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Chino Basin Watermaster Board Announces Water Quality Milestone Reached

Inland Empire, California – The Chino Basin Watermaster’s Board of Directors announced today that a historic milestone has been reached in water quality-hydraulic control in the Chino Basin.

“After 15 years of collaboration, planning and investing for Chino Basin Watermaster (Watermaster) Parties and the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) (and many others), I am pleased to announce we have achieved this long-standing water quality goal,” stated Steven J. Elie, Chairman of Chino Basin Watermaster Board and Board Secretary/Treasurer of Inland Empire Utilities Agency.

One of the biggest issues in the region has been the quality of the Chino Basin’s groundwater and outflow to Orange County. Nitrates, salts and other contaminants have seeped into the groundwater for decades due to historical land uses. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) set a requirement for Watermaster and IEUA to achieve and maintain “hydraulic control” of groundwater outflow from the Chino Basin. Hydraulic control ensures that the water flowing south through the Chino Basin will not flow out to the Santa Ana River and into Orange County.

“The overall concept of hydraulic control was very ambitious from the start; especially, considering the extent of necessary institutional collaboration, and the magnitude of capital investment,” stated Peter Kavounas, General Manager of Chino Basin Watermaster.

A fundamental part of achieving this commitment was the construction, operation and management of the Chino Basin Desalters. The Chino Basin Desalter Authority (CDA) – formed in 2001 and comprised of eight member agencies: IEUA, Jurupa Community Services District, Santa Ana River Water Company, Western Municipal Water District, and the cities of Chino, Chino Hills, Norco and Ontario – manages the production, treatment and distribution of potable water within the Basin through the use of two Desalters.

These Desalters were built specifically to treat historically contaminated groundwater in the southern portion of the Basin, and to help Watermaster stop the flow of this water into the Santa Ana River. In addition to significant local contributions, the Desalters came to fruition with the support and funding of state and federal agencies including: \$113.9 million from the State Water Resources Control Board and the California Department of Water Resources; \$14

million from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI grant program; and, \$414,000 from the Metropolitan Water District.

"Our collective success in attaining hydraulic control is the result of a multi-year, collaborative effort of many water-supply, wastewater treatment, and State regulatory agencies that manage resources in the Inland Empire. This historic achievement reflects an evolving, cooperative water-management model. Successful regional cooperation is vital to protecting our precious resources for the benefit of all," stated Chairman Elie.

The Chino Basin Watermaster is a consensus-based organization facilitating development and utilization of the Chino Groundwater Basin. The Watermaster consists of various entities pumping water from the Basin including cities, water districts, water companies, agricultural, commercial, and other private concerns. The Chino Basin Watermaster's mission is to manage the Chino Groundwater Basin in the most beneficial manner and to equitably administer and enforce the provisions of the Chino Basin Watermaster Judgment.

The Inland Empire Utilities Agency covers 242-square miles, distributes imported water, provides industrial/municipal wastewater collection and treatment services, and other related utility services to more than 830,000 people through its member agencies which include Chino, Chino Hills, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana, Fontana Water Company, Montclair, Monte Vista Water District, Ontario, and Upland.

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