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The Inland Empire Utilities Agency Receives Funding for the WaterSMART Drought Response Program

Inland Empire, California – The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has awarded the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA/Agency) grant funding for two WaterSMART projects: \$300,000 for the WaterSMART Drought Resiliency Project Grant and \$200,000 for the Drought Contingency Planning Grant. The Bureau of Reclamation's new Drought Response Program supports a proactive approach to drought that includes contingency planning and project development that will build long-term resiliency to drought.

IEUA will use the project grant to construct improvements at Wineville, Jurupa and Regional Plant No.3. These basin improvement projects will allow IEUA to capture, recharge and convey 3,311 acre-feet per year of stormwater, dry-weather runoff, and 2,905 acre-feet per year of recycled water that can be made available for use in drought years; and it will increase the storage capacity and area of recharge. The project, identified as a drought response planning action in the Agency's Recharge Master Plan Update, will increase available water supplies in the Chino Basin and will increase flexibility to divert flows to a recharge site.

IEUA will use the Planning grant to update the existing Drought Contingency Plan to account for economic impacts to customers, increased reclaimed water supplies, conservation, climate change, population and other factors not considered in the original plan. The updated plan will incorporate five regional water management plans in order to provide a holistic approach to improving water resources management for the region rather than relying solely on imported water supply.

“In addition to the Agency's recent grant award of \$7.2 million from the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Program, the grant funding for the WaterSMART Drought Response Program will assist IEUA in developing plans and projects that will help to mitigate the effects of drought on the community,” said IEUA Board President Terry Catlin. “IEUA is committed to taking actions that will promote drought resiliency. Given the region's susceptibility to drought and the wide ranging impacts of recent drought on the surrounding communities, IEUA will work with our member agencies and cities to conduct planning activities and projects that will increase the reliability of water supply and sustainability in the region.”

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 870,000 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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