



January 7, 2022

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
1021 O Street, 9th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

In spite of the recent rain and snow, California continues to endure a severe drought. Conditions are so dire that Californians have been asked to conserve their water use. Farmers have already been told they will not receive any allocations from the State Water Project.

Water is life.

This cannot be truer than in the Central Valley.

Yet, the State has failed in its planning for water storage and conveyance to meet the growing demand. Many have said that the state budget is a reflection of our values. If this is the case, then this year's budget must include funding for water storage and conveyance.

With an estimated \$31 billion surplus, the State must dedicate \$3.285 billion to water storage and conveyance that could be allocated as follows:

- \$2.6 billion to fully fund the already voter-approved Sites Reservoir; and
- \$685 million for the repair of the Friant-Kern/Delta-Mendota Canals and the San Luis Field/San Joaquin Divisions of the California Aqueduct.

This critical funding will provide drinking water for the State's nearly 40 million residents, help maintain river flows, and irrigate California's robust farms that grow a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of its fruits and nuts.

Water agencies and districts across the State including the Kern County Water Agency have declared a water emergency.

This follows the draconian announcement by the California Department of Water Resources that 2022's water supply allocation will be zero. Already hit by the port congestion crisis, this is another detrimental blow to California's farmers.

As a result, farmers are forced to rely on already strained groundwater basins to make up for the shortage.

Water efficiency has been a priority for farmers for years, hence, conservation alone cannot solve the state's scarce water supply. Conservation is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. California law asserts that humans have water rights.

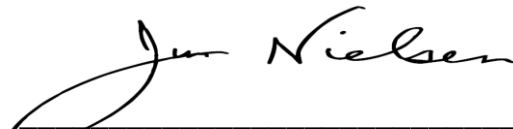
California is heading into its third year of bone-dry conditions. There must be a sense of urgency. The need for reliable and dependable water supply infrastructure and conveyance is paramount to public health, animal life and economic viability.

It was only six years ago that the State experienced devastating dry conditions. Droughts are recurring, and will occur again. To avert economic pain and harm to public health and the environment, we ask you to commit \$3.285 billion to fund water storage and conveyance.

Sincerely,



Vince Fong
Vice Chair, Assembly Budget Committee



Jim Nielsen
Vice Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review
Committee

Cc: Assemblymember Marie Waldron, Assembly Republican Leader
Senator Scott Wilk, Senate Republican Leader
Assemblymember Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
Senator Nancy Skinner, Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee