



For Immediate Release

## CONSOLIDATION IMPROVES WATER RELIABILITY AND DROUGHT RESILIENCE FOR PLACER COUNTY COMMUNITY

### *State Water Board Funding Enables Completion of Project*

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**AUBURN** — In an effort to improve water reliability and drought resilience, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) recently completed a consolidation project with the Castle City Mobile Home Park in Newcastle with funding assistance from the State Water Resources Control Board. The consolidation connects all 282 residents of Castle City to PCWA's Foothill Water Treatment Plant, allowing the mobile home park to decommission its private water treatment plant that has been in operation since the 1960s.

Castle City originally approached PCWA about consolidation roughly six years ago as its system was nearing the end of its life.

“What was evident back then was that our system could not be relied upon to meet the long-term needs of the community,” said Castle City Manager Tim Belarde. “Boil water notices, due to low pressure issues, were becoming more common and there was serious concern about whether we had adequate flow for firefighting needs, especially as drought conditions increase our susceptibility to fire.”

Cost was a major obstacle for the consolidation project, as the mobile home park residents could not afford the fees that would be required to pay for the construction costs. Fortunately, the State Water Board's Division of Financial Assistance was able to help. Using funds from Proposition 1, PCWA and the State Water Board executed an agreement in July 2019, which will provide \$3.1 million to the water agency to cover the



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entire cost of the project. Construction began in March 2021 and concluded in July 2021.

The State Water Board has advocated for consolidations as a timely and cost-effective solution for many ailing water systems, and it values partnering with larger water systems that take a leadership role in efforts like these. PCWA's broader regionalization project will not only further support the needs of surrounding communities, it can be an example for many other systems throughout California. So far, the State Water Board has helped water systems complete eight consolidations this year with funding from Proposition 1, the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, and the General Fund.

"We are very grateful for the commitment Placer County Water Agency has shown as it completes the consolidation with Castle City," said Laurel Firestone, State Water Board member. "We applaud its vision to approach water resiliency with an inclusive regional plan that underscores our belief that access to safe and affordable drinking water is a fundamental human right."

Castle City's story is not unique in the Sierra Foothills. In Placer County alone, there are 128 publicly and privately-owned water systems. The size, reliability of service, and operational capacity of each system can vary widely.

"As a countywide agency and the primary water provider for Placer County, Placer County Water Agency strives to make sure Placer County residents have access to safe drinking water," said PCWA Board Member Mike Lee.

"When we can partner with others to improve the reliability and resiliency of smaller water systems through consolidation, it aligns perfectly with our stewardship responsibilities," said PCWA Director of Technical Services Brent Smith. "The State Water Board's involvement was essential to completing this consolidation."

*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 the benefit of present and future generations.*

*PCWA is the primary water resource agency for Placer County, California, with a broad range of responsibilities including water resource planning and management, retail and wholesale supply of drinking water and irrigation water, and production of hydroelectric energy.*