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**Water Leaders Discuss Strategies for Extending, Enhancing Supplies at
4th Annual Southern California Water Committee Stormwater Workshop**
*Cities, Utilities Engage in Remarkable Regional Collaboration in Storage,
Management of Water Supplies amidst Drought*

Los Angeles, CA – The Southern California Water Committee (SCWC) held its 4th annual Stormwater Workshop today at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California in downtown Los Angeles, where cities, water agencies, regulators and regional leaders gathered to discuss the potential that stormwater capture and integrated regional water management has to expand local water supplies and help reduce reliance on imported water during the state’s ongoing drought.

Stormwater capture projects play an essential role in Southern California’s water portfolio, comprising an average of 12.5 percent of the Southland’s water supply. As California’s historic drought persists, water agencies are increasingly implementing innovative techniques for recharging groundwater basins using stormwater, recycled water, and limited imported supplies.

“Southern California has long been a national leader in water efficiency, breaking ground on innovative water projects that allow us to capture and store stormwater while also tapping into new supplies through groundwater clean-up. These techniques will help drought-proof the region for years to come,” said Richard Atwater, Executive Director of SCWC.

The all-day workshop included Mark Gold from UCLA’s Institute of the Environment and Sustainability as keynote speaker. In addition, numerous panel discussions examined various cutting edge projects underway to enhance local water supplies during the drought.

One panel showcased the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program, a collaborative effort between Eastern Municipal Water District, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Orange County Water District, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, and Western Municipal Water District. Together, these agencies have taken regional cooperation to the next level, launching a 2,464 square mile watershed-wide multi-benefit project that will reduce costs and augment water storage for future generations.

Numerous other agencies throughout Southern California have also been making great strides in improving stormwater capture, as well as augmenting underground and surface storage capacity. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works had completed 22 projects since 2007 that have





increased stormwater capture capacity by 2,200 acre-feet and have conserved enough water on average to supply 40,000 households for one year. Calleguas Municipal Water District has made significant investments to facilitate construction of desalters to pump brackish groundwater, which has filled groundwater basins. The desalters are expected to produce over 50,000 acre-feet per year of local water supplies and create space in shallow aquifers to capture approximately 10,000 acre-feet of stormwater each year in Eastern Ventura County.

“The collaboration we have seen from Southern California’s water agencies in developing initiatives that augment the amount of water we are able to capture and store is truly extraordinary, and this workshop gives water agencies across the region models for improving our water management,” said Mark Pestrella, Chairman of SCWC’s Stormwater Task Force and Chief Deputy Director of Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

Southern California has invested over \$12 billion over the past two decades in water conservation, recycling, stormwater capture, groundwater clean-up, desalination, and new surface and groundwater storage projects. As a result, Southern California is the most water efficient large metropolitan region in the country.

Yet, despite this significant investment, it is crucial that we also protect our historic water supplies that come from the Sierra Nevada Mountains via the State Water Project – water that is crucial to the economy and livelihood of Southern California. Water from the Sierras is the core element of our region’s overall water supply, comprising about 30 percent of the region’s water supply, and it remains the most cost-effective sources of water by far.

SCWC established its Stormwater Task Force in 2010, recognizing the need to develop regional consensus-based strategies and recommendations for utilizing stormwater effectively as a new local water supply, and reduce the urban runoff water pollution problems within the coastal plain of Southern California. The coastal plain of Southern California includes Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties, as well as the Santa Ana River watershed portion of San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

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Established in 1984, the Southern California Water Committee is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public education partnership dedicated to informing Southern Californians about our water needs and our state’s water resources. Spanning Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino, Imperial, Riverside, Ventura and Kern counties, the SCWC’s members include representatives from business, government, agriculture, water agencies, labor and the general public. Visit us at www.socalwater.org and find us on Facebook.

