

CARMEL J. ANGELO  
Chief Executive Officer  
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**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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July 22, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
California State Governor  
State Capitol, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Activation of California Disaster Assistance Act Funding Request

Dear Governor Newsom,

Mendocino County is experiencing disastrous drought impacts that pose an imminent threat to the health and human safety and mental health of our residents. The California Department of Water Resources marked water year 2021 as the third driest year on record, and July 2020 through June 2021 was the driest of any June-July on record. With more than 85% of the State in Extreme or Exceptional Drought, California's counties need additional resources to respond to community and residential water outages. These outages have the potential of substantial impact to Mendocino County's economic stability.

During the 2012-2016 drought, Governor Brown activated access to California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) funding. Through that funding counties were able to take necessary response actions, such as delivering emergency water supplies, placing portable toilets and showers, managing donations, operating local resource centers in hard-hit communities, and installing temporary tanks with hauled water deliveries for household sanitation to enable affected residents to remain in their homes. The activation of CDAA allowed a local response that was prompt and effective. While the household tank and hauled water program is still in existence today, the program is significantly under-resourced and are not directly available to counties but rather directed to non-profits. Self Help Enterprises houses and administers the program in many valley counties, while other counties are struggling to establish a program for their residents. Mendocino County households not receiving the water they desperately need. Our affected population is estimated to be over 30,000 people. 10-12,000 individuals are at immediate risk. For the 10-12,000 population, this equates to an estimation of about 14 million gallons needed per month. The monthly financial impact for this population alone is estimated at \$5 million for hauled water.

Additionally, because drought funding was directed to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) a hyper-focus on drinking water is leaving counties fighting for sanitation and cooling water for households, as well as water for pets and livestock. Mendocino County's economy and well-being relies heavily on agriculture, fish, wildlife, and livestock tourism. The impact is dire. A broader, holistic approach was available through CDAA funding and the current funding roadblocks are

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frustrating and impeding an effective emergency response. Immediate funding is needed for short term and long-term mitigation efforts. The effects of this drought are substantial and long term.

There also seems to be disconnect among the State agencies. The SWRCB and Cal OES are uncertain of their roles in responding to drought emergencies. It is exasperating that the State has amnesia in such a short time frame from the last response effort. It would seem policies relative to drought programs would be readily available. Information sharing across State departments should be straightforward and efficient to provide consistent drought response throughout California's communities.

Imposed restrictions and increases to monthly water costs are already in place for most of our coastal population and in Redwood Valley. In turn, we are beginning to see theft of water from private residences and businesses. We don't want resources, we **need** them. Mendocino County has nine (9) tribal partners that need access to the same resources provided to Counties.

Mendocino County requests the activation of CDAA funding for response to the current drought disaster.

Sincerely,



Dan Gjerde, Chair  
Board of Supervisors

cc: Senator Mike McGuire  
Assemblymember Jim Wood  
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors  
Carmel J. Angelo, Mendocino County Chief Executive Officer  
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)  
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)