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COALITION OF NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZE ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT FOR INNOVATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT AND REUSE

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (October 11, 2023) – Two awards were bestowed upon the Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) at the 2023 Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC) in Chicago. Recognized by a coalition of esteemed national water organizations, OCWD was honored for inspiring the water sector through innovative and transformational programs and implementing water reuse into the District’s water management strategies.

The Utility of the Future Today program highlights water utilities that are reimagining community partnership and engagement, watershed stewardship, and water resources recovery. The program is a partnership of the Water Environment Federation (WEF), the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), the Water Research Foundation (WRF), the WaterReuse Association, and the U.S. Water Alliance, and is supported by advisory partners, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). OCWD received special acknowledgement in the water reuse category for its commitment to incorporate and advance water reuse programs and projects.

OCWD also received a Project Excellence Award from WEF for the completion of the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS). Online since 2008, the GWRS is a joint project with the Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) and is the world’s largest water reuse facility. It takes highly treated wastewater that would have previously been discharged into the Pacific Ocean and purifies it using a three-step advanced treatment process. With the final expansion online in early 2023, GWRS recycles 100% of OC San’s reclaimable wastewater flows and produces up to 130 million gallons of high-quality water a day – enough to serve nearly one million people.

“We are honored to be recognized for implementing innovative programs that support our mission of managing and protecting the local groundwater basin,” said OCWD President Cathy Green. “Over its 90-year history, OCWD has pioneered groundwater management and water reuse to ensure a safe, reliable, locally controlled water supply.”

Guided by sound policy set by its Board of Directors, OCWD takes on the water challenges of today and prepares to meet the region's water demands for generations to come. Learn more at www.ocwd.com.

The Orange County Water District manages the local groundwater basin that provides 85% of the water supply for 19 cities and retail water districts in north and central Orange County, serving 2.5 million people. Guided by its commitment to sound planning and investment, high standards for water reliability, exceptional water quality, environmental stewardship, sound financial management, and transparency, OCWD has proactively implemented initiatives to protect and increase local water supplies. OCWD replenishes the basin, prevents seawater intrusion, and protects Orange County’s rights to Santa Ana River water. For more information about OCWD, please visit www.ocwd.com and follow @OCWaterDistrict on social media.

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