



ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN STATE ENGINEERS

2013 POSITION STATEMENT

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

The federal government has a role in providing financial and technical assistance to states with severe to extreme drought impacts, much the same as it does when other natural disasters (hurricanes, floods, and tornados) cause tremendous hardship and financial burden on local economies that are otherwise unable to cope. Since drought conditions continue to persist across the western United States, it is still necessary to plan for and respond to drought emergencies and climate variability.

The Association of Western State Engineers supports the efforts of the Western Governors' Association to encourage federal agencies to develop long-term drought management plans for federal projects and to support the state efforts to develop plans for non-federal projects. The Association of Western State Engineers urges the federal government to continue working with the states in the implementation of the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS). Congress should reauthorize and fund full implementation of the NIDIS implementation plan to enable the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to provide better information to decision makers at every level of government.

The Association of Western State Engineers believes that its implementation must not insert federal authority into state water law issues or water administration practices. Each state has retained its sovereign authority over water use and administration issues, and the receipt of federal aid does not in any way reduce or abrogate that authority. The crafting of federal drought legislation cannot be seen as an opportunity on the part of the federal government to dictate how individual state's water administration systems should function.

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Association of Western State Engineers

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