



March 30, 2023

The Honorable Nancy Skinner  
 Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
 1021 O Street, Room 8630  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Josh Becker  
 Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #2  
 1021 O St., Ste. 7250  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting  
 Chair, Assembly Committee on Budget  
 1021 O Street, Room 8230  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Steve Bennett  
 Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3  
 1021 O St., Ste. 4710  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: 2023-24 State Budget: Water Rights Modernization Continuation - Support for \$31.5 Million in Governor's Proposed Budget**

**Dear Budget Committee and Subcommittee Chairs:**

On behalf of the entities listed below, we are writing to express our support for the inclusion of \$31.5 million in the Governor's proposed budget to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for Water Rights Modernization Continuation.

**Enhanced water rights data and technologies** are integral to the modernization of our water management system in California. This includes a combination of measurement (stream gages, snow survey) with data and technology (digitizing records, forecast-informed reservoir operations, improving the water right data management system) to improve the water unavailability methodology that provides the basis for implementing the water rights priority system and to verify water rights. (*California's Water Supply Strategy* 4.1 and 4.3; *Piloting a Water Rights Information System for California*). Good data and information are foundational to implementing our water rights system, leading the State Legislature to invest more than \$82 million over the past two years to help advance this important effort.

The State Water Board has made tremendous progress over the past decade improving its water unavailability methodology to more effectively implement the water rights priority system. We laud this progress and focus

on the ongoing efforts to help the State Water Board improve our current water rights system in California to be more effective during dry years. Fundamentally, the work that will be undertaken by the State Water Board pursuant to this budget allocation is essential for increasing transparency and improving the administration of our water rights system.

We strongly encourage your support for this budget allocation for these critical efforts.

Sincerely,

Jim Abercrombie, General Manager  
El Dorado Irrigation District

Erik Hitchman, General Manager  
Walnut Valley Water District

Kristopher Anderson, State Relations Advocate  
Association of California Water Agencies

Mark Krause, General Manager and Chief Engineer  
Desert Water Agency

Brenda Bass, Policy Advocate  
California Chamber of Commerce

Dennis LaMoreaux, General Manager  
Palmdale Water District

Danielle Blacet-Hyden, Deputy Executive Director  
California Municipal Utilities Association

Chris Lee, Interim General Manager  
Solano County Water Agency

Justin Caporusso, Executive Director  
Mountain Counties Water Resources Association

James Peifer, Executive Director  
Regional Water Authority

Tom Coleman, General Manager  
Rowland Water District

Jennifer Pierre, General Manager  
State Water Contractors

Gail Delihant, Sr. Director, CA Government Affairs  
Western Growers Association

Bob Reeb, Executive Director  
Valley Ag Water Coalition

Ed Franciosa, P.E., General Manager  
Modesto Irrigation District

Michelle Reimers, General Manager  
Turlock Irrigation District

Mauricio Guardado, General Manager  
United Water Conservation District

Jeffery Sutton, General Manager  
Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority

David Guy, President  
Northern California Water Association

Greg Thomas, General Manager  
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District

Dennis J. Herrera, General Manager  
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

Chris White, Executive Director  
San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water  
Authority

**cc: Members of Senate Budget Subcommittee #2  
Members of Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3**