

New Water District to Prioritize Local Workers, Vets for New Recycled Water Infrastructure

For Immediate Release

Santa Clarita, Calif. (August 29, 2017) – Local workers and veterans would be moved to the front of the hiring line as part of the new water district planned for the Santa Clarita Valley.

The proposal was added Monday, August 21 to Senate Bill 634, legislation authored by Senator Scott Wilk to create the new water district. If passed, the jobs initiative would prioritize local construction workers, especially veterans, to build upwards of \$200 million worth of recycled water projects planned for the region.

“Our new district was always about improving our community. We are now working to make sure it will be built by our community,” said Maria Gutzeit, President of Newhall County Water District (NCWD). “This effort could put hundreds of our neighbors to work and will give veterans the priority they’ve earned. This is an incredibly important policy for our Valley.”

The jobs initiative was developed by Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA), NCWD, the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council (Trades Council) and Senator Wilk to ensure the local community was deeply involved in building local water infrastructure.

“When you create a new district from the ground up, you have the opportunity to do something really special,” said CLWA President Bob DiPrimio. “I could not think of anything more special than working to ensure our local workforce, especially those who have served in our armed forces, are at the front of the employment line when we begin to build major projects.”

Once the new district is established, its board of directors will work with the Trades Council to craft and approve a Community Workforce Agreement – or CWA. The CWA would be established as an initial five-year pilot program and cover all recycled water projects that would cost \$500,000 or more. The board of directors could extend the CWA for additional five-year terms.

“Community Workforce Agreements are a proven way to generate good local jobs that lead to lifelong careers,” said Ron Miller, Executive Secretary of the Trades Council. “Studies show that local workers invest and spend in their own communities. Jobs on water infrastructure will improve our environment and economy at the same time.”



SB 634 was first introduced in February and was passed unanimously from three Senate committees. Following a 34-0 vote of the full State Senate, the bill passed the Assembly Local Government and Water, Parks and Wildlife committees. It now heads to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on August 31. If SB 634 is approved and signed by Governor Jerry Brown, the new district would take effect in early next year.

About SB 634

The Santa Clarita Valley Water District Act (SB 634, Wilk) is the product of two years of negotiations and public outreach led by Senator Scott Wilk, CLWA and NCWD to unify water governance in the region. It would create a new district out of the existing service areas of the two agencies. A comprehensive economics and efficiencies study found that the new district would generate \$14 million of savings in its first 10 years, create a new, more accessible governance structure, enhance environmental and watershed protections, and lead to stronger local water reliability, including the development of recycled water. More information can be found at www.YourSCVWater.com.



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