USDA Regional Climate Hubs Factsheet

Regional Hubs for Risk Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change

Background:

The Climate Hubs were established in February of 2014 to deliver science-based knowledge, practical information and program support to farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, and resource managers to support climate-informed decision-making in light of the increased risks and vulnerabilities associated with a changing climate. These activities further the mission of maintaining and strengthening agricultural production, natural resource management, and rural economic development under increasing climate variability. Key partners in this effort include the public and land grant universities, Cooperative Extension, USDA researchers, the private sector, state, local and regional governments, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Interior (DOI) regional climate change experts, and non-profits engaged in providing assistance to landowners.

The Climate Hubs are located at an Agricultural Research Service (ARS) or Forest Service (FS) location. The ARS, FS and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provide leadership in each Regional Climate Hub. USDA science and technical support will come primarily from ARS, FS, and NRCS; additional program delivery specialists on topics of relevance to the region will come from other USDA agencies, including the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Farm Service Agency, Rural Development, and the Risk Management Agency.

Activities:

The Climate Hubs, through USDA and partner programs, offer tools, strategies management options, and technical support to farmers, ranchers and forest land owners to help them adapt to climate change. The Hubs direct land managers to USDA agencies that can provide program support to enable them to implement climate-informed management practices.

The Hubs translate climate change projections into potential impacts on the agricultural and forestry sectors. Using this information, along with data on past trends, the Hubs provide periodic regional assessments of risk and vulnerability in the agriculture and forestry sectors to help land managers better understand the potential direct and indirect impacts of a changing climate. The Hubs will provide outreach, education, and extension to farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, and rural communities on science-based risk management through the land grant universities, Cooperative Extension, USDA service agencies, and public/private partnerships.

Partners and Regional Coordination:

Partners include universities; Cooperative Extension, USDA researchers, programs, and field offices; private sector companies addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation; farm groups; state, local and regional governments; tribes; NOAA and DOI regional climate change experts; and non-profits providing assistance to landowners. The Hubs work to connect with and meet the needs of rural, tribal and underprivileged groups to help them sustain their working lands.

The NOAA Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessment Programs (RISAs), and the DOI Climate Science Centers (CSCs) and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) complement the USDA regional Hubs by providing data, findings, tools, and forecasts for USDA agencies and the Hubs to build into integrated services for the agricultural and forestry sectors. In addition, all four regional climate networks are working together to coordinate stakeholder input into their programs.

USDA Regional Hub Locations and Leadership

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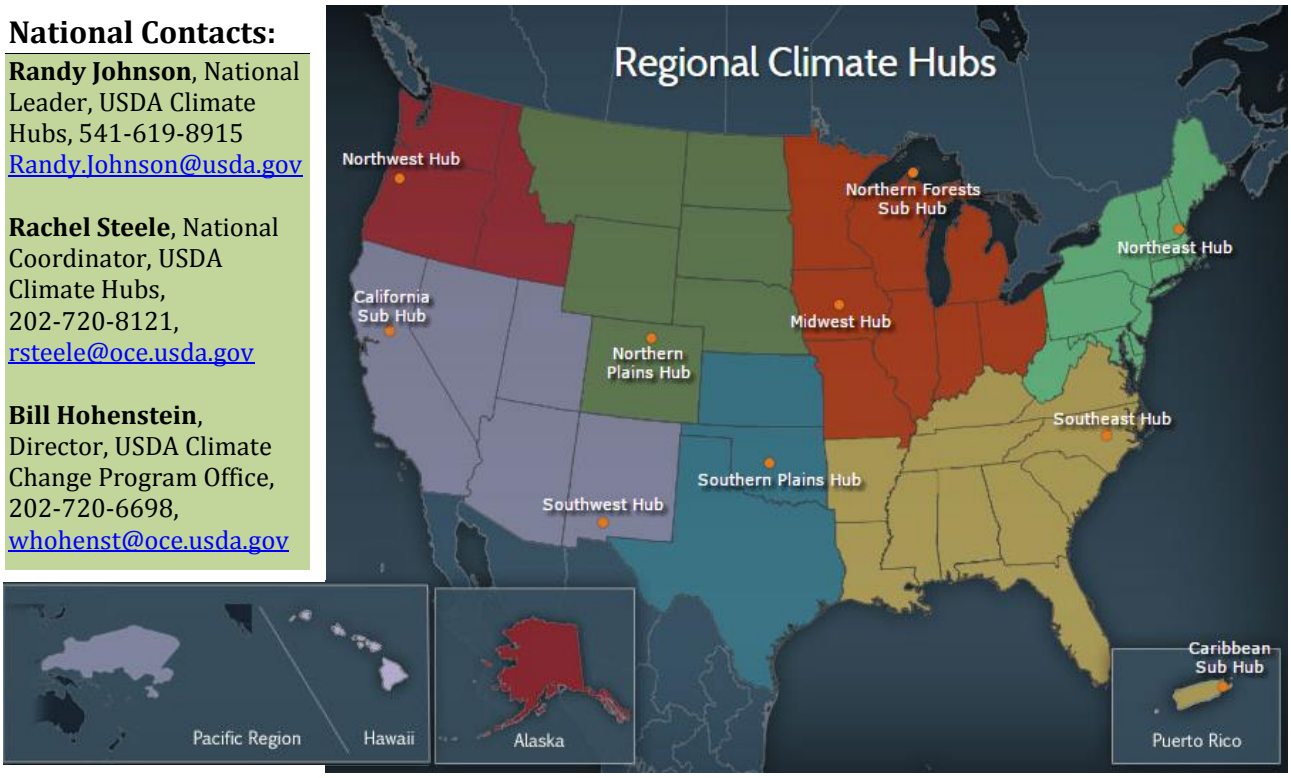

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