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## **Nobel Laureate Dr. Elinor Ostrom Recognized Groundwater Replenishment Agency's Effectiveness**

### ***WRD's "Drought Proofing" Efforts Linked to Local Nobel Prize Winner Doctoral Dissertation***

**Lakewood, Calif.** - The Water Replenishment District (WRD) salutes Nobel Laureate Dr. Elinor Ostrom for her keen analysis of groundwater producer activities in West Basin that culminated with formation of the Water Replenishment District in 1959. Her 1965 UCLA dissertation (*Public Entrepreneurship: A Case Study in Groundwater Basin Management*) was the first field test of the theory of "governing the commons" that led to her historic award in Economics.

Dr. Ostrom's doctoral dissertation noted the need to develop a more economic and efficient source of water supply than the expensive and unreliable alternative of imported water, a prescient finding in light of events 45 years later. Additionally, she chronicled the "design and creation of a water replenishment district as a groundwater basin management enterprise."

For half a century, WRD has worked towards a more efficient and secure source of water for the region through its Water Independence Now (WIN) Program. WIN is a suite of projects that will allow southern Los Angeles County to eliminate the need to purchase expensive imported water from eco-sensitive areas in Northern California and the Colorado River. The program uses various sources of water for groundwater replenishment efforts that include storm water, recycled water and local source water.

In *Governing the Commons*, Dr. Ostrom states, "The creation of the Central and West Basin Replenishment District in 1959 dramatically transformed the structure of incentives facing water producers and their representatives. It was created by the water producers and approved by the citizens. Instead of one central governmental authority a polycentric public-enterprise system has emerged to achieve a very sophisticated management system. This system has restored water levels throughout both basins."

"Dr. Ostrom's award is the centerpiece of a remarkable convergence of events," stated Board President Albert Robles. "Her doctoral dissertation highlighted the need for the formation of the Water Replenishment District decades ago and we're pleased that as we approach our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary she is recognized for her work," 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 agency that manages groundwater for 10% of the State's population.

For more information about the Water Replenishment District please visit [www.wrd.org](http://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.*

**Editor's Note:** Dr. Elinor Ostrom's citation was quoted from her text book *Governing the Commons*, 2008, page 133

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