



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS: Gina Ayala, (714) 378-3323 or gayala@ocwd.com
Manoj Dadlani, (703) 995-9879 or manoj@cosmosid.com

**ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT LEADS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION FUNDED STUDY
OF THE METAGENOMICS OF WATER QUALITY**

In Partnership with 2010 Stockholm Water Prize Recipient Dr. Rita Colwell and CosmosID, Inc.

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (September 6, 2017) - The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) is a recipient, with the University of Maryland and CosmosID, Inc., of a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant that will aid the water industry in its continued effort to improve water quality. The \$100k award will be used to apply metagenomics, an exciting new technology that holds significant promise to water quality assessment. This technology will provide comprehensive information on microbial water quality and ecology of water treatment and distribution systems. Compared to current microbial techniques, metagenomics with exceptional speed and accuracy provides improved identification of microbial communities.

“OCWD is committed to research and development to provide the very best and most effective treatment to provide safe water and we’re honored to receive this prestigious grant,” said OCWD President Denis Bilodeau. “We are equally honored to partner on this important work with world renowned scientists from CosmosID, Inc., the University of Maryland College Park and Cotruvo Associates. We look forward to conducting this research, led by OCWD Principal Scientist Menu Leddy, that will benefit the entire water community and support the District’s mission to provide clean, reliable, safe water,” he added.

The scientific team working on the grant includes CosmosID’s Founder and Global Science Officer, Dr. Rita R. Colwell, recipient of the 2010 Stockholm Water Prize, the 2006 National Medal of Science of the United States and other prominent honors and awards. Also a member of the team is Cotruvo Associates President Dr. Joseph Cotruvo, former Director of the Criteria and Standards Division of the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Drinking Water and Vice President of NSF International. Dr. Cotruvo has more than 25 years of experience in water research and development.

The NSF grant, Metagenomic Analysis of Microbial Communities to Ensure Water Quality and Safety, is focused on identifying and characterizing microorganisms by using next generation sequencing (NGS) and metagenomics, providing accurate and actionable assessment of microbial water quality for both indirect potable reuse and direct potable reuse. This research is expected to ultimately provide the basis for maintenance of public health safety in water reuse.

ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT LEADS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION FUNDED STUDY
OF THE METAGENOMICS OF WATER QUALITY

ADD 1-1-1

OCWD operates the largest water reuse project of its kind, the Groundwater Replenishment System, and aids communities throughout the world in exploring similar projects to create long-term water reliability. The District looks forward to this important work and commends its research and development staff, which on an ongoing basis, researches and reviews promising new technologies to improve water quality and increase the efficiency of OCWD's recycled water treatment and recharge operations.

CosmosID, Inc. is a bioinformatics company working at the leading edge of both NGS and information technology to advance human health and welfare in clinical diagnostics and public health.

About OCWD

The Orange County Water District is committed to enhancing Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly and economical manner. The following cities rely on the groundwater basin, managed by OCWD, to provide 75 percent of their water demands: Anaheim, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Cypress, 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. For more information about OCWD, please visit www.ocwd.com.

About CosmosID

[CosmosID](http://www.cosmosid.com)[®], based in Rockville, Maryland, is a genomics big data company focused on rapid identification of microorganisms for molecular diagnostics, pharmaceutical R&D, public health, food safety, agriculture, and environmental applications. The CosmosID platform uses proprietary sequence analysis algorithms to accurately profile all microorganisms in a metagenomic sample employing next-generation DNA sequencing. To learn more please visit www.cosmosid.com and follow us on Twitter at [@CosmosID](https://twitter.com/CosmosID).

###