



Media Release

State-funded stormwater-capture, recharge project breaks ground in Stanislaus County

State and districts' joint actions will reap regional benefits in building water resilience

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NEWMAN – The State Water Resources Control Board joined the Central California Irrigation District (CCID) and Del Puerto Water District (DPWD) in Newman yesterday to celebrate the launch of the Orestimba Creek Recharge and Recovery project, which is expected to capture up to 3,500 acre-feet per year of stormwater flows for irrigation while reducing flooding risks to nearby disadvantaged communities. The project is scheduled for completion in June 2024.

The State Water Board committed \$5.6 million from its [Prop 1 Stormwater Grant Program](#) to fully fund construction of the project's recharge ponds and diversion and conveyance structures. To provide needed flexibility to plan for and maximize stormwater capture over successive wet seasons, the board issued its second-ever five-year temporary permit to the water districts in May.

"Thank you to the water districts for their leadership in bringing this project forward," said E. Joaquin Esquivel, chair of the State Water Board. "I congratulate them on their partnership and their commitment to strengthening water security and mitigating flood risks for their region. It's an example of how districts can take advantage of our financial assistance and streamlined permitting to make critical investments in water resilience."

Orestimba Creek is a naturally occurring waterway that flows through both water districts in Stanislaus County. The project permit allows for diversions, beginning with next year's wet season, to underground storage from approximately 80 acres of percolation ponds to the underlying Delta-Mendota Subbasin. Stored water can then be used to irrigate more than 209,000 acres of farmland or to augment surface water supplies, reducing impacts on the aquifer during critically dry years.

"Reaching the milestone of groundbreaking for any project is exciting, but my reflections today go first to the importance of collaboration and partnerships," said Anthea Hansen, general manager of the Del Puerto district. "The Central California Irrigation District and Del Puerto Water District have worked lockstep for over nine years to bring this 80-acre recharge and recovery project to the Newman area, and I cannot be more proud of how our agencies have navigated the many ups and downs of project planning and engineering, environmental approvals, permits and water right approvals, funding



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acquisition and stakeholder outreach. This locally owned groundwater storage is a first for the Del Puerto District and its landowners, and I hope we can take what we learned and use it as a model for other potential groundwater storage partnership opportunities in the region.”

Aside from the board’s \$5.6 million stormwater grant, the water districts received \$800,000 from the Department of [Water Resources’ Integrated Regional Water Management Program](#), also funded by the Prop. 1 initiative. The overall project also is supported by \$1 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and \$1.5 million and \$1 million provided by CCID and DPWD, respectively, for land acquisition and construction costs.

“It is amazing to see the collaboration on this project,” said Jarrett Martin, general manager of the CCID. “Not only are we providing water resiliency per the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, we are providing some flood protection to our community and improving the water quality of the domestic water supply. Everyone wins.”

Statewide goals for stormwater capture, wastewater recycling, desalination, increased storage and conservation are all part of Gov. Gavin Newsom’s [Water Supply Strategy](#), which seeks to offset the projected 10% loss in California’s water supplies by 2040 due to climate change.

The State Water Board’s mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California’s water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.