wildlife
Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation
Duke University, Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions

University of California, Berkeley, Center for Law, Energy and the Environment

University of California, Berkeley, Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering

University of California, Santa Barbara, Bren School of Environmental Science and Mgmt.

University of Colorado, CU-NOAA Western Water Assessment

University of Georgia, Odum School of Ecology

University of Maryland, School of Nursing

University of New England

University of Texas, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Center for Limnology

University of Wyoming, Department of Zoology and Physiology

Water Environment Research Foundation

Corporate/Consulting/Trade Association (19)

Arizona Public Service Company

The Cadmus Group, Inc.

CDM

CH2M Hill

The Coca-Cola Company, Strategic Global Water and Environmental Initiatives

Conservation Strategy, LLC

Davidoff Consulting

DuPont Crop Production Products

The Fertilizer Institute

Iowa Soybean Association

John Deere Water Technologies

JohnsonDiversey, Inc.

Kohler Co., Water Conservation Initiatives

LimnoTech, Inc.

Mithun

National Corn Growers Association

Quarles & Brady LLP

S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc.

Watermark Initiative, LLC

Government (12)

California Energy Commission

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health

City of Milwaukee, Department of Public Works

New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Water Supply

City of Philadelphia, Office of Watersheds

Sandia National Laboratories

San Antonio Water System, Conservation Department

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Water Quality Division

Tampa Bay Water

United States Dept. of the Interior, Land, Water and Wildlife Program

United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Wastewater Management

United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Research and Development

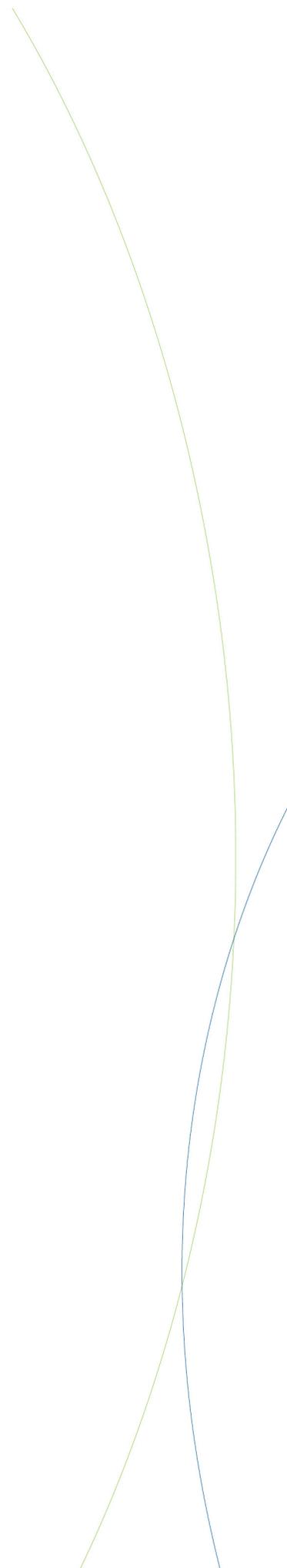
Non-Governmental Organizations/Not-for-Profits (27)

Alliance for Water Efficiency

American Farmland Trust

American Rivers

Center for Resilient Cities



Ceres
Charles River Watershed Association
Clean Air, Cool Planet
Clean Water Action
Clean Water for North Carolina
Ducks Unlimited
Environmental Defense Fund
Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative
Environmental Working Group
Family Farm Alliance
National Heritage Institute
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
National Wildlife Federation
The Nature Conservancy
Natural Resources Defense Council
Pacific Institute
River Network
Union of Concerned Scientists
Water Environment Federation
WaterReuse Foundation
Water Stewardship, Inc.
Waterkeeper Alliance
West Atlanta Watershed Alliance
World Wildlife Fund

Foundations (3)

The Joyce Foundation
The Kresge Foundation
Walton Family Foundation, Freshwater Initiative

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