Vallecitos Water District to enter into contract to purchase treated water from Olivenhain Municipal Water District

San Marcos, CA – The Vallecitos Water District’s long-standing water source diversification strategy identifies water desalination, water reclamation, and a water purchase agreement with the Olivenhain Municipal Water District (OMWD) as primary ways to increase water service reliability and reduce the demand for imported water to the region. For that reason, the Vallecitos Water District Board at a meeting today unanimously voted to approve entering into a contract to purchase 2,750 acre feet of water treatment services annually from nearby OMWD.

The approval that only came to fruition after OMWD and Vallecitos staff members negotiated agreeable terms is just one of the long-term solutions that the Vallecitos Board has considered through the years. This in conjunction with desalination, expansion of the District’s Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facility and regional reclamation projects are just some of the initiatives the Board continues to consider to expand recycled water use and improve the regional potable water supply outlook for the future.

The agreement with OMWD has been considered since 2007 when it was mentioned as a potential new water supply in Vallecitos’ Integrated Water Resources Plan, a strategic plan documenting innovative strategies to ensure water reliability in the future. Upon approval by OMWD’s Board of Directors on December 12, the agreement will allow Vallecitos to meet 16% of its demand through water received from OMWD in 2014 when
OMWD will have additional treatment capacity available after completion of a contract with regional wholesaler San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA).

The purchase agreement will benefit both parties by increasing operational efficiency at OMWD’s David C. McCollom Water Treatment Plant and providing Vallecitos with water that is less expensive than the cost of water they currently receive from SDCWA. This discounted rate will be used to partially offset the financial impacts associated with purchasing the more costly desalinated water in the future, which was recently approved by the Vallecitos Board. In addition, it will assist Vallecitos in diversifying its water portfolio by providing an additional water supplier and access point to complement deliveries it receives from SDCWA, improving water quality for Vallecitos customers, and eliminating power costs the District incurs by moving water from its northern tanks to the south part of the District.

Kimberly Thorner, OMWD’s General Manager, stated: “OMWD and Vallecitos have worked closely on recycled water issues for years, which has benefitted both agencies’ customers. As the wholesale price of imported water continues to climb, each agency needs to work diligently to minimize costs related to potable water as well. The approval of this agreement by Vallecitos’ Board of Directors is evidence of their commitment to their customers and to operating efficiently. We look forward to continuing our mutually beneficial partnership well into the future.”

In order to receive treated water from the OMWD, Vallecitos will need to design, build, operate and maintain a pump station to move water from lower elevations. Terms of the deal allow for recovery of costs associated with construction through an OMWD credit on invoices for treatment services.

Vallecitos Water District is an independent, special district dedicated to providing water, wastewater and reclamation services to approximately 94,000 people in a 45-square-mile area that includes San Marcos; the community of Lake San Marcos; portions of Carlsbad, Escondido and Vista; and other surrounding unincorporated areas. The public is invited to Board meetings, taking place at 4 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month at Vallecitos’ Administration, Maintenance, and Operations Facility - 201 Vallecitos de Oro, San Marcos.