



EMWD

Agriculture Groundwater Exchange Project

Eastern Municipal Water District's (EMWD) Agriculture Groundwater Exchange Project will ensure long term viability of agricultural productivity by providing citrus farmers with a reliable water supply. The project will also stabilize an over-drafted groundwater basin thus enhancing available water supply for other highly beneficial uses.

This project is part of EMWD's Recycled Water Program and involves the construction of recycled water pipelines and a pump station to provide 7,000 acre-feet of recycled water, from EMWD's San Jacinto Valley Regional Water Reclamation Facility, to 3,400 acres of citrus previously irrigated with valuable groundwater. The citrus farmers strongly support the project, as they see increased pumping costs and the possibility of dry wells in their future.

Substituting recycled water for groundwater increases the potable supply of water — every drop of recycled water that is used saves a drop of fresh water that would otherwise be pumped or imported from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta or the Colorado River. Assuring the local farmers a cost-efficient, guaranteed, “drought-proof” supply of high quality water for irrigation benefits the local community, the state, and the entire nation as it ensures the agricultural industry will continue despite threats of rising water costs and competition for water supplies.

This project is another component of EMWD's goal to protect and optimize the use of available water resources for its rapidly growing service area. EMWD is among California's top water recycling agencies, having built a nearly \$50,000,000 “backbone” recycled water distribution system linking its five regional water reclamation facilities. That linkage allows EMWD to move recycled water supplies to areas of demand. Although EMWD is committed to the reuse of recycled water and the continued viability of the area's agricultural activities, the high cost of recycled water facilities threatens the increased use of recycled water. The total cost of the project is \$ 14 million and federal financial assistance is necessary to partially offset the cost.

EMWD believes the Agriculture Groundwater Exchange Project will ease the water supply crisis gripping California and will help ensure the future of agriculture in the nation.

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