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Contact:

Ashley Womack
Acting Communications Officer
909.925.7205
awomack@ieua.org

Chino Basin Program Accelerates to Enhance Local Water Supply Reliability

IEUA and Partners Advance Innovative Program with Regional and Statewide Benefits

INLAND EMPIRE, CA – Backed by regional partnerships, the Chino Basin Program (CBP/Program) continues to move forward, representing a visionary, collaborative approach to enhancing regional water security, addressing groundwater sustainability, and providing significant water quality and environmental benefits.

“The declining reliability of imported State Water Project (SWP) supplies due to the variability and impacts of extreme weather changes underscores the need to further diversify our water portfolio and invest in alternative, reliable water supplies,” stated IEUA Board Member Steve Elie. “The Chino Basin Program allows IEUA and its partners to make better use of local recycled water supplies to improve resiliency, better manage groundwater quality while ensuring ongoing compliance with wastewater permitting requirements, and increase local control to offset SWP variability.”

Yesterday, IEUA presented an update on the CBP to the California Water Commission (CWC). The CWC has dedicated \$2.7 billion for investments in water storage as part of Proposition 1 of 2014 by administering the Water Storage Investment Program. As a part of this funding program, the CBP has conditional funding of over \$215 million. IEUA Board Member Steve Elie, General Manager Shivaji Deshmukh, CBP Manager Elizabeth Hurst, and Cucamonga Valley Water District (CVWD) Board President Randall Reed shared with the CWC the tremendous progress that has been made to advance the CBP, including securing local partnerships, constructing exploratory boring and monitoring wells, and significant advances on the design of the Program.

“Our customers deserve an approach to regional water supply that is fair, forward thinking and resilient; that is why CVWD supports the Chino Basin Program,” stated CVWD Board President Randall Reed. “At its core, the Chino Basin Program provides a regional solution with regional benefits for all agencies involved.”

The CBP is the first of its kind to deliver benefits to both the northern and southern parts of the State, including the construction of an Advanced Water Purification Facility that will provide an additional 15,000 acre-feet per year of advanced purified recycled water to be stored in the Chino Basin. Recycled water supplies will be available for local use to respond more effectively in case of emergencies or extended periods of drought.

Additional benefits include enhancement of ecosystem and environmental health, the creation of hundreds of jobs, and water rate stabilization through guaranteed local water supply. Through the partnership with the CWC, IEUA’s local partners, CVWD and the Fontana Water Company, will construct extraction facilities that will be used to pump local recycled water supplies in lieu of imported water as requested by the State over a 25-year period. This will allow the State to release pulse flows from Lake Oroville to the Feather River to improve the survival of migrating salmon and facilitate water flows to the main stem of the Delta.

“We are proud to be a partner on this important program that delivers on the promise of regional benefit,” stated Marty Zvirbulis, Vice President of the Fontana Water Company. “The CBP addresses longstanding seasonal inefficiencies in water usage, builds flexibility into the system, and represents a moral obligation to current and future generations. I thank IEUA for its leadership and for the CWC’s continued support in advancing this program.”

“The CBP is positioned to not only protect our customers from the volatility of imported water supplies but will also enhance rate predictability and affordability via an approach to regional water security that meets the long-term needs of our communities,” continued Elie. “I would like to thank the CWC for their continued support as we move towards a final funding award that will secure the necessary infrastructure to realize tremendous benefits in both Southern and Northern California.”

For more information on the Chino Basin Program, visit chinobasinprogram.org.

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The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA/Agency) is an innovative, forward-thinking Agency serving over 950,000 residents across 242-square miles in western San Bernardino County. The Agency is committed to supporting the needs of its service area and safeguarding public health through its significant investments in developing a diversified water supply portfolio, developing reliable municipal/industrial wastewater collection and treatment services, and other related utility services in a regionally planned and cost-effective manner. IEUA’s mission ensures long-term success for the region and its customer agencies which include Chino, Chino Hills, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana, Fontana Water Company, Montclair, Monte Vista Water District, Ontario, San Antonio Water Company, Upland, and West Valley Water District.