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John Kennedy Named General Manager of Orange County Water District

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (November 15, 2023) – The Orange County Water District (OCWD) Board of Directors is proud to announce the appointment of John Kennedy as general manager, effective January 27, 2024. Kennedy, who currently serves as the District’s executive director of engineering and water resources, was selected by the Board to succeed Michael R. Markus, who retires after more than 35 years with OCWD, including serving as general manager since 2007.

Kennedy brings to the role more than 40 years of experience in the water and civil engineering industry. His career with OCWD, which began in 1995, has seen him responsible for a wide range of critical functions, including developing long-term financial projections, capital improvement programs, and acting as a liaison with 19 local cities and retail water districts.

"John Kennedy’s deep understanding of our operations, his leadership skills, and his vision for the future of water resources in Orange County make him the ideal choice to lead OCWD," said OCWD Board President Cathy Green. "We are confident that under John’s leadership, OCWD will continue to excel in its mission of providing sustainable water solutions for our 2.5-million-person service area."

The District is an award-winning industry leader in groundwater management, water reuse and water quality. Kennedy’s expertise has been vital in developing and administering groundwater basin management programs, implementing capital projects, and establishing District water rates for groundwater pumping. In his new role, Kennedy will guide OCWD in its ongoing endeavors toward maximized water supply, sustainable water resource management and technological innovation.

"I am deeply honored by the Board’s confidence in me and excited to lead OCWD into its next chapter," said Kennedy. "I look forward to working with our incredible team to continue providing safe, reliable water to Orange County."

A registered professional civil engineer in California, Kennedy holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in civil engineering from the University of Pittsburgh, and a Master of Business Administration from Pepperdine University. His educational and professional background positions him exceptionally well to lead OCWD into a new era of water management and innovation.

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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