

From: Kerri Timmer
Sent: Friday, September 05, 2014 1:59 PM
To: Peters, Laura@DWR
Subject: Comment on Draft PSP for DWR's Water-Energy Grant program

Dear Laura,

On behalf of Sierra Business Council and its network of 4,000 businesses, community organizations, local governments and individuals working to foster thriving communities in the Sierra Nevada, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on the draft PSP for DWR's Water-Energy grant program.

While we understand the obvious need to focus resources on the state's most disadvantaged communities, we are concerned about the use of Cal EnviroScreen as the mechanism for identifying those communities. The criteria used in the EnviroScreen tool skew primarily toward urban metropolitan areas due to the focus on pollutants that either aren't measured in or don't affect rural communities, like those in the Sierra Nevada. Yet many of our communities are incredibly disadvantaged based on below-average household incomes and health impacts from ground and surface water contamination and air pollution from wildfire and other "non-urban" sources.

As a result, we ask that you modify your DAC identification process to include other criteria, such as those found in the definition of "Economically Distressed Areas" included in Proposition 1 (the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 on the ballot Nov. 4), Section 79702(k).

Economically Distressed Area means "a municipality with a population of 20,000 persons or less, a rural county, or a reasonably isolated and divisible segment of a larger municipality where the segment of the population is 20,000 persons or less, with an annual median household income that is less than 85 percent of the statewide median household income, and with one or more of the following conditions as determined by the department:

- (1) Financial hardship.
- (2) Unemployment rate at least 2 percent higher than the statewide average.
- (3) Low population density."

Without such a change, seriously disadvantaged communities in the region that provides 60-65% of the state's developed water supply will not be eligible to benefit from the DAC funding in programs like your Water-Energy grant program.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kerri Timmer
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