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West Basin Municipal Water District Begins Construction of Ocean-Water Desalination Demonstration Facility Utilizing Ocean Protection Technology

CARSON, Calif. — West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin) recently started constructing one of the first ocean-water desalination demonstration facilities to utilize ocean protection technology at the source of intake and discharge. The facility is co-located at the Los Angeles Conservation Corps' SEA Lab education center in Redondo Beach and is part of West Basin's Water Reliability 2020 (WR2020) initiative to reduce dependence on unreliable imported water use in the South Bay from 66 percent to 33 percent by the year 2020.

"Southern California is faced with a fragile, out-of-date state water delivery system, predicted reductions in imported water supplies caused by climate change, continued statewide population growth, and other limitations. We need to develop new locally-controlled water supplies to protect our water future," stated Gloria D. Gray, President of the West Basin Board of Directors. "After more than 15 years of aggressive conservation and recycled water programs, West Basin is proud to continue its history of water technology innovation by pioneering environmentally responsible ocean-water desalination," she said.

Unlike other methods of desalination, West Basin's new demonstration facility is testing "at the source" ocean withdrawal and return methods that protect the ocean environment. These include wedgewire screens, sea floor withdrawal simulation and returning salt water dilution and diffusion. The project will also test plant operation optimization and energy recovery systems from its reverse osmosis system.

In addition to the physical treatment plant, a new Water Education Center is being built within an unused pump station at the SEA Lab property. The renovated pump house will become a new, modern Water Education Center that teaches the importance of water conservation, recycling and ocean protection. Guests will "see for themselves" the safety of water returning to the ocean with two ocean tanks, one with Santa Monica Bay water and one filled with diluted salt water produced through the purification process. They can also taste-test the high quality desalinated water.

The new Ocean-Water Desalination Demonstration Facility and Water Education Center, currently under construction, will be operational in fall of 2010. For additional information about Water Reliability 2020, to take a tour of West Basin's water recycling plant or to join the more than 2,000 local project supporters, visit www.westbasin.org.

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