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Charting New Waters Explores the Intersection of Water Infrastructure and Climate Change

Thought Leaders Explore Opportunities to Enhance Water Infrastructure

RACINE, Wis. (April 17, 2013) – Today, The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread convened a group of leading freshwater and climate experts to address the intersection between water infrastructure and climate change. The meeting marks the start of the newest phase of [Charting New Waters](#), a collaborative initiative dedicated to catalyzing new solutions to U.S. freshwater challenges.

Over the next two days, conference participants will examine how water infrastructure can be adapted to withstand the devastating impacts of extreme weather events as well as the role water infrastructure can play in easing the effects of climate change.

“As we witnessed in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, our nation’s aging water infrastructure is no match for increasingly destructive weather events,” said Lynn Broaddus, Director of the Environment Program at The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread. “We must develop solutions for more resilient water infrastructure to protect the livability of our communities and the health of our ecosystems.”

Through collaborative discourse, participants will identify opportunities to improve the resiliency and adaptability of water infrastructure to help communities withstand the emerging and future impacts of climate change. Participants will also explore opportunities for leveraging water infrastructure to help mitigate climate change and address greenhouse gas emissions through renewable energy generation, reduced energy use and carbon sequestration.

"As a public utility, we recognize the importance of understanding and preparing for the impacts of climate change on our infrastructure and business operations, both now and in the future," said Paul Fleming, Manager, Climate Resiliency Group, [Seattle Public Utilities](#). "We have worked extensively with other urban water utilities to address this issue and are delighted at the opportunity to join this diverse group of collaborators to further explore this issue."

The dialogue is part of the [Charting New Waters](#) initiative, which aims to bring together experts to examine freshwater challenges, successes, innovations and potential solutions that can bridge geographies and inform national policy.

Fleming continued, "We applaud The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread for its foresight in bringing together experts from multiple sectors to discuss the challenges and solutions at the intersection of water infrastructure and climate change."

The Johnson Foundation formally launched the Charting New Waters initiative in 2010 as an effort dedicated to catalyzing new solutions to U.S. freshwater challenges. Charting New Waters is the work of a diverse group of leaders from business, agriculture, academia and environmental organizations that have publicly committed to improving U.S. freshwater resources by advancing the principles and recommendations of the group. These recommendations were captured in a consensus report: *Charting New Waters: A Call to Action to Address U.S. Freshwater Challenges* issued on Sept. 15, 2010. Download the report [here](#).

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[The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread](#) is dedicated to serving as a catalyst for change by bringing together leading thinkers and inspiring new solutions on major environmental and regional issues. For additional information about *Charting New Waters*, or to learn more about The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, please visit www.johnsonfdn.org.