Arizona

On January 14, Governor Doug Ducey (R) said in his State of the State address: “Last year we came together and passed the Drought Contingency Plan. It was the most significant water policy in 40 years. We will continue to protect Lake Mead, the Colorado River, groundwater, and our ag jobs. But we shouldn’t be dealing with this issue one generation at a time. We need a strategic ongoing effort to turn Arizona into the international capital for water innovation. Look at all that Israel has accomplished. Why not Arizona? We’ve been a leader on water, and with this approach, we will be an even stronger leader far into the future.”

Colorado

On January 9, Governor Jared Polis (D) delivered his State of the State address. “Previous generations were wise enough to understand that there are some things that you cannot replace. That once they are gone, they are gone forever. Of course, I’m talking about protecting our iconic public lands - the ground under our feet, the water we drink, the air we breathe - the most essential parts of our Colorado Way of Life. Our majestic lands define our state and power our economy by making us an international destination for tourism and outdoor recreation. But like many things in our state, growth threatens our enjoyment of these natural treasures. In a very real sense, we are loving our public lands to death.... We know our state’s growth also affects our ever-scarce water supply. I was glad to see Prop DD - led by House Majority Leader Alec Garnett, House Minority Leader Patrick Neville and Senators Kerry Donovan and John Cooke - pass at the ballot box. In addition to the future revenues that we’ll derive from DD, I’ve called for another $10 million investment in the Colorado Water Plan.”

Idaho

On January 6, Governor Brad Little (R) gave his State of the State address. “I am committed to working with you to invest in education, continue reducing regulatory burdens, and increase all Idahoans’ prosperity and quality of life. I want us to champion affordable health care, make Idaho safer, and promote healthy lands and waters.... We have an obligation to keep our public lands and waterways healthy, so that future generations can enjoy them as well. Just as we approach our budgets prudently, we must also approach water management with an eye for efficiency and preparation for dry years. We are doing that through aquifer recharge and other innovative approaches. And for the past several years, because of forethought from the Legislature, we have positioned Idaho for success by setting aside funds for water infrastructure projects. We have also made investments in flood management and water quality, which is as important as water quantity. From Lake Coeur d’Alene to Bear Lake and Priest River to the Snake River, we are all working together - the state, tribes, local government, citizens, stakeholders, and others - to ensure our waterbodies are safe and clean.”

Kansas

On January 16, Governor Laura Kelly (D) delivered her State of the State address. She focused much of her speech on fiscal stability, public education, and expanding Medicare, but also addressed the concerns of farmers with historic flooding and trade uncertainties. She spoke of infrastructure, highlighting needs for roads and bridges. “Even the best laid infrastructure plan will crumble if we do not maintain the resources we need as a State to see it through.”

Nebraska

On January 15, Governor Pete Ricketts (R) delivered his State of the State address. “For 318 days – from February 4th to December 19th – Nebraska had a Flood Warning, Watch, or Advisory somewhere in our state. Through it all, Nebraskans showed the world what it truly means to be Nebraska Strong. Nebraskans not only
rescued stranded neighbors, but they also sandbagged levies, donated hay and supplies, delivered hot meals, and raised money for those who had lost everything. During the flooding, members of the Nebraska National Guard drove nearly 45,000 miles and put in 335 hours of flight time. Along the way, they rescued 112 people, 66 of those rescues were by helicopter hoist. The Nebraska State Patrol made more than 160 rescues in the weeks following the blizzards and floods in March. In July, when another round of flooding struck central Nebraska, the State Patrol was among the first on the ground to help. Troopers worked side-by-side with Kearney police officers and others to evacuate hundreds of people from flooded businesses and hotels in Kearney.” He also recognized the efforts at the Nebraska Department of Transportation and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

He emphasized flood relief as one of his four major legislative priorities. “Eighty-four counties and five tribal nations have submitted over $400 million in disaster relief projects to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. My recommendation includes $50 million to address the State’s share of these projects and another $9.2 million to aid the counties most severely impacted by the disaster. I am also recommending an additional $3 million to maintain an adequate balance in the Governor’s Emergency Fund, so the State is prepared to address any future events.”

He noted that the floodwaters compounded challenges for ag producers in the State’s largest industry, who also faced trade uncertainties, a battle to enforce a robust renewable fuel standard, and an “irrigation tunnel [that] collapsed in eastern Wyoming, threatening our State’s sugar beet industry and hundreds of farm operations.”

New Mexico

On January 21, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham (D) talked about education, economic expansion, and health care in her State of the State address. She said: “We boosted common-sense oversight of polluters; and we put New Mexico on a direct path to being the Nation’s clean energy leader, ensuring our land, air and water – our inheritance as residents of this incredible State – are passed on to future generations. We brought industry and environmental leaders together, and we are moving forward on creating nation-leading rules that will curb methane pollution...”

North Dakota

On January 29, Governor Doug Burgum (R) delivered his State of the State address calling for more action to address the State’s workforce shortage, highlighting recent progress on diversifying the economy, and making North Dakota a more military-friendly state. He noted that the State’s finances have stabilized and reserves are being rebuilt, with the Budget Stabilization Fund expected to reach its statutory cap of $726.5M by the end of the 2019-2021 biennium. He outlined a plan for earnings from the Legacy Fund – currently at $6.8B and expected to grow to over $26B by 2033 – that include investing in property tax relief, infrastructure and “transformational legacy projects” that meet specific criteria. The earnings from the fund are expected to be over $400M for this biennium.

South Dakota

On January 14, Governor Kristi Noem (R) talked about fiscal responsibility, smart regulation, technology, and economic growth in her State of the State address. She mentioned opportunities for ag producers and livestock development, from trade negotiations to developing lasting infrastructure devoted to agriculture. She also called on South Dakotans to get involved in the long-term preservation, improvement, and expansion of bird habitat, particularly to preserve the state tradition of pheasant hunting. She said the State needs to continue focusing on USDA Conservation Reserve Program efforts.
Utah

On January 29, Governor Gary Herbert (R) gave his 11th and final State of the State address. “As directed by the Utah Constitution, I’m here tonight to report to you on the State of our State and to ‘recommend such measures as may be deemed expedient.’ To say that the State of our State is excellent would be a gross understatement. Utah is thriving – and we are in the best position economically that we have ever been in our State’s history.” He noted improvements in transportation, infrastructure, education, employment, and healthcare, and challenges for the future as Utah’s population continues to grow. https://governor.utah.gov/2020/01/30/2020-state-of-the-state-address/.

Washington

On January 14, Governor Jay Inslee (D) talked at length about establishing a clean fuel standard in his State of the State address. “We know the science – and our love for our state – requires us to do more to fight climate change. We’ve done much. You can rightfully be proud for passing some of the best clean energy laws in the United States. But for those who doubt that we need to do more, look at Australia today. That is all of our futures – not just Australia’s.... The science has shown we have to act more quickly and with greater commitment.... Because, unless we act, here’s the truth we have to face: Even with the tremendous work we’ve done together, we will still fall 30 percent short of our 2035 statutory requirement if we don’t continue our clean transportation efforts. While we’ve made progress, we still haven’t addressed the nearly half of our emissions that come from the transportation sector. This is a huge hole in our efforts.” He spoke of the benefits of clean fuel standards in other West Coast states “with little impact on fuel costs and significant impact on carbon emissions.” He spoke of clean electricity from hydropower and wind fueling electric transportation. “Washington State is not a state of climate denial. It is a state of climate science acceptance. For those who say we shouldn’t take action, I say climate inaction is just as deadly as climate denial.” https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/speeches/2020-StateoftheState.pdf.