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FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 GROUNDWATER RATES ADOPTED BY OCWD ENABLE WATER SUPPLY COST SAVINGS FOR LOCAL CITIES

Cities of Westminster, Garden Grove, Fountain Valley, and Seal Beach to save approximately \$1 million total

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (May 22, 2023) – Orange County Water District (OCWD) manages the Orange County Groundwater Basin that provides most of the water supply for the northern portion of the county. At its April 19 Board of Directors meeting, the OCWD Board took action to continue to provide an affordable, reliable water supply through the establishment of its fiscal year 2023-2024 groundwater rates and groundwater pumping percentage.

The fiscal year 2023-2024 groundwater rates adopted by OCWD will enable savings in water supply costs for the cities of Westminster, Garden Grove, Fountain Valley, and Seal Beach. The city of Westminster will save approximately \$250,000; the city of Garden Grove will save approximately \$500,000; the city of Fountain Valley will save approximately \$200,000; and the city of Seal Beach will save approximately \$77,000.

“Local groundwater costs approximately half as much as imported water,” said OCWD Director Van Tran. “I’m very happy we are able to increase the availability and reliability of this local water supply to the cities while reducing their cost.”

Annually, in April, OCWD determines the cost and availability of groundwater to the 19 cities and retail water districts in its 2.5-million-person service area. Due to sound planning and investment, OCWD has been able to maintain low rates while providing an ever-increasing water supply. With the recent completion of the final expansion of its Groundwater Replenishment System water recycling project, more local wastewater from residents and businesses will be annually purified to drinking water standards and put into the groundwater basin it manages.

This allows OCWD to increase the amount of water that cities and water districts can pump (also called the Basin Production Percentage, or BPP) from 77% to 85%. Cities such as Garden Grove, Seal Beach, Fountain Valley, and Westminster can now pump more groundwater to meet the needs of their residents and businesses.

“OCWD’s actions will allow local cities to pump greater amounts of lower cost groundwater as their primary drinking water supply and reduce their need for more expensive imported water from the Colorado River and northern California,” said OCWD President Cathy Green.

Due to OCWD’s successful management of its groundwater basin that currently has an ample supply of water, it has provided a financial incentive to encourage cities such as Westminster, Garden Grove, Fountain Valley, and Seal Beach, who have made the necessary infrastructure

investments, to pump additional groundwater, above the 85% BPP. OCWD's actions help to partially offset other price increases cities are experiencing to operate their water systems such as higher chemical and energy costs as well as inflation.

"We're proud of our efforts to sustainability manage the groundwater basin that provides a reliable, local supply of water, at affordable rates," added OCWD Director Dina Nguyen.

To learn more about how OCWD ensures a reliable supply of high-quality water to north and central Orange County, please visit www.ocwd.com.

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 85% 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.