



ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

Orange County's Groundwater Authority

10500 Ellis Avenue, Fountain Valley, CA 92708

NEWS RELEASE

ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT IS AWARDED \$2.8 MILLION FOR WETLANDS RESTORATION

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced a federal grant for the State of California, associated with severe storms and flooding from last winter's rains. Included in the funding is \$2,852,606 million that has been awarded to the Orange County Water District. This grant will assist in repairing and restoring the Prado Wetlands behind Prado Dam.

When in use, the Prado Wetlands treat one-half of the Santa Ana River flow naturally removing nitrates. The treated Santa Ana River water is then percolated downstream into the Orange County groundwater basin. During last year's severe winter storms, extremely high water levels caused debris and sediment to block the river adjacent to the wetland, causing the wetland to flood and facilities to be destroyed or severely damaged.

Restoration of the wetlands includes: removing debris from the Santa Ana River; restoring the river to a course that does not threaten the Prado Wetlands; rebuilding levees; installing culverts; replacing damaged canal gates; and removing 300,000 cubic yards of sediment and debris from the wetland ponds.

"We would like to thank the entire Orange County Congressional Delegation, Congressman Miller, Calvert, Royce, Rohrabacher, Sanchez and Campbell, and our two U.S. Senators, Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, for their assistance with this grant and having the foresight to ensure Orange County's water is of the highest quality. Rebuilding the wetlands is an important part of OCWD's groundwater recharge system. The wetlands provide natural treatment by removing unwanted nitrates from the Santa Ana River water before the water is percolated into the Orange County groundwater basin," stated Phil Anthony, OCWD board president.

Orange County Water District (OCWD) manages the large groundwater basin that underlies North-Central Orange County that provides most of the water for 2.3 million citizens. OCWD is committed to constantly improving Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly manner. With years of prudent planning and careful investment, OCWD has doubled the yield of the groundwater basin. Recently, the basin, larger than the largest reservoir in Southern California, sustained the County through a five-year drought. OCWD has also spent millions of dollars on studies by outside experts to ensure the quality of our groundwater. We want to be your trusted source for water quality. We will continue to plan and invest in ways to get more water into and out of the basin. OCWD is a special district, separate from the County of Orange, that supplies to residents in the cities of Anaheim, Buena Park, Cypress, Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, La Palma, Los Alamitos, Newport Beach, Orange, Placentia, Santa Ana, Seal Beach, Stanton, Tustin, Villa Park, Westminster and Yorba Linda.