

June 18, 2019



The Honorable Anna Caballero
State Capitol, Room 5052
Sacramento, CA 95814

Paul Schubert, Chair
Kerry Schmitz, Vice
Chair

Re: SB 487 Department of Water Resources: aerial snow survey.

Position: Support

Members

Dear Senator Caballero:

On behalf of the Regional Water Authority (“RWA”), I am writing to express RWA’s support for SB 487, as amended June 11, 2019. SB 487 would require the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to conduct aerial surveys of snowpack and conduct supporting forecasts of runoff volume and timing for the watersheds of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Range and the Klamath-Trinity Mountains, including areas that drain or supply water to major reservoirs and lakes, if funds are appropriated for these purposes.

DWR’s conventional snow surveys provide water managers critical information needed to make daily decisions about operating water infrastructure to serve water supply and public safety needs. While these surveys provide necessary information, they are limited and have a large margin of error. Aerial snow surveys in combination with conventional snow surveys have been shown to greatly reduce the margin of error.

Statewide water suppliers, including RWA and Sacramento area water suppliers, flood managers, and environmental interests would benefit from the improved information that aerial snow surveys can provide. There is an often expressed sentiment among statewide water observers that “you can’t manage what you can’t measure.” Aerial snow surveys hold great promise to improve water measurement and ultimately water management in the state.

For these reasons, RWA supports SB 487. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Ryan Ojakian of RWA’s staff at (916) 967-7692 or rojakian@rwah2o.org.

Sincerely,

Rob Swartz
Interim Executive Director

- California American Water
- Carmichael Water District
- Citrus Heights Water District
- Del Paso Manor Water District
- El Dorado Irrigation District
- Elk Grove Water District
- Fair Oaks Water District
- Folsom, City of
- Golden State Water Company
- Lincoln, City of
- Orange Vale Water Company
- Placer County Water Agency
- Rancho Murieta Community Services District
- Roseville, City of
- Rio Linda / Elverta Community Water District
- Sacramento, City of
- Sacramento County Water Agency
- Sacramento Suburban Water District
- San Juan Water District
- West Sacramento, City of
- Yuba City, City of

Associates

- County of Placer
- El Dorado County Water Agency
- Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency
- Sacramento Municipal Utility District
- Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District