Despite drought, ski gear-clothing sales rise

By Hugo Martin, Los Angeles Times

While California suffered through the driest winter on record, ski gear and winter clothing sales rose nationwide last season thanks to frigid temperatures in other parts of the country, according to an industry trade report.

Businesses that sell snow gear and winter apparel reported $3.6 billion in sales in the 2013-14 ski season, up 7 percent over the previous season, according to an annual report by the Snow Sports Industry Association.

Although the snowpack in California's Sierra Nevada fell to less than 15 percent of the season average, snowfall and frigid temperatures elsewhere, particularly in the South, helped boost sales of winter clothes, gloves and hats, the report said.

The sale of ski equipment rose 2 percent last winter, while the sale of winter clothes jumped 4 percent and accessories like hats and gloves shot up 14 percent, the report said.

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