



## For Immediate Release

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### **East County Advanced Water Purification Program Breaks Ground and Begins Construction**

***Program will create a new, local, sustainable and drought-proof drinking water supply by using state-of-the-art technology to purify East San Diego County's recycled water***

June 1, 2022 – San Diego, CA – Today, the East County Advanced Water Purification Program broke ground, marking an important milestone for the project, East San Diego County, the region and the entire water industry.

Program representatives, elected officials and water industry leaders gathered at the future site of the treatment facility in Santee to celebrate the Program that 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. Officials in attendance included representatives from the East County AWP Joint Powers Authority, San Diego County Water Authority, Bureau of Reclamation, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The groundbreaking follows approval of project construction on May 19, 2022, by the East County AWP Joint Powers Authority that owns and operates the Program and is a collaborative partnership between four agencies: Padre Dam, the City of El Cajon, the County of San Diego and Helix Water District. The overall cost for the project is \$950 million and estimated to create 2,500 jobs in the region.

Scheduled to be complete in 2026, the East County AWP Program will generate up to 11.5

million gallons per day of purified water— meeting approximately 30% of current drinking water demands for East San Diego County residents and businesses. The Program will use four advanced water purification steps to produce water that is near-distilled in quality.

“Today marks an exciting moment for our East San Diego County customers!” said Allen Carlisle, Padre Dam and JPA Administrator CEO/General Manager. “We are now one step closer to creating a local, reliable and sustainable drinking water source that will reduce our dependence on increasingly expensive imported water. The East County Advanced Water Purification Program is a smart investment that provides a long-term solution for increased stability in our communities and safeguards the vitality of our economy and quality of life.”

After the advanced water purification process, the purified water will be blended with water in Lake Jennings and treated again at Helix Water District’s 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,” said Kyle Swanson, Padre Dam Incoming CEO/General Manager. “The East County Advanced Water Purification Program will benefit not only our customers and the community, but our shared environment too.”

“As California adapts to an increasingly arid climate, expanding our water supply portfolio with 21st century investments in water recycling, like the East County Advanced Water Purification program is critical,” said Joaquin Esquivel, Chair, State Water Resources Control Board. “Thanks to state and federal leadership, we have a generational opportunity to support the affordability and viability of this and other water supply projects throughout the state. Local leadership and vision are what have made this project a reality and helped to show that we can turn climate anxiety into climate action.”

To date, the Program has already secured more than \$123 million in grant funding and up to \$796 million in low interest loans to help finance the Program. East County AWP Program officials anticipate receiving additional state and federal grant funding to help pay for the Project.

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

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