



## For Immediate Release

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### **East County Advanced Water Purification Program Awarded \$388 Million WIFIA Loan from EPA**

June 4, 2021 – San Diego, CA – Today, the East County Advanced Water Purification Program was awarded a \$388 million dollar Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help finance the Program. This will be the first WIFIA loan awarded to the Program and marks the EPA’s second largest loan awarded to projects in San Diego County.

Scheduled to be complete in 2025, the East County AWP Program will create a new, local, sustainable and drought-proof drinking water supply using state-of-the-art technology to purify East San Diego County’s recycled water. The program will generate up to 11.5 million gallons per day of new drinking water—approximately 30% of current drinking water demands for East San Diego County residents.

Commemorating the historic moment, Program partner agencies—Padre Dam Municipal Water District, the City of El Cajon, Helix Water District and the County of San Diego—held a press conference. Officials in attendance included U.S. EPA Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water Radhika Fox, East County AWP Director Kyle Swanson and East County AWP Joint Powers Authority Chair Steve Goble.

“The East County Advanced Water Purification Program is the result of many years of strategic, long-term planning and this WIFIA loan marks a historic milestone in its development,” said Allen Carlisle, CEO/general manager of Padre Dam Municipal Water District. “By providing East

County with local control and independence of both its wastewater and water, the program secures a long-term solution for increased stability in our communities and safeguards the vitality of our economy and quality of life. We are grateful to the U.S. EPA for partnering with us on this important program and investing in future generations.”

“EPA is proud to partner on this project, which uses proven technology to bolster drinking water supplies in this climate-stressed region,” said EPA’s Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox. “Investing in water infrastructure is one of the best bets we can make to improve public health and the environment, create jobs and address pressing challenges that face our communities.”

In 2019, the program was one of only 38 projects selected nationwide to receive loans totaling approximately \$6 billion to help finance over \$12 billion in water infrastructure investments. The WIFIA program accelerates investment in the nation’s water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental loans for regionally and nationally significant projects.

Once complete, the Program will use four advanced water purification steps to produce water that is near-distilled in quality. After the advanced water purification process, the purified water will be blended with water in Lake Jennings and treated again at the R.M. Levy Water Treatment Plant before being distributed as drinking water. In addition to providing a new local water supply, the program will eliminate the need to send most of East County’s wastewater to the City of San Diego’s Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant, where it is currently treated and then discharged into the ocean.

For more information about the East County Advanced Water Purification Program, please visit <http://eastcountyawp.com>.

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