



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP WITH ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS BRINGS INCREASED WATER SUPPLY AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (May 5, 2021) – More than a decade of collaboration between public agencies yields tremendous benefit to Orange County’s water supply following approvals by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) associated with the Chief of Engineer’s Report for the Prado Basin Ecosystem Restoration and Water Conservation Feasibility Study (Study). For the Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District), this critical action increases water storage and habitat restoration behind Prado Dam.

Lieutenant General (Lt. Gen.) Scott A. Spellmon signed the final of the two approvals for the Study on Earth Day (April 22, 2021) which will ultimately go before Congress for consideration of ecosystem restoration authorization. The approval of water conservation was signed earlier in April by Brigadier General Paul E. Owen, Commander and Division Engineer of the South Pacific Division of the Corps.

“What an accomplishment and a big win for Orange County,” said OCWD President Steve Sheldon. “I would like to thank OCWD staff for their great work and Lt. Gen. Spellmon for the Corps partnership and support. This project increases long-term water supply reliability by adding an additional 6,000 to 12,000 acre-feet of water annually into the Orange County Groundwater Basin—creating a new water supply for approximately 60,000 people per year. It is estimated that this project provides the region with over \$4 million annually in economic benefits.”

Once implemented, it will enable OCWD to capture stormwater up to 505 feet above mean sea level (amsl) behind Prado Dam whenever it rains. The prior Prado Dam Water Control Plan allows for up to 498 amsl from October through February and 505 amsl the rest of the year. Stormwater captured at Prado Dam is recharged into the Orange County Groundwater Basin at OCWD’s facilities in Anaheim and Orange and becomes part of the drinking water supply for 2.5 million people in the county.

In addition to increased water supply, the Study recommends restoration of more than 600 acres of valuable riparian and associated habitats within the Prado Basin. Restoration of this critical wildlife corridor will improve aquatic and riparian ecosystems by removing non-native vegetation in Prado Basin, planting native plants, and restoring a portion of Chino Creek.

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“With the possible beginnings of another drought cycle occurring, it is a reminder that we must continue to do all that we can to increase local water reliability and diversify our sources—it is our #1 job and this project is a prime example of our success,” added Sheldon.

To read more about this innovative collaboration, please visit the Corps website to read its [news release](#) and view a photo of the signing.

About Orange County Water District

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 77% 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, like @OCWaterDistrict on Facebook, follow @OCWDWaterNews on Twitter, follow @OCWD on Instagram, and follow Orange County Water District on LinkedIn.

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