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WRD Groundwater Festival a Huge Success

*More than 4,000 participants learned about WRD's Mission to
Protect, Preserve and Replenish Local Central Groundwater Basin & West Coast Groundwater Basin*

(Lakewood, CA)- What do star fish and geckos have in common? They were all special guests at the Water Replenishment District's (WRD) 4th Annual Groundwater Festival "Treasure Beneath Our Feet."

With more than 4,300 guests participating in this year's educational festivities, many enjoyed the Aquarium of the Pacific's "Aquarium on Wheels," Star Eco Station reptile exhibits and the Discovery Science Center's environmental and educational "edutainment."

Local students from around WRD's 43 cities service area were on hand to test their "H₂O IQ," and learn how WRD conducts groundwater monitoring of the Central groundwater basin and the and West Coast groundwater basin.

On hand were Congresswoman Grace Napolitano, State Senator Kevin De León and Assembly Member Isadore Hall to emphasize the importance of groundwater and conservation efforts. Locally groundwater is vital to south Los Angeles County because it is responsible for providing almost half of the water supply to 4 million residents, or 10 percent of the State's population!

The festival concludes National Groundwater Awareness Week, which runs from March 7, 2011 to March 12, 2011.

"Without water we don't have an economy," Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (D-38th) said, "we have to learn to conserve it, preserve it and use it wisely and this event shows you the leadership that WRD has on the issue of water."

WRD honored five Groundwater Ambassadors for their unique contributions to local groundwater issues. This year's recipients include State Assembly Member Kevin De León, Assembly Member Isadore Hall, Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, South Gate City Council Member Bill De Witt, environmentalist Belinda V. Fasutinos and local reporter Arnold Adler.

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“Just 50 years ago the WRD imported more water than any other agency in all of Southern California,” State Senator Kevin De León said. “Through WRD’s Water Independence Now Program, WRD is developing local water supplies to eliminate their demand on imported water for groundwater replenishment. We are on our way to meet our goal because of the policies and vision of the WRD Board to make sure that we store water underground and make us independent.”

Assembly Member Isadore Hall applauded WRD’s smart regional water projects, “We must be willing to be innovative and creative and change the way we think about water.” “Together we must work with one purpose so that when we reach for the tap we have clean, reliable water.”

“This is our 4th annual Groundwater Festival, and we are proud to be able to provide the public this unique learning opportunity where kids and adults are able to learn about the ‘treasure beneath our feet,’ groundwater,” said WRD Board President Sergio Calderon. “This event allows WRD to educate the public on water conservation, the importance of protecting our groundwater basins and our mission to become independent of imported water.”

The Groundwater Festival is made possible through the generous financial support from the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Golden State Water Company, West Basin Municipal Water District, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District and many more.

The Water Replenishment District of Southern California is the regional groundwater management agency that protects and preserves the quantity and quality of groundwater for two of the most utilized basins in the State of California, with a service area that is home to over ten percent of California’s population residing in 43 cities in southern Los Angeles County with a publicly elected Board of Directors including Willard H. Murray, Jr., Robert Katherman, Lillian Kawasaki, Sergio Calderon, and Albert Robles.

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