

DRI scrambles to come up with money to cloud seed

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada's cloud-seeding program, almost killed by the state budget crisis, produced nearly 13 billion gallons of extra water over six months ending in late April, experts said.

"That's nothing to sneeze at," said Sparks Councilman Mike Carrigan, who chairs two water commissions that voted to provide money to keep the cloud-seeding program alive last winter.

Now, officials at the Desert Research Institute hope to convince providers that the program squeezes enough extra moisture out of winter storms to justify the expense of about \$1 million per year.

The cloud-seeding program was in big trouble after the 2009 Legislature, facing a record budget deficit, dropped state funding for DRI's efforts. Last summer, DRI went so far as to dismantle its five cloud-seeding generators in the Lake Tahoe area.

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