



## Water project funded

### \$49M for recycling to bring needed jobs

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CHINO - Two grants will allow the Inland Empire Utility Agency to increase its recycled-water capacity by about 10 million gallons a day.

The \$49 million in state and federal stimulus money help make the area less dependent on imported water.

The \$14 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds accompany \$35 million from the State Water Resources Control Board to finance the IEUA's Northeast Area Regional Recycled Water Project.

That project will supply more recycled water to Rancho Cucamonga and Fontana by fall 2010 and boost job opportunities for contractors.

"We will have more of a reliable water supply in the future, ensuring that businesses and homeowners will have more reliable, less expensive local supplies than the more expensive imports," said Rich Atwater, CEO and general manager of IEUA.

The project could mean more than 600 local construction jobs over the next year.

The funding comes as cities are low on both

cash and water because of the recession and a statewide drought.

The IEUA has been looking for long-term ways to avoid water shortages. The agency recycles about 25million gallons of water per day and expects the northeast project to recycle 10million more gallons a day, serving an additional 40,000 to 50,000 people, Atwater said.

In Rancho Cucamonga, the agency will install three purple pipelines for recycled water, buy and convert a reservoir into a recycled-water system, build a pump station to improve water pressure in some areas, and install wells and equipment to analyze water for contamination.

Places with irrigation needs, such as schools, parks and golf courses, will receive recycled water by fall 2010.

The estimated cost of the northeast project is \$28 million. IEUA originally estimated the cost to be \$40 million and now finds itself under budget with extra stimulus funding.

Atwater said his agency is planning to expand the northeast project's construction and will make final decisions on how to spend the extra stimulus money in the fall, with state water board approval.

Judie Panneton, a spokeswoman for the State Water Resources Control board, said the projects were approved based upon their environmental benefits and viability, how quickly they could be completed and the financial hardship in the

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service region.

IEUA board President Terry Catlin said in a statement that the recycled-water projects will help create jobs in areas that have unemployment rates exceeding 12 percent.

The stimulus money also brings relief to some local contractors that have been struggling to find work in a slow economy.

WEKA Inc., a general engineering contractor business in Redlands, was one of about 20 companies bidding for the construction jobs.

Jared Himle, president of WEKA, said the competition was tough because many specialized pipeline companies are suffering.

"My competitors were all basically fighting and hurting for work," Himle said. "Contractors are trying to hang in there."

His own business took the economic slump hard. In 2007, Himle had 50 employees. He now has 20.

Himle said the two low-bid construction jobs he was awarded are fair-sized and specialized because of the quality of pipes he will be installing. He added that he will have no problem finishing on time.

"Now, finding manpower is easy," he said.

Atwater said two construction jobs, the Church Street Lateral pipeline and the installations of monitoring wells and lysimeters, will go out to

bid in the next few months.

But the federal stimulus money will not stop there.

Over the next few months, the IEUA will begin planning more water-conservation projects in Fontana, Ontario, Upland and Rancho Cucamonga with the recent influx of \$14 million from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

An additional \$773,045 from the state water board will help fund a separate IEUA project in the Chino area.

The approved Magnolia Channel project will plant and restore wetland habitats such as the Chino Creek and Prado Wetlands, which naturally purify water. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$1.9 million. **Upcoming projects**

1299 East Recycled Water Pipeline

Estimated cost: \$3.6 million

Estimated number of jobs: 108

1299 East Reservoir and 1630 East Pump Station

A tank reservoir will be modified for recycled water rather than drinking water.

Estimated cost: \$5.7 million

Estimated number of jobs: 171

1630 East Recycled Water Pipeline - Segment A

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Estimated cost: \$5.2 million

Estimated number of jobs: 156

Church Street Lateral Pipeline

Estimated cost: \$5 million

Estimated number of jobs: 150

Open for contractors' bids in August

Monitoring wells and lysimeter clusters

Estimated cost: \$2 million

Estimated number of jobs: 60

Open for contractors' bids in late July

Source: *Inland Empire Utilities Agency*

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