

SB 634 PASSES ASSEMBLY WITH STRONG BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT

For Immediate Release

Santa Clarita, Calif. (Sept. 13, 2017) – The California State Assembly passed a bill by Senator Scott Wilk on Wednesday that will create a new water agency for the Santa Clarita Valley.

Senate Bill 634, introduced in February, would reorganize the Newhall County Water District and the Castaic Lake Water Agency into the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, a new water district that would manage and distribute water throughout the valley.

The bill cleared the Assembly with a strong and overwhelmingly bi-partisan vote and now heads back to the Senate for concurrence before heading to Governor Jerry Brown. If the bill is passed, then approved and signed by the governor, the new agency would take effect in early next year.

Maria Gutzeit, president of Newhall County Water District, and Bob DiPrimio, president of Castaic Lake Water Agency, issued a joint statement announcing the passage for the water bill.

“The Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency Act is the product of two years of negotiation and public engagement to unify water governance in the region. A new public water district would cut costs, create efficiencies and bring new, cost-effective and reliable sources of water to reality.

“We are extremely pleased the Assembly saw the value in creating this new public water agency so we can begin to benefit from unified water management in our region. With this bill, Senator Wilk has been a true champion for our region and we are grateful to be in final steps of the of legislative process.”

The bill is supported by a broad and diverse coalition of environmental, business, labor, and government leaders. Additionally, dozens of local residents and businesses have expressed strong support for SB 634.

The purpose of the new district would be to provide, sell, manage, and deliver surface water, groundwater, and recycled water for municipal, industrial, domestic, and other purposes at retail and wholesale, and provide a means to unify and modernize water resource management within the Santa Clarita Valley. It would provide new jobs for local residents and veterans to help build approximately \$200 million of recycled water infrastructure. It would also create more unified environmental stewardship within the region, specifically regarding the Upper Santa Clara River watershed.

A comprehensive economics and efficiencies study found that the new agency would generate \$14 million in 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 on the new water district can be found at www.YourSCVWater.com.

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