

**RESOLUTION**  
of the  
**WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL**  
regarding  
**NATIONAL DROUGHT POLICY**  
**Breckenridge, Colorado**  
**July 21, 2006**

**WHEREAS**, much of the West is characterized by its aridity; and

**WHEREAS**, drought is a continuous threat to Western states as is evident by the extended drought conditions afflicting many parts of the West over the last decade; and

**WHEREAS**, water availability continues to circumscribe our economic and environmental well being and quality of life; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council has been actively involved in drought management and policy since 1976, when it served the Governors as a regional coordinating body for drought relief efforts and a clearinghouse for information on drought conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, Western states learned from that experience, and began developing drought response plans for the future; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Drought Mitigation Center estimates that eleven separate drought events since 1980 have caused \$147.5 billion in losses, and the federal government spends \$6 to \$8 billion annually on drought, even though a national drought policy still does not exist; and

**WHEREAS**, timely, effective government action at the federal, state, local and tribal levels to prevent or mitigate drought impacts can significantly reduce the effects of drought and the need for relief expenditures; and

**WHEREAS**, the 'National Drought Preparedness Act of 2005,' introduced in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress by Senators Domenici and Baucus and Representatives Hastings and Rehberg, would establish a national policy for drought through the coordination of proactive measures at all levels of government to plan, prepare and mitigate the serious impacts of drought; and

**WHEREAS**, Western governors helped develop the National Drought Preparedness Act of 2005 and have called on the Congress and the President to support its enactment;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Western States Water Council joins the Western Governors in urging Congress and the Administration to enact this or similar legislation, which is long overdue, to establish and implement a national drought preparedness policy.