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December 2, 2010

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WRD'S ECO GARDENER PROGRAM RECEIVES ACWA THEODORE ROOSEVELT ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

Lakewood, CA—The Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD) has been awarded the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Theodore Roosevelt Environmental Award for Excellence in Natural Resource Management for its *Eco Gardener Program*.

The Theodore Roosevelt Environmental Award was established by ACWA in 1993 to recognize resources management programs that benefit the environment while meeting public needs.

The award recognizes significant agency commitment to “the wise use of natural resources; innovative and imaginative methods of enhancing or protecting the environment; and programs that achieve conservation goals in natural resources management in a financially efficient manner.”

Recognized at the 2010 ACWA Fall Conference, WRD Board of Directors were on hand to receive the award. Highlighting its signature Eco Gardener Program, WRD’s booth showcased various drought tolerant and native plants that are currently used at the District’s eco-friendly demonstration garden at WRD headquarters.

The *Eco Gardener Program* enhances the importance of water conservation and stewardship by educating the public about simple ways to save water and contribute to a more reliable water supply now and into the future. The *Eco Gardener Program* will further resonate as water rates increase, making it even more attractive for consumers to plant less water intensive landscaping -- thereby increasing the demand for knowledgeable landscapers.

The objective of the *Eco Gardener Program* is to educate the public on the benefits and beauty of a low water use garden or landscape in lieu of the traditional residential and commercial garden composed of grass and ornamental shrubs.

The *Eco Gardener Program* is part of WRD’s Water Independence Now Program, a suite of programs that aim to reduce reliance on imported water and to increase local water supply through conservation, water recycling and storm water capture.

The *Eco Gardener Program* is conducted at WRD headquarters and throughout the District’s 43 city service area to enhance the landscaping skills of residential, municipal, school and industrial landscape gardeners.

“The goal of the *Eco Gardener Program* is to conserve water resources through practical education in eco-friendly landscaping,” WRD Board President Sergio Calderon said. “The

Theodore Roosevelt Award is recognition of a WRD initiative that has been widely emulated by other water districts throughout Southern California”, Calderon said.

“We are proud to be a part of California’s overall water solution,” Calderon added. “This award is recognition that WRD is on the right path when it comes to water education and conservation.”

Created by voters in 1959, WRD is a regional groundwater management agency that protects and preserves the quantity and quality of groundwater supplies for 10 percent of the State’s population residing in southern Los Angeles County.

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