

Federal fiscal year 2013 (September 30, 2012 to October 21, 2013) was a challenging year fiscally, with the President's Campaign to Cut Waste, Sequestration, and the shutdown of the Federal Government. Firstly, I want to reassure everyone that the streamgaging network was being monitored during the shutdown and that —if called upon— staff was at the ready to repair damaged and/or malfunctioning streamgages gages, if necessary. With that said, routine field visits necessary for the proper operation the streamgage network was not performed during the shutdown, and as such, there was some degradation in the quality of our data. As soon as we got the word, we were back at work and regularly scheduled field trips resumed. I'm happy to report that the streamgage and groundwater well networks are operating normally.

During fiscal year 2013, much of my time was spent dealing with streamgages —more specifically streamgage funding. For the most part USGS streamgages (and groundwater wells) require a funding partner, with a few exceptions. These exceptions include streamgages funded by the National Streamgage Information Program (NSIP) and streamgages funded directly by the federal government. Streamgage funding for federally funded streamgages historically came in the form of Congressional “earmarks.” Congressional earmarks were dropped from the federal budget in 2010 and subsequently so was the funding for many streamgages in the Susquehanna and Lake Champlain Drainage Basins. These streamgages make up part of the Susquehanna Flood Forecast and Warning System and are used for flood forecasting and/or to estimate contaminant loading to Lake Champlain, respectively.

Working with funding partners and stakeholders, streamgages were prioritized. Those streamgages that were given the highest priority included streamgages used by NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) to issue flood forecasts. A combination of funds from NSIP, New York Department of Conservation (NYSDEC), NWS, Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP), and the U.S. Geological Survey's Cooperative Water Program (CWP) were secured —some long-term and some short term (one year). With these funds many of the streamgages slated for closure on October 1, 2013 will continue to operate for federal fiscal year 2014 and beyond. Low-priority and unsupported streamgages will be discontinued on November 1st. A list of discontinued streamgages can be found on the New York Water Science Center's website at <http://ny.water.usgs.gov/Table.pdf>.

I'd like to personally thank everyone involved in helping USGS secure funding to maintain these very important monitoring networks.

We're looking forward to a productive federal fiscal year 2014.