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Water Replenishment District Hosts First State of the District

Agency Provides Critical Overview of Local Groundwater Supply in Southern Los Angeles County

Lakewood, Calif. - The Water Replenishment District (WRD) hosted its first State of the District Address. The event presented an overview of the region's groundwater supply picture in southern Los Angeles County and highlighted WRD projects and partnerships that aim to address the region's water constraints.

California faces unprecedented water challenges. Persistent dry weather conditions, drought on the Colorado River and sharp curtailment of water delivery through the Delta pumps have resulted in serious water conservation measures, higher water rates and even water rationing in some parts of our state.

With these constraints, WRD and partnering agencies are working towards addressing the region's water challenges.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) awarded nearly half a million dollars in federal stimulus funds for preliminary design of the final expansion phase of the Leo J. Vander Lans (Vander Lans) advance water treatment facility. Currently, Vander Lans provides 50% of the highly treated recycled water that is injected into the Alamitos Barrier to protect the groundwater aquifer against seawater intrusion. Once the expansion is completed, Vander Lans will double its water recycling capacity and will supply nearly one billion gallons of recycled water a year.

This past April, WRD and the West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin) signed a historic agreement to supply 100% recycled water for seawater barrier protection at the West Coast Barrier, making it the first seawater barrier system in the world to rely entirely on recycled water by 2012. The project will save 5.5 billion gallons of drinking water each year by eliminating the need for imported water, enough to serve 136,000 people for one year. Currently the barrier is supplied with 75% recycled water and 25% imported water. Through this partnership, WRD becomes the largest user of recycled water in Los Angeles County.

The address also highlighted WRD's partnership with the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County and the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District on the Groundwater Improvement Reliability Program (GRIP) to "drought-proof" the region and increase local self-sufficiency by expanding the use of highly treated recycled water for groundwater replenishment. This multi-agency collaboration will eliminate the need to import expensive water from the drought plagued Colorado River or eco-sensitive Bay Delta for replenishment in the Montebello Forebay.

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Furthering efforts to secure a reliable water supply for the region, the District in conjunction with groundwater producers has petitioned the courts to create a legally-certain framework for groundwater storage. Should the courts approve the petitions, groundwater producers will be able to beneficially use the largest untapped water resource in Southern California, which is the 150 billion gallons of available storage capacity in the Central and West Basins. Taking advantage of that storage opportunity when surplus water is available would increase water supply reliability during times of drought, help eliminate the region's dependence on expensive imported water and provide greater savings for consumers.

“Through innovative planning, strong partnerships and visionary leadership, WRD is solidly positioned to help secure and safeguard the region's water supply with projects such as GRIP and the expansion of our state-of-the-art Leo J. Vander Lan water treatment facility,” stated WRD Board President Albert Robles. “WRD has taken bold steps to respond to the water challenges that plague our region. These steps have prepared the District and partner agencies to meet an uncertain water future as well as ‘drought proof’ the region,” concluded Robles.

WRD manages two of the most heavily used groundwater basins in the state of California and plays a significant role in providing groundwater to southern Los Angeles County. WRD is a regional groundwater management agency that supplies groundwater for 10% of the State's population.

For more information about the Water Replenishment District please visit www.wrd.org.

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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