September 13, 2006

Panel on Solid-Earth Hazards, Resources, and Dynamics  
Bradford H. Hager, Chair  
54-622  
Dept. of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
77 Massachusetts Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307 USA

Panel on Water Resources and the Global Hydrologic Cycle  
Dennis P. Lettenmaier, Chair  
Surface Water Hydrology research Group  
202D Wilson Ceramic Lab, Box 352700  
University of Washington  
Seattle, WA 98195-2700

Panel on Earth Science Applications and Societal Needs  
Dr. Anthony C. Janetos, Chair  
Senior Fellow  
The H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment  
1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 735 South  
Washington, DC, 20004

Dear Panel Chairmen:

On behalf of the Western States Water Council, representing the governors of eighteen western states, I am writing to urge you to support spending for thermal infrared (TIR) remote sensing. This information is increasingly critical for the management of western water resources and watersheds and administration of state water rights, particularly agricultural water use, which is the predominate use in the West.

Attached please find a copy of a letter to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) that was recently adopted as a position statement by the Council expressing support for maintaining the availability of Landsat thermal information. The Council is very interested in the future of the Landsat Data Continuity Program, and the availability of thermal data. Moreover, the Western Governors’ Association has expressed its support in a letter that is also attached. We hope that you will consider this support and seek to ensure the availability of this data as we struggle to balance water uses and demands in the West.

Sincerely,

Duane A. Smith, Chairman  
Western States Water Council