



**RESOLUTION
of the
WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL
to Support the Use of
FORECAST INFORMED RESERVOIR OPERATIONS and INNOVATIONS
Texas Hosted Spring Virtual Meetings
March 25, 2021**

WHEREAS, Western States experience great variability in precipitation, with serious impacts and consequences for the operation of water projects, particularly aging water infrastructure, as well as water supply and emergency planning and management, drought and flood preparedness and response, and other public and private decisions; and

WHEREAS, decisions to operate water projects to protect life and property by reducing flood risks, while at the same time maximizing water supply storage, including carryover storage, impact billions of dollars of economic investments in the West to maintain and protect municipal and industrial centers, agriculture, hydropower generation, and fisheries; and

WHEREAS, these investments depend on our ability to observe, understand, model, predict, and adapt to precipitation variability on operational time scales ranging from hours to days, weeks and months, seasons and longer; and

WHEREAS, observations, modeling, high-performance computing capabilities, research, and demonstration projects are essential to significantly improving operational forecasting of precipitation to maximize the use of our existing water storage projects to reduce flood damages, mitigate economic and environmental damages, and maximize water storage and water use efficiently; and

WHEREAS, operating aging water infrastructure effectively in the face of growing and often competing water supply and water management and flood protection demands requires that state, federal, tribal, and local agencies optimize operations and seek innovative alternative strategies to support their decision-making; and

WHEREAS, project operations and alternatives may include, but are not limited to, using enhanced forecasting capabilities to better inform reservoir operators, operations, and actions – to dynamically determine reservoir levels to improve storage opportunities, and to alter static reservoir operating rule curves and requirements based on updated hydrologic information; and

WHEREAS, FY20 appropriations legislation directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to develop a comprehensive list of water control manuals at Corps-owned projects located in states where a Reclamation project is also located, including a prioritized list of needed updates of those manuals; and

WHEREAS, Section 1222 of WRDA 2018 directed that one year after the date of completion of the Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) research pilot program at Coyote Valley Dam in California, the Secretary shall issue a report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate that among other things provides an assessment of the viability of using FIRO at other dams owned or operated by the Secretary. In addition, the report will provide an identification of other dams owned or operated by the Secretary where FIRO may assist the Secretary in optimization of future reservoir operations as well as any additional areas for future study of FIRO.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Western States Water Council supports the use of innovative and forecast informed reservoir operations by public and private entities at all levels to maximize the effective and efficient use of our existing and future infrastructure to benefit our myriad and growing economic uses of water, while at the same time balancing and protecting our need for public health and safety, as well as a resilient and healthy environment.