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July 25, 2020

John Kingsbury – Executive Director

Transmitted via electronic transmission

The Honorable Laura Friedman
Chair, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
State Capitol, Room 2137
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill No. 989 (Dahle) - Favor

Dear Assemblymember Friedman:

I am writing on behalf Mountain Counties Water Resources Association (MCWRA) to express support for SB 989, relating to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

MCWRA advocates for the water interests of its 67 members in 12 of the mountain counties within the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) of woodland and forested lands in the Sierra Nevada. These foothill and mountain areas contain the headwaters for 40% of the state's developed water supply, which also provides for hydropower production, irrigation, recreation, water recycling, tourism, and instream flows that fuel the engine of our State's economy.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy was created by legislation in 2004. Current law defines the Conservancy's region to include the area lying within 22 counties of California, including the Counties of Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba. SB 989 seeks to modify the region boundaries of the Conservancy to include a section of Siskiyou County, as well as increase the area of Shasta County included in the Conservancy.

More specifically, SB 989 would add a portion of Siskiyou County to the defined Sierra Nevada Conservancy to include the watershed

areas of the Upper Sacramento, McCloud, and Pit Rivers. This Siskiyou County watershed drainage area all feeds into the Upper Sacramento River, and into the Shasta Lake, the largest reservoir in California.

The cities included in the Sierra Nevada Conservancy region are Mt. Shasta and Dunsmuir, both of which are in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) as defined by CAL FIRE. In particular, Dunsmuir, is one of four of the most vulnerable communities to wildfire in California. The bill would also increase the area of Shasta County in the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. The updated boundary would be adjusted to the west, following the primary Upper Sacramento River tributary along Interstate 5 and encompass areas recently impacted by the Carr, Delta, and Hirz Fires of 2018.

MCWRA supports SB 989 as the measure would expand the region of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to more completely encompass the Sierra Nevada watershed and in particular the upper watershed areas within the Counties of Siskiyou and Shasta, bringing together all five source watersheds under one state conservancy. Despite their critical importance to water supply and quality, habitat and biodiversity, and forest carbon sequestration. These watersheds are significantly degraded and at risk of further deterioration from climate change and catastrophic wildfire. By bringing these five source watersheds under the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, this bill could provide more opportunities for the state to holistically and systematically address these threats, potentially through Conservancy's Watershed Improvement Program, which seeks to approach watershed issues in a comprehensive manner.

For this reasons that the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association respectfully request an "AYE" vote on SB 989. Should you have any questions about our position, please feel free to contact Bob Reeb, Reeb Governmental Relations, LLC at robertreeb@comcast.net or (916) 558-1926.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JKingsbury', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

John Kingsbury, Executive Director
Mountain Counties Water Resources Association

c: The Honorable Brian Dahle
Members and Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Assembly Republican Office of Policy
Office of the Governor
Board of Directors, Mountain Counties Water Resources Association
Legislative Committee, Mountain Counties Water Resources Association