



For Immediate Release

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DOHENY OCEAN DESALINATION PROJECT RECEIVES \$39.9 MILLION AWARD FROM METROPOLITAN LOCAL RESOURCES PROGRAM

Los Angeles, CA (April 9, 2024) - The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) Board of Directors unanimously approved entering into a \$39.9 million Local Resources Program (LRP) Agreement with the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) and South Coast Water District (SCWD) for the Doheny Ocean Desalination Project. The Doheny Project will create 5,600 acre-feet of new, reliable, local, drought-proof water supply and emergency supplies to south Orange County should imported water deliveries be disrupted due to earthquakes or other natural disasters.

“This marks a significant milestone for the Doheny Project. Metropolitan’s historic investment underscores the significance of this initiative,” said Bob McVicker, President of the MWDOC Board. “Our longstanding partnership with the South Coast Water District has been instrumental in moving this project forward. This new, locally managed water supply will fortify our resilience against future droughts and adapt to the challenges posed by a changing climate and emergencies. It is a testament to our unwavering commitment to sustainable water solutions for our region.

The Doheny project will be the first desalination project to receive Metropolitan LRP funding. The award is an important step following more than two decades of work by MWDOC and six other local agencies on an ocean desalination plant at Doheny Beach. MWDOC performed years of hydrogeologic studies, slant well pilot tests, engineering feasibility reports, extended pumping, and tested a slant well. SCWD took over the project in 2015.

SCWD Board Vice President Scott Goldman touted “the environmentally responsible and cost-effective development of the project over the past decade stewarded by SCWD Director Rick Erkeneff and spearheaded the decade prior by MWDOC Director Karl Seckel has helped to form a partnership built on the shared vision of leveraging local resources to build a self-reliant and drought-proof water supply for our communities.”

MWDOC’s Orange County Water Reliability Studies have highlighted the need for comprehensive long-term water reliability and provide valuable information to key decision-makers regarding the future of Orange County’s water supplies and the ability to meet current and future water demands. MWDOC’s 2018 report deemed the Doheny Project one of the most cost-effective investments to meet annual and emergency supplies. The study prescribes the

Doheny Project and the San Juan Watershed Project as the core reliability investments for South Orange County.

The Doheny project is an eco-friendly alternative to traditional desalination plants, utilizing advanced slant wells that draw water from beneath the ocean floor, preventing harm to marine life. The proposed system also has an energy recovery process that uses roughly 50% less energy.

The Metropolitan Local Resources Program incentivizes regional agencies to develop new local projects, such as water recycling and groundwater recovery. This program has provided financial assistance to more than 100 projects across Southern California, producing over 1.3 trillion gallons of recycled water and recovered groundwater.

MWDOC has secured \$226.4M in funding for 23 projects through Metropolitan's LRP Program, yielding 1,590,000 acre-feet of local supply development. These efforts increase regional water supply reliability, reduce future demands on Metropolitan for imported water supplies, help relieve burdens on existing infrastructure, and achieve long-standing reliability goals.

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The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) is a wholesale water provider and resource planning agency whose efforts focus on sound planning and appropriate investments in water supply, water use efficiency and conservation, public information and outreach, legislative advocacy, water education for all ages, and emergency preparedness. MWDOC's 27 water agencies, comprised of city water departments and water districts, provide water service to the public. www.mwdoc.com