

News Release

Securing Your Water Supply

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Contact Michele McKinney Underwood, Community Affairs Manager
951.571.7239; 951.897.0897 mobile; munderwood@wmwd.com

Sondra Elrod, Public Information Officer
909.993.1749; selrod@ieua.org

Federal Grant Increases Inland Empire Drinking Water Supply



RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The Inland Empire is one step closer to seeing a significant increase in a local drought-proof source of drinking water thanks to a \$4 million U.S. Bureau of Reclamation grant that Western Municipal Water District secured in close partnership with the Chino Basin Desalter Authority and the Inland Empire Utilities Agency.

The \$4 million federal WaterSMART grant will fund a portion of the planned Phase 3 Expansion of the Chino I and Chino II Desalter facilities, which will produce an additional 10,600 acre-feet of potable water per year – enough water to serve more than 1.5 million people in the region.

“Western is committed to collaborating with our neighboring agencies to secure local, reliable water sources and to do what we must to continue expanding these resources,” said Western’s General Manager John Rossi. “The Chino Desalter project is a significant regional project that not only increases our local water but also helps us manage salt in our groundwater basins and protect downstream water quality for Orange County.”

The existing Chino I/Chino II Desalters currently provide 24,600 acre-feet annually (roughly 24 million gallons daily) of high-quality drinking water to the cities of Chino, Chino Hills, Ontario and Norco as well as the Jurupa Community Services District and the Santa Ana River Water Company. The WaterSMART grant comes through the Bureau’s Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Program. It will enable a new pump station and about 40,000 feet of pipeline to be added to the system.

“We’re pleased to work in partnership with Western on this project,” said General Manager/CEO of the Chino Basin Desalter Authority Curtis Paxton. “The increased water supply from this secure, local source will reduce the amount of water that’s imported from our sometimes uncertain, far-off sources of the Colorado River and California Bay-Delta.”

IEUA General Manager Tom Love said, “We are honored by the outcome of this competitive grant process. On behalf of all of our agencies, we thank Senator Barbara Boxer and Congressmen Joe Baca, Ken Calvert, Jerry Lewis, Gary Miller and Ed Royce for their strong support for our grant application.”

“The staff from all three agencies did an outstanding job in putting together a grant application that won the Bureau’s support,” added Rossi. “By working together, Western, IEUA and the Authority have already successfully secured more than \$19 million in outside grants to help the region build the \$130 million Chino Desalter expansion project.”

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