

## **Action Learning Scenario Leadership 201**

The Science Portfolio; Strategic Positioning and Periodic Reassessment – What Does This Really Mean?

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Issue/Challenges – taken from ACES report

The USGS budget submission to Congress (the [Greenbook](#)) is one of the few places where the majority of the USGS Science Portfolio (a list of USGS science work) is described in detail in one document. However it does not describe the entire breadth of activities funded by appropriated and reimbursable sources. A Science Portfolio developed from the USGS Science Strategy, core expertise, societal relevance and customer needs is critical to efficiently manage and meet our science mission. Delineating all our science funded by all sources in a Portfolio is necessary for efficiency, accountability and transparency but difficult because there is variation across Mission Areas, Regions and Centers on the approval, funding and tracking of science projects. Science work, whether appropriated or reimbursable, should be closely tied to its priority contribution and relevance to our mission as outlined in the USGS Strategic Plan and subsequent Strategic Science Reports (USGS Circular 1383 A-G) and prioritized in Mission Area guidance. Having appropriated funds tied up in waning science efforts can be just as much a concern as having cutting edge or emerging science funded by unpredictable or short-term reimbursable funds.

It is critical that we assemble, maintain and adapt the USGS Science Portfolio so that it meets partner and customer needs, is societally relevant and is cost effective. Accountability is a keystone, and part of the answer is adopting industry standards and metrics to measure how well the USGS is performing and whether it is creating relevant, effective and efficient projects that deliver value and build a strong overall Portfolio. Effectively delivering USGS science to a changing world requires more collaboration, standardization, continuous improvement, a “service or customer mindset” for all employees, ongoing guidance and leadership at all levels to maintain the Portfolio and focus.

This sounds good – but what does it really mean and how do we make it happen?

Background Material/Resources

ACES Report – Science Work Processes: Considerations and Recommendations for Improving U.S. Geological Survey Science and Achieving Cost Efficiencies. Final version May 9, 2014

Ecosystem Line of Work Exercise Information

Cooperative Water Program Information

Other examples from various Regions (if available)

Expectations

Develop guidance for a clear and consistent path forward that the Centers can follow that allows them to balance the Center's scientific capabilities with the needs of Department of Interior, USGS, and our partner/cooperators.