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## **WRCOG Expands Membership to Include Two Regional Water Districts**

The Western Riverside Council of Governments will expand its membership for the first time since its inception to include non-jurisdictional members as it voted to include Western Municipal Water District and the Eastern Municipal Water District

**Riverside, CA** – Board members of the Western Municipal Water District and the Eastern Municipal Water District have voted unanimously to join the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG). Both votes came after the historic move by the WRCOG Executive Committee on March 3 to extend membership opportunities to both water agencies. This is the first time since the Council of Governments was formed in 1990 that a non-jurisdiction has been invited to participate as a member of WRCOG.

“We recognize that there is an interconnectivity of the regional issues, and it makes sense to incorporate Eastern and Western Municipal Water Districts into our membership as we discuss the regional issues that affect us,” stated WRCOG Chairman Chuck Washington.

Before the water districts joined, the Western Riverside Council of Governments’ members had included fourteen (14) cities and the County of Riverside. “This is a sign of progress,” Washington stated, “Water related issues are a real concern for this region, and we believe that having the major water districts at the table will increase communication and will strengthen our regional efforts.”

The Eastern and Western Municipal water districts’ service boundaries closely mirror the WRCOG boundaries; therefore having the districts join WRCOG will provide a single forum where regional water planning and delivery discussions can take place.

“We believe that participation in WRCOG will mutually benefit the jurisdictions, the water districts and to WRCOG as a whole,” said Phil Paule, Eastern Municipal Water District Board Member. Director Paule initiated the new relationship with WRCOG because “membership will provide an opportunity to improve coordination on major infrastructure planning which will really strengthen the region’s approach to water project delivery and availability. There are some things we should do on our own, but this regional approach just makes sense when we’re considering long-term infrastructure.”

“Western is extremely pleased that the WRCOG board unanimously accepted its recommendation to have a seat at the table of this planning agency,” commented Board President S.R. “Al” Lopez. “Water supply and reliability are topics that should be an integral part of these discussions and decisions that impact Riverside County. Uniting water resource management and land use planning on a regional basis was the emphasis of Western and Eastern’s collaborative effort to pursue a successful conclusion to joint membership status.”

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## **WRCOG Membership, con't.**

It is feasible that membership of the WRCOG is likely to expand again in the near future as new cities incorporate. The most recent city approved by voters for incorporation in western Riverside County was the City of Wildomar; Menifee Valley voters will be considering voting for cityhood this June.

WRCOG was formed as a joint powers agency in 1990 to provide cooperative, long-range planning on issues of mutual concern that cross jurisdictional boundaries, providing regional perspective to its member agencies while respecting local control. Today, WRCOG's program areas include air quality, solid waste, transportation, environment, and growth.

For more information on the various programs administered by the Western Riverside Council of Governments please visit their website at [www.wrcog.cog.ca.us](http://www.wrcog.cog.ca.us) .

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