



1100 K Street
Suite 101
Sacramento
California
95814

Telephone
916.327-7500

Facsimile
916.441.5507

CSAC DROUGHT STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

California faces many complicated and compelling water resource issues. As a statewide association with a diverse membership, CSAC recognizes the complexities of water use and distribution throughout the state and has reiterated its position on this issue over the years through various policy statements. Among other things, those statements express support for statutory protection of counties of origin and watershed areas, support for existing water rights, the need for new and expanded water resources, and the need for local water conservation efforts.

The historic drought in California punctuates the need for comprehensive, long-term solutions to our state's complex water management challenges. Indeed, greater emphasis must be placed on conservation, groundwater recharge, recycling and reuse, storm water capture, desalination, and investment in and development of a variety of water storage systems throughout California.

At the same time, CSAC recognizes that the current drought emergency necessitates that federal and state agencies undertake certain authorized actions aimed at assisting consumers, farmers, and municipalities impacted by the drought. In the near term, the focus should be on providing adequate water supplies to populations that are without water sources of sufficient quantity and/or quality. Additionally, targeted emergency financial assistance and support - both federal and state - must continue to be made available to the greatest possible extent.

- CSAC strongly supports the expedited delivery of federal and state drought assistance.
 - Current federal financial assistance offered through various U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs - including livestock disaster assistance, conservation assistance, Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program assistance, Emergency Water Assistance Grants, food bank assistance, and additional meal sites - must be expedited and, if necessary, supplemented by additional federal support.
 - State assistance under the recently announced drought-aid package also must be expedited and, if necessary, increased.
 - CSAC supports amending the *Stafford Act* to provide additional individual and public emergency assistance for major droughts when a state of emergency declaration is made by the president.
- WaterSMART grants should be prioritized to provide emergency water supplies to at-risk communities in order to meet basic public health and safety needs; to prevent the loss of crops; and, to minimize economic damage caused by the drought.
- Any federal or state drought legislation and/or regulatory action(s) must respect individual counties' land use authority, revenues, public health and safety, economic development, water rights, and agricultural viability.
- Expedited decision-making procedures and/or expedited environmental and public review procedures intended to respond to the drought emergency must be consistent with existing federal and state environmental laws and regulations.