**National Governors Association Center for Best Practices**

***State Retreats to Advance Efficiencies in the Water-Energy Nexus***

***REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS:* Monday, December 4, 2017**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Purpose:** To help Governors’ offices identify specific opportunities for improving integration of water and energy policy to achieve efficiencies, conserve limited resources, and reduce customers’ costs in both urban and rural communities.

Bidders Calls**Monday, December 11, 2017, 2:00 pm EST/11:00 am PST**

 **Monday, December 18, 2017, 2:00 pm EST/11:00 am PST**

*Call in number: 888-858-6021; Participant code 202-624-2681*

Proposals Due:                               **Monday, January 22, 2018, 6:00 pm EST/3:00 pm PST**

Selection Announcement:           **Week of February 5, 2018**

Policy Retreats: **April 2018 – June 2018**

Eligibility: States in good standing with NGA.

Support: **Two states will be selected to receive technical assistance, which includes:**

* **Bi-weekly project planning calls** with the NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) staff (from February 2018 until the retreat date in spring 2018) to clarify goals for the retreat.
* **A tailored one-day in-state policy retreat**, convened and facilitated by the NGA Center, with support from experts in the private and public sectors.
* **A memo summarizing the retreat and list of action steps** delivered two weeks after the retreat.
* **Targeted follow-up technical assistance** from NGA Center staff monthly for up to four months after the retreat to support implementation, review progress and plan future action.
* **Dissemination of retreat findings and lessons learned** by NGA Center staff through webinars, state workshops or presentations at NGA’s Water Policy Institute or Energy Policy Institute. (summer 2018)

NGA Contact: **Bevin Buchheister, NGA Center for Best Practices**

bbuchheister@nga.org **(202) 595-2681**

Funding Source: U.S. Department of Energy State Energy Program

**The Opportunity**

Approximately 13 percent of U.S. energy is used to pump, treat and deliver water to end users. [[1]](#footnote-2) At the same time, substantial amounts of water are used to extract, generate and transport energy, and to cool some types of power plants. The term “energy-water nexus” is used to capture the interdependencies of these two critical resources.

There are many opportunities to coordinate state water and energy policies to conserve limited resources and to achieve consumer cost savings.

To lower the costs and environmental impacts associated with water treatment and use, states can adopt water management policies and programs that use energy more efficiently. In states where there are concerns around water availability, governors could consider adopting policies that encourage the most efficient use of water in energy production.

States where agriculture uses large amounts of water for irrigation and livestock can consider incentivizing measures that will result in water and energy savings. Upgrades to leaky conveyance systems, irrigation scheduling, soil moisture sensors, and automated irrigation systems will help farmers use less water and energy to achieve the same crop results. Increasing the efficiency of water use and distribution will require less water to be pumped and, therefore, result in energy savings. Some of these technologies may require investments in rural broadband.

Opportunities also exist to integrate energy and water conservation efforts to unlock benefits for both systems. Water efficiency programs can yield substantial energy savings and may do so at a lower cost than programs designed for energy efficiency alone. Also, conservation of water resources can help mitigate potential increases in consumer bills from much needed infrastructure investments.

**The Retreats**

NGA’s in-state retreats will be designed to help states identify and implement policies and programs to achieve greater savings of both water and energy. They will draw from the policy options identified in the DOE-sponsored NGA report, “Advancing the Energy-Water Nexus: How Governors Can Bridge Their Conservation Goals” found here: [NGA Energy-Water Nexus White Paper.](https://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2017/1706EnergyWaterNexus.pdf)

The retreats will focus on bringing together the different entities that govern both sectors – the health, environment and natural resource agencies that regulate water, and the public utility commissions (PUC’s), oil and gas commissions, environmental offices and energy offices that typically oversee energy policy –to identify cross cutting-policies that can provide cost-effective conservation of both resources.

State policy retreats have proven to be an effective form of support provided by the NGA Center. They help states focus on state-defined challenges, engage experts, examine state examples from across the country, facilitate tailored conversations about state opportunities and produce an actionable list of next steps.

NGA also provides follow-up assistance to help states implement policy ideas that result from the retreat and will share the lessons and policy ideas with governors’ water and energy advisors and state officials across the country through various forums such as through NGA’s Water Policy Learning Network webinar series, or a panel at NGA’s Energy Policy Institute or Water Policy Institute.

**Activities and Timeline**

This technical assistance opportunity will help teams from two states explore specific challenges or goals to advance policies to conserve water in the energy sector; conserve energy in the water sector, or achieve conservation benefits in both sectors to conserve and stretch limited water and energy resources.

The state team will develop implementation approaches guided by a detailed list of action steps. Selected states will receive:

* **Bi-weekly project planning calls** with NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) staff to discuss key topics and help the state clarify its goals for the retreat. (Feb– retreat date)
* **A tailored in-state policy retreat**, convened and facilitated by the NGA Center, with support from experts in the private and public sectors. This will include a one-day session with all stakeholders bracketed by smaller meetings with state planning teams before and after the retreat to finalize plans and recap discussions, respectively. Members of the state planning team will use the retreat to develop a list of action steps for their state. (April-June)
* **A memo summarizing the retreat and list of action steps** identified by the planning team with input from the larger group. (delivered two weeks after the retreat)
* **Targeted follow-up technical assistance** from NGA Center staff after the retreat to support implementation of next steps. (up to four months)
* **Dissemination of retreat findings and lessons learned** by NGA Center staff, in coordination with state planning teams, to assist other states with similar issues.

(Summer 2018)

Expected outcomes of the retreats are as follows:

* Participants will learn about innovative approaches, policies and programs, learn from leading experts, and can work on collaboration of departmental policy. (participants may include staff from the governor’s office, the health, environment and natural resource agencies that regulate water, and the public utility commissions (PUC’s), oil and gas commissions, environmental offices and energy offices that typically oversee energy policy and other relevant state agencies, and/or other stakeholders)
* State teams will develop a list of recommendations for their governors to advance along with other adoption and implementation steps, including identification of key players and roles.
* State teams will begin to implement their action steps in support of their Water-Energy conservation goals.

**Project Approach**

The policy retreats will be a joint effort between the NGA Center and the participating states. The NGA Center will plan and host a state retreat in each participating state’s capital city or another agreed-upon location. Each selected state’s policy retreat agenda and discussion will be informed by the state’s application and bi-weekly scoping conference calls facilitated by the NGA Center. Each state will identify a policy topic for its focus. Policies must address water conservation in the energy sector or energy conservation in the water sector or both.

Below are examples of potential topics; states do not need to limit their applications to these options:

* Establishing a multiagency and stakeholder working group to identify how the state can better integrate energy and water considerations in state policies.
* Creating tax incentives for water efficiency and conservation investments based on successful energy efficiency tax incentives.
* Incentivizing agricultural practices like upgrades to leaky conveyance systems, soil moisture sensors, irrigation scheduling, and automated irrigation systems that will result in water and energy savings.
* Including water efficiency projects in legislation authorizing Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs.
* Updating State Revolving Loan Fund guidance on asset management to help optimize water utility infrastructure investments
* Including criteria for water minimization considerations in electricity generation and transmission permits.
* Incentivizing energy efficiency measures at water and wastewater treatment facilities.
* Requiring water audits to encourage replacement of leaky water pipes and considering adoption of a water loss standard which will also reduce the energy costs of pumping water through leaky infrastructure.
* Examining water rate designs that support conservation while maintaining utilities’ financial stability.

The NGA Center will work with the selected state teams to plan the in-state policy retreats. Each state will be asked to identify a group of 15 to 20 retreat participants including a set of three to five planning team members, led by a representative from the Governor’s office. All planning team members are expected to participate in all technical assistance activities.

Each retreat will include a combination of expert presentations and strategic planning activities, with the exact balance to be determined by the state in coordination with the NGA Center. Experts will be drawn from a combination of other states, relevant federal agencies, the private sector, academia and national or regional research and policy organizations.

The NGA Center will cover the cost of food and beverages during the retreats. The NGA Center will also cover any costs associated with bringing outside experts to the retreat.  States will be responsible for (1) transportation costs for the state participants and (2) providing a meeting site along with equipment such as flipcharts, LCD projectors and screens.

**State Selection Process**

The NGA Center will select two states to participate in this initiative. States will be selected based on a set of criteria outlined below that demonstrates their need and commitment to exploring innovative policies as well as their existing authority and internal capacity. NGA Center reserves the right to reject or request resubmission of any or all applications deemed incomplete or inadequate upon initial submission.

**Bidders Calls**

All potential applicants are invited to join NGA Center for bidders’ calls during which NGA Center representatives will provide an overview of this opportunity and answer questions. The format will be the same for both calls so there is no need to be on both calls.

Calls will be held on:

**Monday,** **December 11, 2018, 2:00 pm EST /11:00 am PST**

 **Monday, December 18, 2018, 2:00 pm EST/ 11:00 am PST**

Please call 888-858-6021 and use participant code 202-624-2681#. States are encouraged to submit questions in advance of this call by sending an e-mail to Bevin Buchheister at the NGA Center at bbuchheister@nga.org . These questions will be addressed during the bidders’ calls.

**Application Deadline**

Please send by email the requested information to Bevin Buchheister at the NGA Center by **Monday, January 22, 2018, 6:00 pm EST/ 3:00 pm PST.** Bevin can be contacted at bbuchheister@nga.org or 202-595-2681 with any questions. Only one application per state may be submitted. States will be notified of their selection during the week of February 5, 2018 with a public announcement made by NGA soon thereafter.

**State Application Criteria**

To be considered, states must submit an application that includes the following information:

* A cover letter from the governor that expresses interest and includes a designated project lead/co-leads. The letter should be addressed to: Bevin Buchheister, Senior Policy Analyst, NGA Center for Best Practices;
* A list of up to 15 to 20 proposed retreat participants, their responsibilities and titles. Participants may include representatives from:
	+ - Governor’s office (required)
		- Environment office
		- Energy office
		- Natural resource agencies
		- Public utility commissions (PUC’s)
		- Oil and gas commissions
		- Other state agencies as relevant; and
		- Other relevant stakeholders
* A list of three to five planning team members from the proposed state retreat participant list, one of which must be a representative of the governor's office;
* A set of three or more proposed dates in April, May or June 2018 for a one-day retreat. Retreats will be bookended by pre- and post-retreat meetings between the state planning team and NGA for retreat planning and post-retreat coordination amounting to two days total for the state planning team. Dates for these meetings should be selected to allow the full planning team to attend along with at least one representative from each of the proposed participating entities (e.g. agencies, offices). Dates can be adjusted as needed in consultation with the NGA Center, but the retreat should be completed by June, 2018. Please hold proposed dates on potential participants’ calendars.
* A narrative addressing the following areas (2-3 pages):
	+ **Background and Objectives -** objectives for the retreat, including a description of the specific water-energy nexus conservation policies to be explored. This should include discussion of existing departmental coordination, policies in the state and the relationship between those policies, other state objectives, the policy area to be covered during the retreat and any activity to-date focused on the development of the policy;
	+ **Barriers -** current barriers to the implementation of water-energy nexus conservation policies or wider adoption of departmental coordination, including barriers related to the specific policy area to be covered during the retreat. This should include a discussion of how the retreat and any related technical assistance from the NGA Center will help the state overcome these barriers and achieve its objectives;
	+ **Expertise Needed** - the types of experts from which the state would like to hear (including other states, federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private sector entities); and
	+ **Outcomes -** a list of expected or desired short-term and long-term outcomes, including program design changes, legislative proposals, regulatory actions, or enhanced state agency partnerships.
1. 3 Kelly T. Sanders and Michael E. Webber, “Evaluating the energy consumed for water use in the United States,” Environmental Research Letters, Vol. 7, 034034 (2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)