Vallecitos Water District Board approves contract to receive Desalinated Water

San Marcos, CA – Bolstered by the District’s long-desired goal of source diversification to increase water reliability, the Vallecitos Water District Board of Directors today unanimously voted in favor of adopting a Resolution of Intent to enter into a Uniform Member Agency Purchase Contract (UMAPC) with wholesaler San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) that would bring desalinated water to its customers by 2016.

This agreement is just one aspect of a plan the Vallecitos Board has been considering to diversify its water portfolio, as the District is currently 100% reliant on imported water deliveries from the San Diego County Water Authority.

In an effort to promote stability and sustainability, Directors as far back as 2005 approved related, forward-thinking projects, such as an expansion of the District’s Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facility, which now enables Vallecitos to recycle up to 74% of the wastewater generated in its service area to significantly lower imported water demand into the region.

When combined with the recently approved agreement to purchase treated water from neighboring Olivenhain Municipal Water District, the desalinated water agreement represents years’ worth of Board and staff collaboration to offer water from viable, alternate water sources to Vallecitos customers.

The desalination contract will provide 3,500 acre feet or more than 1 billion gallons to the District’s annual water supply, answering a critical need for reliability considered as far back as the 1991 drought and identified in the District’s 2007 Integrated Water Resource Plan.

The combination of these two sources will provide up to 36% of the District’s long term supply options with local resources and treatment.
Under the contract, Vallecitos – who in 2005 had partnered with eight other regional public agencies to pursue desalinated water - will get its share of 48,000 acre feet through an annual Water Purchase Agreement (WPA) between Poseidon and SDCWA. A major benefit of purchasing this new source is that deliveries would not be subject to cutbacks or water-use restrictions from wholesalers Metropolitan Water District of Southern California or San Diego County Water Authority. An additional benefit is that it would provide a local source of water that would be accessible during a major emergency if imported water is not available.

SDCWA staff has been negotiating terms for desalinated water from Poseidon Resources since 2010, with the final WPA released for public review on Sept. 27, 2012. Vallecitos’ Resolution of Intent to enter into a purchase contract is required before the SDCWA Board will deliberate on acceptance of the WPA, so that the SDCWA knows how much of the 48,000 acre feet contracted from Poseidon will be committed to member agencies directly. Needing majority vote for approval, the WPA will be considered by the SDCWA Board at its November 29 meeting.