



WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL

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Web Page: www.westgov.org/wswc

November 20, 2007

Dr. John H. Marburger, III
Director, Office of Science & Technology Policy
Executive Office of the President
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20502

Dr. Michael Griffin, Administrator
National Aeronautics & Space Administration
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS: 100
Reston, VA 20192-0002

Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Administrator
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
14th & Constitution Avenue NW, Room 5128
Washington, DC 20230

Dr. Mark Myers, Director
U.S. Geological Survey
Headquarters, Suite 1M32
Washington, DC 20546-0001

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of the Western States Water Council, representing the governors of eighteen western states, I am writing to again reiterate and express our strong support for including a thermal infrared (TIR) instrument on Landsat 8, as part of NASA's Landsat Data Continuity Mission (LDCM). Attached are a previous letter, and a related letter from the Western Governors' Association also supporting funding.

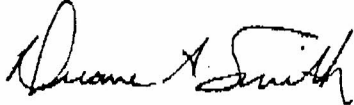
NASA's recent LDCM "Request For Offer" to build the Landsat 8 spacecraft (under the existing Rapid II contract) does not preclude the addition of a thermal instrument. The selected contractor will design, build, qualify the spacecraft and integrate the Government-furnished instruments. However, NASA does not now have the funding to build the TIR instrument. It is estimated that a total of about \$90 million is needed for the TIR instrument, including \$35 million now.

The Senate Appropriations Committee has directed that NASA report as to how it intends to continue providing TIR data in the future, and eight Senators recently wrote the Administrator asking that NASA take immediate action to ensure this capability is not lost. A copy of that letter is attached.

Given this congressional interest, NASA has left open the possibility for a TIR instrument to minimize the impact to LDCM development of adding the instrument to the satellite at a late stage in its development. While the instrument is included in the "preliminary design," without additional funding, Landsat 8 will be deployed without it. Adding TIR would delay deployment by an estimated eight months. Losing this capability would seriously degrade our future ability to measure, monitor and manage our increasingly scarce water resources, particularly during shortages, such as drought. It would also compromise our ability to observe changing evapotranspiration rates over large areas, due to increasing climate variability, at a scale useful to many decision-makers that will need to prepare and implement appropriate adaptation strategies.

We would respectfully request that the Administration support a specific provision in any CJS appropriation bill, any continuing resolution, or any supplemental FY 2008 appropriation to immediately begin work on a TIR instrument. Further, this should be a vital element in the President's FY 2009 budget request. Again, we urge you to take whatever steps are necessary to insure that our 25-year investment in Landsat thermal data is preserved and this increasingly valuable tool is not lost.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Duane A. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Duane" being more prominent than the last name "Smith".

Duane A. Smith, Chairman
Western States Water Council