

## Sub-seasonal to Seasonal Precipitation Forecasting for Water Management

April 25, 2022

The Honorable Matt Cartwright  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rep. Robert Aderholt  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cartwright and Ranking Member Aderholt:

On behalf of the below-signed water management agencies and organizations, we are writing to request your support for a \$15 million Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) appropriation to begin the Western pilot for improving sub-seasonal to seasonal (S2S) precipitation forecasting. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) [2020 report to Congress](#) under Public Law 115-25 recommended the creation of this pilot project.

The purpose of the pilot project is to improve precipitation forecasting for water management in the United States. As the report notes, NOAA pilot projects were chosen "...based on the existence of major climate phenomena that have huge economic impacts and for which current S2S predictive skill is too low to be effectively used by many stakeholders."

For many decades the scientific community has not been able to offer dependable forecasts beyond a week or two, and S2S forecasts have the ability to provide state and local water managers with reliable extended precipitation outlooks. These sub-seasonal (2- to 6-week) to seasonal (2- to 6-month) projections fill an important gap between weather and climate forecasting and represent a central component of seamless short-term and long-term predictions that are needed to support water project operations, drought preparedness and response, and innovative water management strategies such as forecast-informed reservoir operations.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center has been issuing S2S precipitation outlooks since the mid- 1990s. Their skill for the Western U.S. has been minimal, just slightly better than predicting average weather conditions, and has shown little improvement over time. Forecasting precipitation at S2S timescales is scientifically challenging and has historically received little federal research funding support.

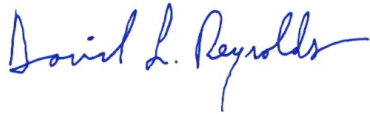
Your support for a \$15 million increase in the U.S. Weather Research Program line item within NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research would begin development of reliable forecasting with longer lead times to provide water managers with critical data to operate infrastructure more efficiently and allocate resources to mitigate and manage impacts of extreme wet and dry conditions. The attached proposed committee report language describes how we believe this critical funding should be focused.

We appreciate your consideration and hope you will support S2S pilot project funding in FY23. Please contact Jordan Smith at [jas@vnf.com](mailto:jas@vnf.com) with any questions or to schedule a meeting to discuss this project with your staff.

Sincerely,

*Signature Page Follows*

**Sub-seasonal to Seasonal Precipitation Forecasting for Water Management**



*David Reynolds*  
*Director of Federal Relations*  
**Association of California Water Agencies**



*Michael Arceneaux*  
*Acting Chief Executive Officer*  
**Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies**



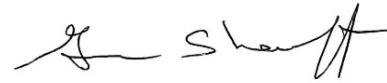
*John A. Coleman*  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
**Bay Planning Coalition**



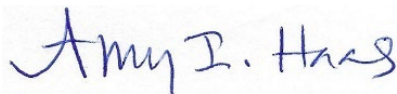
*Neil McCormick*  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
**California Special Districts Association**



*Paul Hutton*  
*Executive Director*  
**California Water & Environmental Modeling Forum**



*Gene Shawcroft*  
*General Manager*  
**Central Utah Water Conservancy District**



*Amy Haas*  
*Executive Director*  
**Colorado River Authority of Utah**



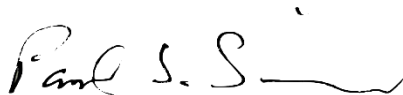
*Dan Keppen*  
*Executive Director*  
**Family Farm Alliance**



*Jason Phillips*  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
**Friant Water Authority**



*Sue Lowry*  
*Executive Director*  
**Interstate Council on Water Policy**



*Paul Simmons*  
*Executive Director*  
**Klamath Water Users Association**



*Nancy Sutley*  
*Senior Assistant General Manager of External and Regulatory Affairs and Chief Sustainability Officer*  
**Los Angeles Department of Water and Power**

**Sub-seasonal to Seasonal Precipitation Forecasting for Water Management**



*Matthew Chase*  
*Executive Director*  
**National Association of Counties**



*Ian Lyle*  
*Executive Vice President*  
**National Water Resources Association**



*David J. Guy*  
*President*  
**Northern California Water Association**



*Tom Byler*  
*Director*  
**Oregon Water Resources Department**



*Mary-Ann Warmerdam*  
*Senior Vice President, Governmental Affairs*  
**Regional Council of Rural Counties**



*J. Scott Peterson*  
*Water Policy Director*  
**San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority**



*Chris Harris*  
*Secretary*  
**Six Agency Committee**



*Grant Davis*  
*General Manager*  
**Sonoma Water**



*Jennifer Pierre*  
*General Manager*  
**State Water Project Contractors**



*Mark Foree*  
*General Manager*  
**Truckee Meadows Water Authority**



*Michelle Reimers*  
*General Manager*  
**Turlock Irrigation District**



*LeGrand Bitter*  
*Executive Director*  
**Utah Association of Special Districts**

**Sub-seasonal to Seasonal Precipitation Forecasting for Water Management**



*Scott W. Paxman, PE*  
*General Manager/CEO*  
**Weber Basin Water Conservancy District**



*Tony Willardson*  
*Executive Director*  
**Western States Water Council**

Cc: The Honorable Grace Napolitano