



Association of California Water Agencies

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ACWA SUPPORT FOR HR 2647 – RESILIENT FEDERAL FORESTS ACT OF 2015

July 8, 2015

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) respectfully requests your support for H.R. 2647, The Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2015. ACWA's 430 public water agency members supply over 90 percent of the water delivered in California for residential, agricultural, and industrial uses.

Severe drought and one of the most destructive wildfire seasons on record have focused renewed attention on the health of California's headwaters. That attention is well placed because the forests, meadows and source waters that play a critical role in our water supply and water management system are threatened by factors ranging from climate change to incomplete management to a lack of planning and coordination.

H.R. 2647 addresses many of these factors. It incentivizes and rewards collaboration with local governments and stakeholders by expediting environmental review for collaborative projects up to 15,000 acres in size. It also includes important provisions that will increase the yield and protect the quality of our headwaters.

Additionally, H.R. 2647 solves the perennial "fire borrowing" problem, in which federal land management agencies must raid non-fire suppression accounts in order to pay for suppression activities. Fire borrowing has negatively affected funding for wildfire preparedness, forest restoration, and other activities in nearly every state across the country because wildfire suppression budgets do not fully cover firefighting costs. H.R. 2647 ends this practice by allowing FEMA to transfer funds to the Forest Service/BLM when all fire suppression accounts have been exhausted.

As stated in ACWA's headwaters framework, ACWA believes with more effective management "healthy headwaters" could provide multiple benefits to California's water management system and the environment. These benefits include: Increased Water Supply Reliability; Improved Water Quality; Reduced Impacts from Catastrophic Wildfires; Increased Renewable Energy Supplies; Improved Response to Climate Change; and Enhanced Habitat.

ACWA encourages you to vote for H.R. 2647.

If you have any questions please contact David Reynolds at 202-434-4760 or dlreyns@sso.org.