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Contact: Elsa Lopez
(562) 275-4231 • (562) 631-1518 cell
elopez@wrd.org

WRD Director Albert Robles Is Chairman Of Newly Created Joint Powers Authority That Will Reduce Southern California's Dependence On Imported Water

Lakewood, CA- A venture between the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD), the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (USGVMWD) and the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County held its first meeting of the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) and selected WRD Director Albert Robles as its first Chairman. The JPA will govern the implementation of the Groundwater Reliability Improvement Program (GRIP), a project that will significantly reduce Southern California's dependence on expensive and unreliable imported water from the Bay Delta in Northern California and the Colorado River.

The GRIP JPA is developing an advanced treated recycled water project that will produce up to 18,000 acre-feet of high quality water for groundwater replenishment by 2015 at a projected cost of about \$400 million. The Sanitation Districts will supply the water, and operate the treatment plant, and the two water districts, WRD and USGVMWD, will use the water to replenish the groundwater in Southern California.

The GRIP project is the cornerstone of WRD's Water Independence Now (WIN) program. WIN is a suite of projects and programs that aim to eliminate WRD's reliance on imported water for replenishing the area's groundwater. WIN aims to increase the development of locally sustainable water sources through the increased use of locally available and reliable recycled water and the augmentation of local storm water capture.

"GRIP is the logical next step in WRD's pioneering use of recycled water," newly-appointed JPA Chairman and WRD Director Albert Robles said. "It is the culmination of a journey begun by WRD nearly 50 years ago when the District pioneered the use of recycled water for groundwater replenishment."

Recently, WIN was recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior as one of only seven pilot demonstration projects selected state-wide under the Interim Federal Action Plan (IFAP). IFAP is President Obama's initiative, led by the Department of the Interior, to facilitate a partnership with state agencies to help address California's water challenges.

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“This first GRIP JPA meeting brings WRD one step closer to fully implementing WIN,” Robles said. “This has been a longtime effort by many individuals who had the foresight to see the need to secure Southern California’s water future, and a continuation of WRD’s vision to go from being the single largest purchaser of imported water in Southern California to being independent of imported water in the very near future. WRD recognizes that the solution to California’s water challenges will require the collaboration of many individuals and entities and we invite them all to work together,” concluded Robles.

“WRD’s innovative and smart water projects will contribute to the State’s long-term water solutions. Programs such as WIN, and its cornerstone GRIP project, will ensure that the residents of Los Angeles County will continue to be able to turn on the tap in the future,” said WRD Board President Sergio Calderon.

“WRD’s innovative planning and strong partnerships position it to help safeguard the region’s groundwater supply,” said Assemblymember Roger Hernández (D-West Covina). “The first GRIP JPA meeting is a significant milestone, and I congratulate WRD, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District and the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County for taking the region one step closer to fully ‘drought proofing’ the region,” stated Hernández. “I also congratulate Albert Robles for his recent leadership post. His 18 year tenure as Director for WRD makes him uniquely qualified to serve as Chair of the GRIP JPA and help bring to fruition the new GRIP water project,” concluded Hernández. Assemblymember Roger Hernández is a member of the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife and also serves as Assistant Majority Whip.

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About WRD:

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. For more information please visit WRD at www.wrd.org