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The Inland Empire Utilities Agency Receives \$5.2 million In Federal Grant Funding from U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Inland Empire, California –Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke announced on May 12, 2017, that the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) will be receiving a \$5.2 million grant from the Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse program, which is the U.S. Department of the Interior’s sustainable water initiative. Six California projects received almost \$21 million to provide clean water to communities across California.

IEUA will use the grant to help fund the Chino Desalter Phase 3 Expansion of the Lower Chino Dairy Area Desalination and Reclamation Project. The project will improve both the quality of the groundwater and surface water in the Chino Basin by removing salts, nitrates and other volatile organic compounds. As a result, this will significantly reduce the flow of degraded water into the Santa Ana River, thereby protecting downstream water supplies and ecosystems. The expansion is expected to create 10,600 acre feet per year of additional drinkable water – one acre foot serves the annual needs of two California families with four family members – which will no longer need to be imported into the area from the State Water Project.

“The \$5.2 million grant will be used to help ensure the long-term availability of clean water for our communities. As southern California and the Inland Empire continue to struggle with ongoing cycles of drought, projects like this one are essential to securing our future water supply,” said IEUA Board President Steve Elie. “We are proud of our track record of being good stewards of public dollars, and look forward to continuing our work with the Bureau of Reclamation.”

All five members of IEUA’s congressional delegation, along with Congressman Ken Calvert, who was instrumental in obtaining congressional authorization for the project, continue to strongly support IEUA’s efforts to receive the Title XVI and other federal grants that will help alleviate the water shortage issues in IEUA’s service area.

“This latest drought was a sobering reminder of the impact a strain on our water supply can have on our economy and day-to-day lives. We must invest in our water infrastructure so that our communities are better prepared to weather the inevitable next drought or other pressures on our water resources,” said Congresswoman Norma J. Torres (CA-35). “I am thrilled to see IEUA receive this funding, because projects like this help ensure a clean, environmentally sustainable water source for our region for generations to come.”

“I’m glad to see the IEUA gain access to critical funds that will help fortify our water infrastructure so we can ensure Inland Empire families have sustainable access to clean drinking water. These federal dollars will allow us to prioritize necessary resources for families, protect the environment and invest in our regional economy,” said Congressman Pete Aguilar (CA-31).

“The Inland Empire Utilities Agency continues to take important, forward-looking steps to ensure its ratepayers have access to a reliable and affordable water supply. The resources being provided by the Bureau of Reclamation are a valuable investment in our region’s infrastructure,” said Congressman Ken Calvert (CA-42). The Inland Empire Utilities Agency and their partner agencies should be applauded for their regional approach to tackling the water challenges of today and the future.”

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The Inland Empire Utilities Agency covers 242-square miles, distributes imported water, provides industrial/municipal wastewater collection and treatment services, and other related utility services to more than 875,000 people through its member agencies which include Chino, Chino Hills, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana, Fontana Water Company, Montclair, Monte Vista Water District, Ontario, and Upland.