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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
ORANGE COUNTY'S GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY

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October 5, 2016

RE: UPDATE ON OCWD NORTH BASIN GROUNDWATER CLEANUP PROJECT

After working closely with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for several months, the Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) has entered into a formal agreement to perform a remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS) for the North Basin groundwater cleanup project. Please see the attached press release recently issued by the EPA regarding this project milestone.

This agreement calls for OCWD to perform a detailed scope of work under EPA oversight. Upon completion of the prescribed investigatory work and analysis of cleanup options, the EPA will then select one of those options as a preferred interim remedy. It is envisioned that the remedy will capture the most contaminated portion of the plume, cut off its continued spreading and begin to clean it up so that it no longer threatens the Orange County Groundwater Basin.

Up until now, the District has pursued State Court litigation to compel the responsible parties to clean the contamination emanating from their sites, with very limited success. While some of the industrial dischargers have settled with the District and paid for remedial actions, many others have not, leaving much of the responsibility for cleanup unresolved.

This agreement is important because it will put in place a formal and scheduled plan to do the RI/FS work needed as a first step in the North Basin cleanup plan. The District's work will provide the technical basis for beginning cleanup of the site and will establish a schedule for its implementation. The final selection of an interim remedy and the identification of parties responsible for its implementation will be left to the EPA. EPA will organize a public meeting and seek public comment on a proposed cleanup plan before selecting a remedy.

In addition to moving the project forward under EPA oversight, the District has also applied to the State Water Resources Control Board for grant funding support available from Proposition 1. OCWD's priority is the protection of the groundwater basin. This agreement facilitates the next steps toward meeting that interest. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Bill Hunt at 714 378-8229 or whunt@ocwd.com