



*"Serving Western Legislatures"*

**RESOLUTION NO. 01-03  
MANAGEMENT OF DROUGHT IN THE WEST**

Introduced by the Western Water Policy Committee

**WHEREAS**, Severe and long-term droughts have occurred in the Western portion of the United States for many years; and

**WHEREAS**, recent severe drought conditions in the Pacific Northwest and Klamath Basin have created serious economic, human, agricultural and environmental impacts; and

**WHEREAS**, extremely dry conditions have led to numerous forest and rangeland fires, burning tens of thousands of acres of land, destroying homes and communities, and eliminating critical habitats for wildlife and grazing lands for livestock. The subsequent ash and sediment loading threatens the health of our streams. In addition to the millions of board-feet of timber lost, these fires have cost tens of millions of dollars to fight and have put thousands of lives at risk; and

**WHEREAS**, droughts have caused agricultural shortages leading to soaring prices with devastating impacts to farmers, ranchers and food consumers; and

**WHEREAS**, the droughts have threatened municipal water supplies, causing many communities to develop new water management plans which institute water restrictions and other water conservation measures; and

**WHEREAS**, drought causes social, economic and environmental consequences including negative effects on commerce and industry, tourism, air, water and other natural resources, and quality of life for our citizens, ranging from limits on recreational opportunities to loss of employment; and

**WHEREAS**, the fiscal impacts of the drought on individuals and governments are significant with losses over five billion dollars in the last few year; and

**WHEREAS**, unlike other natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes, the effects of drought creep up over a period of several years. Unlike the institutional programs to plan for and respond to other (non-drought) natural disasters, the institutional programs to prepare for and respond to droughts historically have been slow and fragmented;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Council of State Governments – *WEST* (CSG-*WEST*) believes that a comprehensive, integrated response to drought emergencies, including mitigation planning, is critical to the social, environmental and economic well-being of the West. Because of the interstate nature of this crisis and its impacts, the CSG-*WEST* believes it is important to work together and cooperate with other affected entities to plan for and implement measures that will provide relief from the current drought and increased prevention and preparedness for future drought emergencies

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that CSG-*WEST* recognizes the work accomplished by the Western Drought Coordination Council (WDCC), including the WDCC's May 1999 report to the National Drought Policy Commission (NDPC) and believe the WDCC report to the NDPC and the NDPC report to Congress and the President contain a number of important recommendations that would improve future drought planning, monitoring, response and communications to the citizens of the West; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** a national policy must be enacted which provides for a comprehensive, coordinated and integrated approach to future drought and provides funding for states and local drought planning, mitigation and response; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** CSG-*WEST* members and staff recommend the sharing of information on drought from western states and organizations and the Interim National Drought Council with Congress to ensure that state and local expertise are included in national drought policies, programs and assistance; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a western legislator be appointed to any future national drought council or like body created by Congress.

**Adopted By the CSG-*WEST* Executive Committee on July 28, 2001 Assembled in Annual Meeting in Whistler, British Columbia.**